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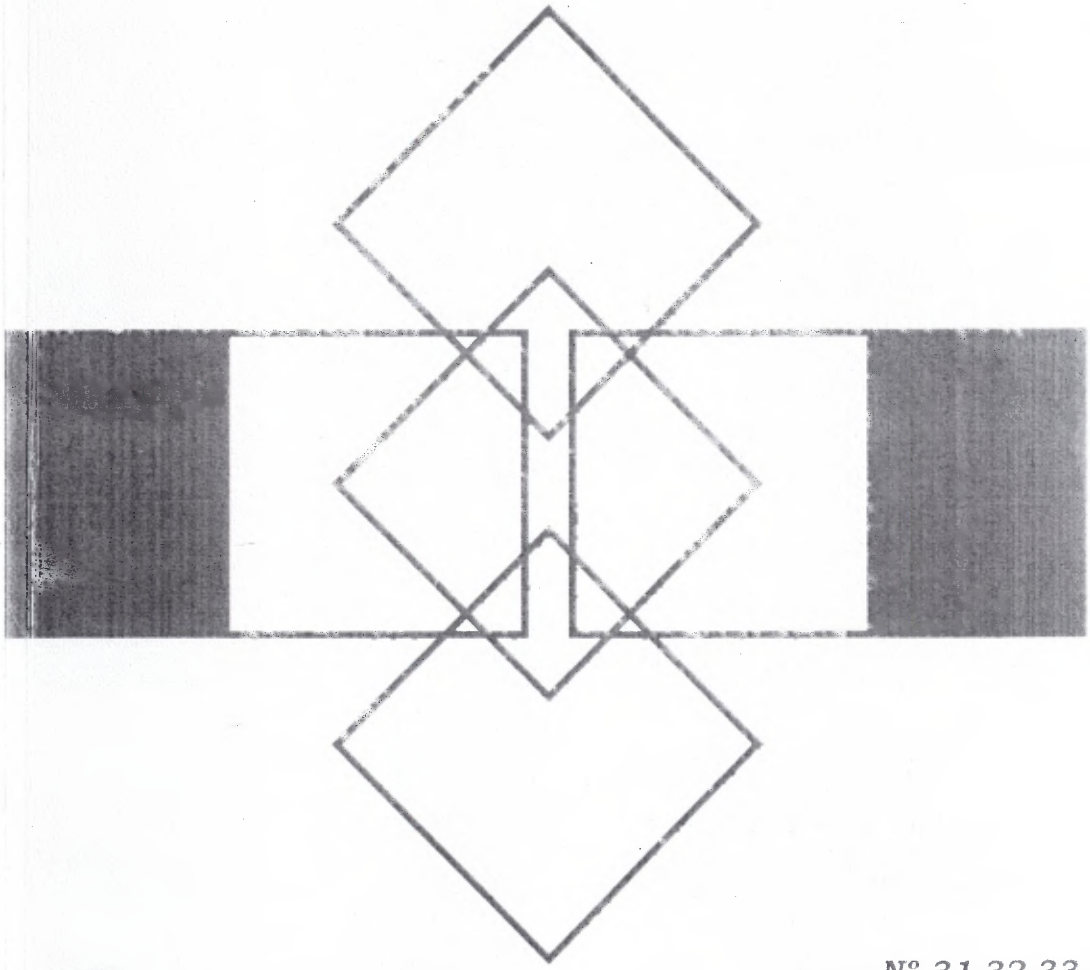

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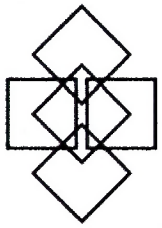

ABRAPUI

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O ENSINO DE VOCABULÁRIO DE LÍNGUA INGLESA: QUESTÕES PERTINENTES E MATERIAL DIDÁTICO

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RESUMO: A importância do vocabulário tem sido tema recorrente na área de ensino / aprendizado de língua inglesa. Hoje a competência lexical do aprendiz é vista como sendo tão importante quanto a competência gramatical do mesmo. Sem um bom domínio do léxico, a expressão oral e escrita do aluno tende a ficar prejudicada. Neste estudo, enfocamos o modo como o ensino do vocabulário tem sido abordado no livro didático nas duas últimas décadas, uma vez que, em nosso contexto de ensino de Língua Inglesa, esse é o principal material utilizado pelo professor.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: vocabulário; competência lexical; livro didático

ABSTRACT: The relevance of vocabulary has been a recurrent topic in ELT. Nowadays the learner's lexical competence is regarded as being as important as their grammatical competence, since their oral and written production depend upon a good command of vocabulary. This study focuses on how vocabulary has been approached in coursebooks in the two last decades, due to the fact that Brazilian teachers of English depend mainly on them in their everyday practice.

KEYWORDS: vocabulary; lexical competence; coursebook

1. Introdução

O ensino de língua estrangeira tem sofrido constantes mudanças ao sabor de prescrições e propostas as mais diversas. Surgem métodos, abordagens e procedimentos que são, a princípio, vistos como possíveis soluções para o imenso desafio que é aprender outro idioma. Ao longo do tempo, críticas, dúvidas e questionamentos dão origem a novos posicionamentos e caminhos, deixando o professor freqüentemente insatisfeito e confuso. Perguntas recorrentes como: o que significa aprender uma língua? O que deve ser aprendido? De que maneira? Quais os melhores procedimentos e materiais? assinalam uma busca

constante por respostas claras que facilitem os processos instrucionais.

Nesse cenário, tão propício a incertezas e fracassos, encontra-se, particularmente, o ensino e aprendizado de vocabulário. Ao longo da história do ensino e aprendizado de língua estrangeira, o desenvolvimento da competência lexical nem sempre esteve no foco da atenção de lingüistas e pesquisadores da área. A atenção ao vocabulário perdeu espaço para o foco na competência gramatical e oral, e para o desenvolvimento de habilidades instrumentais de leitura e escrita. Entretanto, mais recentemente, de modo especial a partir dos trabalhos de Lewis (1993; 1997), uma nova postura a respeito do papel do léxico vem se consolidando.

Nesse trabalho, focamos em específico a questão do ensino do léxico de língua inglesa como língua estrangeira. No primeiro segmento, buscando oferecer uma visão abrangente de diferentes percepções e tratamentos, apresentamos um breve histórico. Em seguida, discorremos sobre a importância da aquisição de um vocabulário rico e variado. Citamos o trabalho de alguns pesquisadores da área e colocamos nosso posicionamento sobre o assunto. No segmento relativo a questões pertinentes à área lexical, considerando-se este um tema extenso e complexo, optamos por abordar fatores especialmente freqüentes, como os procedimentos para a seleção, seqüenciamento e apresentação do vocabulário. Em seguida, abordamos o papel do professor por considerarmos que, a despeito da aplicação de quaisquer procedimentos prescritivos, sua percepção e condução do processo educacional serão sempre decisivas para resultados mais ou menos satisfatórios. No segmento final, trazemos uma análise do tratamento do léxico em materiais didáticos recentes, esperando contribuir para uma discussão continuada e abrangente.

2. Ensino de Vocabulário: um Breve Histórico

No final de século 18, quando surgiu o método denominado Gramática e Tradução, The Grammar Translation Method, o vocabulário era selecionado a partir de textos clássicos, cuja leitura e tradução eram o objetivo principal. As aulas constavam de explicações, em língua materna, sobre o sistema gramatical da língua-alvo e da leitura de longas passagens literárias com a respectiva tradução (Zimmerman, apud Coady & Huckin,1997).

Ao longo de todo o século 19, o ensino do vocabulário baseou-se na definição e na etimologia. O vocabulário era geralmente arcaico e as listas bilíngües eram organizadas de acordo com os campos semânticos e utilizadas como material de instrução. A tradução e a leitura dos

clássicos prevaleceu nas escolas européias até o final da década de 40, já no século 20. Entretanto, a técnica, apesar de amplamente utilizada, colheu críticas e oposições. (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Essas oposições abriram caminho para que lingüistas preocupados com abordagens mais dinâmicas começassem a se fazer ouvir. Em 1899, Henry Sweet estabeleceu os princípios do que viria a ser chamado Movimento Reformista, The Reform Movement, segundo o qual as aulas de língua estrangeira deveriam dar ênfase à língua falada em detrimento da escrita, a tradução deveria ser evitada e a gramática ensinada de modo indutivo. A maior contribuição do movimento foi associar o léxico ao mundo real.

Ainda no final do século 19, beneficiando-se do debate levantado pelo Reform Movement, surge o Método Direto, The Direct Method. O novo método foi assim rotulado por priorizar a relação entre o significado e a língua-alvo sem o recurso da tradução. Na questão do vocabulário, prioriza a linguagem do dia-a-dia e as palavras concretas são explicadas através de figuras e objetos para se evitar a tradução direta e simples. Foi a partir dessa época, que o termo realia passou a ser usado para designar esse tipo de recurso (Zimmermman apud Coady & Huckin, 1997).

Nas décadas de 20 e 30, houve uma grande ênfase no desenvolvimento da habilidade da leitura, o que levou a uma preocupação maior com a questão do vocabulário. Este era percebido como componente essencial ao desenvolvimento da leitura. O novo enfoque levou a mudanças significativas na percepção do papel do léxico, as quais tiveram grande impacto em questões práticas como a produção de materiais instrucionais e as práticas metodológicas.

Nesse cenário, Harold Palmer e Michael West produziram um guia para o ensino de vocabulário de língua inglesa como língua estrangeira. Essa lista, A General Service List of English Words, publicada em 1953, tornou-se um marco de referência no assunto e é considerada até hoje a mais completa no que diz respeito a palavras de alta freqüência.

A entrada dos Estados Unidos na Segunda Guerra Mundial teve um efeito significativo sobre o ensino de línguas. A necessidade de formar tradutores e intérpretes em curto espaço de tempo levou à criação de um programa especial e várias universidades americanas engajaram-se no projeto. Charles Fries, contrário aos princípios do Método Direto, desenvolveu o método Áudio-lingual, The Audiolingual Method, a partir da crença de que a formação de hábitos poderia ser aplicada ao aprendizado de línguas.

Contudo, o Método Audiolingual teve vida curta, entrando em decadência no final dos anos 60. O maior responsável por isso foi o

marco na teoria lingüística americana representado por Noam Chomsky, que rejeitava tanto a abordagem estruturalista na descrição lingüística quanto a teoria behaviorista no aprendizado de línguas. A partir daí, seguiu-se um período de "adaptação, inovação, experimentação e confusão", segundo Richards & Rogers, ocasionado pela falta de uma alternativa para o Método Audiolingual.

Em 1977, Terrell, desenvolveu uma nova proposta para o ensino de línguas que ele chamou de Abordagem Natural, The Natural Approach. Terrell uniu-se a Krashen, a fim de elaborar uma base teórica que desse sustentação à abordagem proposta. Na Abordagem Natural, o vocabulário é o veículo condutor do significado e deve ser aprendido através de atividades cujo objetivo é a comunicação. O ensino do léxico não é o objetivo propriamente dito, mas acontece, naturalmente, a partir da prática de atividades comunicativas. (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Foi com base nessa perspectiva que a Abordagem Comunicativa aos poucos se consolidou. Apoiada nas teorias lingüísticas de Chomsky e Hymes, que uniam, respectivamente, os conceitos de "competência lingüística" e "com¬petência comunicativa", essa nova abordagem ressaltou a importância da interdependência existente entre linguagem e comunicação. Dentre seus objetivos principais, destaca-se a valorização do "significado" sobre a "forma", e da "fluência" sobre a "precisão gramatical".

Mais recentemente, o trabalho de Lewis veio trazer uma nova perspectiva para o ensino e aprendizado do vocabulário em língua estrangeira com a Abordagem Lexical, ou The Lexical Approach. Na visão do autor : "A linguagem se constitui de léxico em bases gramaticais e não de gramática em bases lexicais" (Lewis, 1993, p. 89). Lewis sugere uma integração entre a abordagem comunicativa e um foco no léxico. Defende que a aprendizagem de uma língua, ao invés de ser um processo governado por regras de sintaxe, depende da memorização de unidades lexicais. A proposta acarretou significativa mudança na percepção dos profissionais da área e trouxe novos rumos às pesquisas que passaram a focar com mais freqüência a questão lexical.

3. A Relevância do Léxico no Aprendizado de Língua Estrangeira

Durante a Conferência do Conselho Britânico, realizada em Milão em 1987, Krashen destacou a relevância do aprendizado do léxico ao afirmar: "Quando os estudantes viajam, eles não levam consigo livros de gramática, eles levam dicionários." (apud Lewis, 1993, p. iii). O autor é um dos que, assim como Lewis, Nation, Melka e

Zimmermman, entre outros, defende o ensino e a aquisição de vocabulário como pontos-chave no aprendizado de língua estrangeira.

Entretanto, apesar da percepção de diversos profissionais sobre a importância do léxico, muitos programas têm colocado o vocabulário como um aspecto a ser abordado e assimilado indiretamente, através da prática de outras habilidades, especialmente a leitura. Nesse caso específico, estudos mais recentes têm indicado que a utilização de estratégias de leitura não se revela suficiente nem para uma satisfatória compreensão de textos, nem para a efetiva aquisição do léxico.

Pesquisas realizadas por Laufer (1997) na área de leitura demonstram que aprendizes de língua estrangeira percebem as palavras como o verdadeiro marco do significado (landmarks of meaning). Na pesquisa, os outros elementos colocados como recursos da compreensão textual foram o conhecimento prévio do assunto e o domínio da sintaxe. O primeiro foi relegado a segundo plano, considerado como menos importante do que o conhecimento do vocabulário. O domínio da sintaxe, como instrumento de compreensão, foi quase totalmente ignorado, sendo raramente mencionado pelos participantes. Ou seja, o conhecimento de um grande número de palavras foi percebido como fator determinante da compreensão textual. Essa visão coloca o conhecimento e a utilização de estruturas gramaticais como subordinados ao domínio do léxico, no caso específico da leitura. Esse ponto é defendido por Lewis (1993), ao sustentar que o desenvolvimento das habilidades envolvidas em aprendizado de língua estrangeira não pode ser tratado como um processo alheio à aquisição de vocabulário, devido à natureza eminentemente lexical de uma língua.

É certo que, no que se refere à leitura de textos, além do conhecimento lexical, vários fatores se conjugam para uma compreensão efetiva: a qualidade e o volume dos suportes contextuais, o conhecimento prévio do leitor sobre o tópico, seu conhecimento de mundo, sua maior ou menor capacidade de inferir a partir do contexto, como também sua habilidade para reconhecer o tipo de texto, a estrutura e a idéia principal. Entretanto, o estudo de Laufer demonstra que a qualidade e o nível dessa compreensão podem estar muito mais diretamente ligados ao domínio do vocabulário do que a outros fatores. A autora destaca que palavras imediatamente reconhecidas pelo leitor – aquelas que formam seu vocabulário dito visual – funcionam como uma base familiar que o libera para processos cognitivos mais elaborados, tanto na compreensão geral do texto, como no entendimento de palavras novas. Isso talvez explique quando, ao

encontrar um grande número de palavras desconhecidas, o aluno parece incapaz de inferir o significado geral do texto, apesar das orientações para o uso de estratégias de compreensão.

Nagy destaca que um foco em palavras específicas e a compreensão geral do texto podem ser, na verdade, abordagens excludentes entre si. Levar o aluno a concentrar-se no entendimento de palavras novas a partir de suportes textuais acarretaria um expressivo efeito negativo sobre a compreensão geral:

> Há, também, o problema de uma potencial exclusão mútua entre a atenção voltada para as palavras individualmente e a compreensão do texto. Stallman (1991) descobriu que nenhum dos métodos utilizados para dirigir a atenção dos alunos para as palavras teve qualquer impacto sobre sua aprendizagem, entretanto, essas tentativas tiveram um significativo efeito negativo na compreensão.(apud Nagy, 1997, p.81) [1]

Também na área das habilidades orais, há cada vez mais uma percepção de que limitações lexicais estão na raiz de uma comunicação precária e insatisfatória. É um sentimento comum à maioria dos professores que, não importa o quanto um aprendiz domine o aspecto gramatical, sem o conhecimento de um amplo e significativo número de palavras, a comunicação na língua alvo fica comprometida ou se torna inviável.

Richards (1985) destaca que aprendizes em constante expansão de seu vocabulário estão mais bem preparados para o desenvolvimento das habilidades lingüísticas, tanto receptivas quanto produtivas, e se saem melhor em atividades orais e escritas. Schmitt e McCarthy (1997), assim como Lewis (1993; 1997) defendem que nada é tão significativo para o progresso de iniciantes quanto um foco continuado e intensivo no léxico. Para os autores, um investimento constante na área do vocabulário estabelece bases sólidas para o desenvolvimento de habilidades estruturais e comunicativas.

Lewis (1993) destaca que impropriedades gramaticais criam limitações e dificuldades de compreensão mas, ainda assim, o significado pode ser transmitido de modo satisfatório. Diferentemente, o uso de vocabulário inadequado ou o seu desconhecimento podem simplesmente inviabilizar a comunicação. O conhecimento de um grande número de palavras assume, em conseqüência, um papel preponderante em detrimento da exatidão estrutural, já que, a despeito de eventuais impropriedades, o aprendiz será capaz de se comunicar

caso domine o repertório adequado. O autor argumenta que um conhecimento gramatical sólido permite ao aprendiz fazer uso do léxico de modo criativo e variado. Entretanto, o inverso não é observado: o domínio das estruturas gramaticais não é utilizado em todo seu potencial, se o vocabulário é reduzido e insuficiente.

Algumas indagações, então, se fazem necessárias: que elementos se colocam para escolhas e procedimentos adequados no tratamento desse léxico? Que materiais utilizar e privilegiar em nossas salas de aula? No próximo segmento passamos a abordar questões que consideramos relevantes nessa discussão, como os elementos que norteiam o tratamento do léxico e o papel do professor nesse cenário.

4. Questões Pertinentes ao Ensino e Aprendizado de Vocabulário em Língua Estrangeira

4.1 Alguns Aspectos e Parâmetros Norteadores

Ao analisarmos a aquisição do léxico em língua estrangeira, os primeiros aspectos a serem enfocados dizem respeito à "seleção", ao "seqüenciamento" e à "apresentação" desse vocabulário (Nation, 1990).

Quanto à seleção, o critério mais usual tem sido o da freqüência com que as palavras são usadas. Além do aspecto da freqüência, outros parâmetros para essa seleção são a escolha de um tópico, o nível de proficiência do aprendiz, suas necessidades e objetivos. Considerando-se um spectrum de competência comunicativa, diferentes itens lexicais ocupam posições distintas. Lewis (1993) sustenta que os substantivos têm sido amplamente priorizados, em detrimento de outras categorias e ressalta a necessidade de que verbos, adjetivos e advérbios sejam igualmente trabalhados. Baseia-se em pesquisas que evidenciam a má utilização de substantivos, em função da falta de palavras que ampliem seu significado.

No que concerne ao seqüenciamento, Nation (1990) avalia que dois aspectos devam ser considerados: o primeiro diz respeito ao grau de dificuldade das palavras e o segundo ao agrupamento e organização dessas palavras num determinado conjunto de aulas.

O autor assinala que, ao se determinar essa seqüência, as palavras de alta freqüência devem ser priorizadas em função de sua alta incidência. Num segundo momento, decidir sobre o enfoque em vocabulário acadêmico, técnico ou de baixa freqüência depende das necessidades do educando. No caso da exigência de leituras e para fins acadêmicos, itens lexicais pertinentes à área em questão deverão ser o próximo foco. Ou, ainda, se houver necessidade de se aprender a língua para ocupações técnicas, o jargão adequado deve ser priorizado.

Já se o aprendiz desejar usar a língua-alvo socialmente e para a leitura de romances e revistas populares, o foco deve se fazer sobre palavras de baixa freqüência.

Vale ressaltar que a fronteira entre o que seriam essas palavras de baixa ou alta freqüência é arbitrária e tem sido alvo de debate entre profissionais que, entretanto, concordam que essa variação ocorreria entre as 1500 e 7000 palavras mais usuais (Nation & Newton, 1997).

A terceira questão a se considerar diz respeito à apresentação desse vocabulário. Como palavras de alta freqüência, vocabulário técnico e acadêmico são em número relativamente reduzido, torna-se, até certo ponto, simples a seleção de exercícios específicos que tragam esse tipo de palavras à atenção do aprendiz (Carter, apud Nation, 1990). No caso das de baixa freqüência – dada sua grande extensão – torna-se difícil decidir quanto à melhor maneira de abordá-las. Nation e Newton (1997) defendem que não há necessidade de que o professor as enfoque individualmente. É necessário equipar o aprendiz com estratégias efetivas que o habilitem a lidar com as dificuldades de compreensão originadas por palavras desconhecidas que se encontrem nesse grupo. Segundo os autores, se as palavras de alta freqüência já são de domínio do educando, as outras poderão, com relativa facilidade, ser compreendidas a partir do contexto, através de conhecimentos de derivação e outras estratégias. Contudo, alguns autores enfatizam a necessidade de abordagens instrucionais sistemáticas.

Pesquisas têm assinalado que a leitura extensiva de textos seria um instrumento eficaz para a ampliação do vocabulário além da fronteira das 2000 palavras, pois funcionariam como uma fonte poderosa de input compreensível (Krashen, 1982; 1985). Contudo, o processo mostra-se lento e imprevisível quanto a que palavras serão realmente incorporadas pelo aprendiz e em que número, o que enfatiza a necessidade de condução do processo instrucional por parte do professor (Paribakht & Wesche, 1997).

De quantas palavras, então, precisam nossos alunos? No caso da leitura, Laufer (1997) menciona que o conhecimento de 3000 famílias de palavras seria ideal para a compreensão satisfatória de textos autênticos, considerando-se família o conjunto formado pela palavra raiz, suas inflexões e formas derivadas. Segundo fórmula de conversão desenvolvida por Nation (apud Laufer, ibid, p. 24), esse número equivale à cerca de 5000 unidades lexicais, e somente a partir desse limiar o leitor seria capaz de transferir recursos cognitivos de leitura para compreensão na língua alvo. Abaixo desse nível, o sucesso dessas estratégias estaria comprometido pela insuficiência de vocabulário,

pois o leitor estaria essencialmente focado no mero reconhecimento das palavras.

Nation e Waring (apud Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997) mencionam cálculos semelhantes aos de Laufer e apesar de haver discordâncias quanto a esses números, há razoável consenso sobre o fato de que um léxico reduzido pode levar a deduções incorretas e comprometer a compreensão, mesmo que o leitor utilize estratégias efetivas (Arnaud & Savignon, 1997).

Ainda quanto à questão da apresentação, Nation (1990) coloca três possibilidades: uma abordagem explícita, implícita, ou a combinação de ambas. No caso da primeira, o vocabulário é enfocado de modo direto, através de atividades que tenham o ensino do léxico como foco específico. Entre outros, são comuns exercícios de ligar palavras às suas definições, o uso de figuras, traduções e a confecção de listas de palavras.

Caso se opte por uma abordagem indireta, o vocabulário passa a ser trabalhado através de atividades como ler, contar e ouvir histórias, redigir resumos e qualquer trabalho que não tenha como objetivo específico o aprendizado do vocabulário. O desenvolvimento do léxico passa a ser visto e tratado como subproduto de atividades comunicativas que visem ao desenvolvimento da fluência ou à compreensão oral e escrita.

A terceira possibilidade combina tratamentos diretos e indiretos, em maior ou menor grau, a partir das necessidades do aprendiz.

Uma questão importante diz respeito a se estabelecer um conceito sobre o quê significa saber uma palavra. A maioria dos pesquisadores e professores costuma contrapor os termos "receptivo" e "produtivo", ou "passivo" e "ativo" como conceitos opostos e auto-excludentes. Nesse caso, vocabulário receptivo (passivo) é aquele reconhecido pelo aprendiz, quando com ele se depara, mas que não é produzido espontaneamente. Vocabulário produtivo (ativo) é aquele que realmente foi internalizado, a ponto de ocorrer de modo natural e espontâneo em linguagem escrita ou oral, e é utilizado de modo eficaz e apropriado.

Melka (1997) ressalta o caráter sutil e fugidio dos conceitos e a dificuldade em se estabelecer a distância entre os dois extremos e sugere a existência de um "continuum de conhecimento" que melhor explicaria as fronteiras pouco definidas e as nuances entre conhecimento parcial e completo. Por essa proposta, o aprendizado de um item lexical é um processo, que ocorre em etapas, ao longo do qual as noções de uso receptivo e produtivo interagem e se sobrepõem em momentos diversos, numa dinâmica continuada, até sua efetiva

retenção. Schmitt e McCarthy (1997) destacam que o conceito proposto por Melka nos afasta de uma visão radical em que os conceitos de "saber" e "não saber" não admitem graduações ou variações. Segundo os autores, mesmo para nativos o conhecimento de um item lexical acontece - em muitas ocasiões – somente a partir de seu contexto pragmático.

Acreditamos, também, que devam ser levados em conta os objetivos e as necessidades individuais do aprendiz ao se considerar a aceitação de um maior ou menor número de itens lexicais como repertório de vocabulário passivo.

Outra questão é a utilização de procedimentos que favoreçam a retenção do vocabulário a longo prazo. Segundo Nation (1990) pesquisas apontam a necessidade de vários encontros com o item lexical para que essa retenção aconteça. O autor menciona evidências empíricas de que processos conscientes por parte do aprendiz - embora não garantam essa retenção - a favorecem de modo substancial e significativo. Esses processos se dão quando, após deduzir o significado de uma palavra nova, o aprendiz confirma sua compreensão em um dicionário, ou junto a um falante nativo e, em seguida, faz um registro intencional.

Tendo abordado algumas das questões mais recorrentes no tratamento do léxico, passamos a analisar o papel do professor.

4.2 O Papel do Professor num Cenário de Privilégio Lexical

A despeito de vários fatores interagirem na atuação do professor em sala de aula, como traços de personalidade, exigências da instituição onde leciona e sua bagagem acadêmica pessoal, acreditamos que os materiais de que dispõe são fatores determinantes nas atividades desenvolvidas e na abordagem que direciona as mesmas. Portanto, os materiais didáticos adotados serão sempre de grande relevância no processo de ensino/aprendizagem e seus eventuais resultados. Daí a necessidade de um olhar criterioso por parte do profissional, sejam esses instrumentos impostos ou de sua própria escolha.

Brown (1993) define que o papel do professor tem início ao planejar as atividades que irá desenvolver, continua ao administrar os procedimentos na sala de aula, e se estende ao avaliar os resultados e definir as práticas que se seguirão. O autor destaca a natureza multifacetada dessa atuação e compara o professor a um maestro. Dependendo da situação, diferentes papéis se alternam num spectrum de possibilidades: num momento, o professor é gerenciador e líder, em outro controlador, e em outro, ainda, faz as vezes de facilitador

e provedor. Poderá, também, atuar como amigo, parceiro e guia, permitindo que um papel prevaleça sobre o outro em função do contexto e, principalmente, da percepção de seus aprendizes.

Segundo Tsui (1995), um professor avalia sua aula a partir de suas próprias expectativas muito mais do que em função de parâmetros objetivos. Entretanto, na imensa maioria das vezes, há uma distância significativa entre o que imaginou e o resultado real. Em função dessa imprevisibilidade, Brown (1993) destaca que a intuição é um importante instrumento na condução dos procedimentos e tomadas de decisão: "Há ampla evidência de que bons professores de língua desenvolvem acentuada intuição" (ibid, p. 294). Sternberg e Davidson (1982; apud Brown, 1993) definem essa percepção intuitiva como "insight", o qual consideram como um componente essencial ao que denominamos "inteligência".

Os papéis desempenhados por professor e educando interagem e se complementam. Uma percepção diferente quanto ao papel do aprendiz acarreta a necessidade de um redimensionamento do papel do educador e vice-versa. Foi o que ocorreu com o surgimento da Abordagem Comunicativa: por atribuir aos alunos um papel mais atuante, o professor deixa de ser a fonte absoluta de conhecimento e controle, e isso poderá vir a se refletir na confecção e utilização dos materiais didáticos.

Nesse cenário, o professor seria não apenas o condutor, mas o grande estimulador no processo educacional. Vê a si próprio como co-responsável por uma nova consciência da parte de seus educandos. Deixa claro o que cada um pode e deve fazer na busca de uma aprendizagem eficaz e duradoura, independentemente do que ocorre na sala de aula.

No próximo segmento passamos à análise de quatro livros didáticos, visando determinar que parâmetros foram privilegiados por seus autores e comentar o possível papel do professor ao utilizá-los.

5. O Tratamento do Léxico em Livros Didáticos

5.1 Critérios de Avaliação

Segundo O'Neil, "Nenhum outro meio é tão fácil de usar, quanto um livro." (1982, p. 107, apud Mc Donough & Shaw, 2003, p. 60). Na verdade, o livro didático é o único recurso para muitos professores. Daí a necessidade de que seja analisado criteriosamente. Sheldon (1988, apud Mc Donough & Shaw, ibid, p.61) ressalta, entretanto, que essa avaliação é basicamente subjetiva e que não existem fórmulas ou sistemas definidos. Ainda assim, existe a necessidade de um

modelo que seja ao mesmo tempo conciso, prático e abrangente.

Tomlinson chama a atenção para a importância de uma abordagem flexível em relação a qualquer critério que se adote. Segundo o autor, o modelo adotado será determinado em função das razões, objetivos e circunstâncias que conduziram a essa avaliação. Mc Donough e Shaw propõem adoção de um modelo duplo: uma avaliação externa, que permita uma análise geral, e uma avaliação interna mais detalhada. Enquanto a primeira enfatiza as informações contidas na contracapa (blurb), apresentação (introduction) e o índice (table of contents), a segunda se detém na maneira como as habilidades são tratadas, na gradação e seqüenciamento do conteúdo, no tipo de atividades e exercícios propostos, na existência ou não de testes avaliativos e materiais autênticos, bem como na adequação desse conteúdo às necessidades dos alunos.

Algumas questões podem conduzir à avaliação de outros fatores: o material atende aos diferentes estilos de aprendizagem? Oferece a possibilidade de um estudo autônomo? O material é motivante para professores e alunos?

No presente estudo, é nossa intenção comentar de modo despretensioso o tratamento dado ao léxico nos volumes destinados a alunos iniciantes de quatro séries distintas. Escolhemos as séries Interchange – English for International Communication (Cambridge University Press, 1990), Hotline (Oxford University Press, 1992), New English File (Oxford University Press, 2004) e American Inside Out (MacMillan, 2004). Os primeiros foram escolhidos por serem exemplos de livros didáticos amplamente utilizados no início da última década, e os dois últimos por serem publicações recentes de grande aceitação no segmento de ensino de língua inglesa como língua estrangeira. A opção pelos níveis iniciantes (elementary e pre-intermediate) deve-se ao fato de que, geralmente, essas turmas são mais homogêneas. Além disso, acreditamos que a eventual aquisição de vocabulário nos primeiros anos é mais visível e essencial a uma percepção positiva por parte do aluno acerca da língua-alvo.

5.1.1 Avaliação Externa

Na série Interchange, que disponibiliza o volume chamado Intro, para iniciantes dito "reais', enfocamos o livro 1, destinado a iniciantes que já tenham tido algum contato com o idioma. Ao observarmos a contracapa, verificamos que o autor destaca as características principais da obra, dentre elas o uso de uma linguagem autêntica, conversacional, e a ênfase dada às oportunidades de expressão pessoal do aprendiz, através de atividades que estimulam a criatividade.

Chama-nos atenção a ausência de uma referência específica ao ensino do léxico. Essa impressão se confirma na introdução assinada pelos autores, onde reafirmam a importância dada à personalização e à interação entre os alunos. Referem-se ao vocabulário apenas quando explicitam os segmentos de cada unidade. Nos chamados snap-shots e word power o vocabulário é apresentado através de diferentes tarefas, tais como mapas de palavras (word map).

Já no volume da série Hotline, a contracapa faz menção a uma abordagem analítica baseada na gramática. Deixa claro que esta é tratada em atividades que visem à solução de problemas, através das quais o aluno desenvolverá conclusões próprias a respeito de regras gramaticais. Faz menção, ainda, à interdisciplinaridade e ao estímulo ao desenvolvimento da responsabilidade do aprendiz no processo de aprendizagem. Entretanto, com relação ao ensino do léxico, assim como observado no volume da série Interchange, não há nenhuma referência direta ao mesmo.

Passando à análise do índice de conteúdo (table of contents) no livro Interchange, constatamos que o mesmo foi organizado em quinze unidades, a partir de tópicos e funções que direcionam as práticas das quatro habilidades. Cada unidade encontra-se dividida em segmentos sob o título de "gramática/pronúncia", "compreensão auditiva", "leitura/escrita" e, ainda, uma atividade suplementar que visa ao aprofundamento da prática oral. Contudo, os autores não fazem menção ao ensino do vocabulário de modo específico.

O volume da série Hotline que aqui abordamos volta-se para alunos de nível pré-intermediário. O índice de conteúdo divide-se em doze unidades, estas subdivididas em seis segmentos, a saber: trabalho de linguagem (language work), que aborda a gramática, leitura, compreensão auditiva, interação, projeto e pronúncia. Porém, mais uma vez, não é feita qualquer referência explícita a vocabulário.

Na contracapa do New English File os autores destacam o tratamento equilibrado dado às diferentes áreas de aquisição: gramática, vocabulário, pronúncia e fala. O livro menciona a inclusão de textos autênticos (real world texts) e de um banco de vocabulário ilustrado (illustrated vocabulary bank). Faz referência ao uso da linguagem informal do dia-a-dia e menciona um Cd-rom com atividades interativas que incluem o léxico.

No caso do American Inside Out, os autores mencionam a apresentação de vocabulário contextualizado e a inclusão de exercícios específicos.

No que concerne ao "índice do conteúdo", parece-nos que a área lexical abordada em cada lição encontra-se mais detalhada no New

English File. Neste, o vocabulário está especificado numa coluna própria. Já o American Inside Out opta por distribuir o conteúdo segundo as diferentes habilidades e inclui o vocabulário junto com a gramática e a pronúncia, dando-lhe menos destaque.

Na apresentação encontrada no livro do professor, os autores do New English File esclarecem sobre os parâmetros que serviram de base à série. Referem-se à necessidade de capacitar o aluno iniciante a falar a língua-alvo, como expressão daquilo que seja aprender a falar uma língua. O léxico é visto como um dos componentes do tripé gramática-vocabulário-pronúncia, que levaria o aprendiz a usar a nova língua com confiança. Por isso, alegam dar a mesma ênfase ao tratamento dos três componentes citados. No caso específico do vocabulário, ressaltam a importância da aquisição e expansão de palavras de alta freqüência e do uso desse vocabulário em contextos personalizados.

Os autores do American Inside Out referem-se à necessidade de que haja atividades personalizadas para um aprendizado eficaz. Para a abordagem do léxico, afirmam haver optado, basicamente, por palavras de alta freqüência. Apresentam esse vocabulário de modo contextualizado em relação aos temas e tópicos de cada unidade. Alegam, também, o cuidado de incluir exercícios para a reciclagem constante desse léxico, tanto no livro do aluno como no livro de exercícios. Além dessas atividades específicas, acreditam na aquisição indireta do léxico. Para tanto, encorajam o professor a expor o aluno à maior quantidade possível de input através de leitura extensiva.

5.1.2 Avaliação Interna

Na avaliação interna do volume da série Interchange, observamos que cada uma das quinze unidades está dividida em cerca de onze a treze segmentos e, como já mencionado, no word power, presente em todas as unidades, os autores apresentam palavras-chave ao tópico abordado. Entretanto, este encontra-se em momentos diferentes em cada unidade: às vezes é o primeiro, outras está mais adiante. Tomando-se como exemplo a Unidade 1, o tópico faz menção a "cumprimentos; nomes; ocupações; países; nacionalidades". O word power é o terceiro segmento em onze e apresenta uma lista de doze nomes de profissões que devem ser distribuídas em três categorias, a saber: trabalho de escritório, gerenciamento e negócios e profissões liberais. Uma lista de países e nacionalidades encontra-se em outro segmento denominado "países e nacionalidades". Também os dias da semana são listados no segmento onze, denominado "conversação", que traz pequenos diálogos de despedida. Percebe-se, portanto, que o

vocabulário essencial à prática das atividades propostas encontra-se diluído em diferentes segmentos, e apenas alguns itens lexicais são reunidos no word power.

Avançando-se para a Unidade 8, constatamos que o tópico abordado, "cidades e lugares, vizinhança, casas e apartamentos", traz o word power como primeiro segmento, onde encontra-se uma lista de lugares, tais como farmácia, lavanderia e supermercado, que o aluno deve ligar à sua definição. Entretanto, várias outras palavras são apresentadas nos segmentos seguintes, através de diálogos e trabalhos de grupo, visando à prática oral ou à leitura e à escrita. Essa constatação pode ser feita ao longo de todo o livro: verificamos que o word power apresenta palavras isoladas, mas vários itens lexicais igualmente importantes surgem em outros segmentos.

O autor claramente favorece uma abordagem que se baseia nas funções da linguagem e não dá ênfase ao tratamento do léxico, que se dilui pelas diferentes atividades. Não há enfoque em colocações e as palavras são, em geral, apresentadas de modo isolado. Entretanto, há no final do livro um sumário de cada unidade, que apresenta um resumo da gramática, e uma listagem das palavras e expressões consideradas essenciais.

Ao procedermos à avaliação interna do Hotline, notamos que cada unidade gira em torno de diálogos e situações com personagens adolescentes, protagonistas de histórias que evoluem ao longo de todos os volumes da série. O léxico nos diálogos é bastante rico e variado, mas este é abordado apenas em um segmento denominado "expressões úteis" (useful expressions). Ao longo do livro há também textos bastante longos e densos, que não recebem por parte do autor nenhum trabalho especial ou mais minucioso na abordagem do vocabulário. Pode-se encontrar apenas, em poucas unidades, um segmento denominado "trabalho com palavras" (word work), que agrupa alguns itens lexicais ligados ao texto. Este procedimento ocorre, por exemplo, na Unidade 5, onde um longo texto discorre sobre o desaparecimento das florestas tropicais. No word work o aluno deve encontrar os nomes de diversos animais mencionados no texto e classificá-los em seis listas de acordo com o grupo a que pertencem.

Praticamente não se encontram ilustrações destinadas a esclarecer o vocabulário. As fotos ao longo do livro referem-se, majoritariamente, aos personagens já mencionados e suas experiências.

Passando à análise das publicações recentes, constatamos no New English File a presença de listas de palavras e sintagmas (phrases) em quase todas as lições, geralmente acompanhadas de ilustrações.

Na seção do Banco de Vocabulário (Vocabulary Bank) do livro, listas mais longas e completas, referentes a cada lição, trazem ilustrações claras e atraentes. Chamou-nos a atenção o tratamento dado a itens considerados gramaticais, como preposição, advérbios e verbos irregulares, incluídos nas listas de vocabulário. Os autores conjugam a idéia de aquisição de vocabulário com o aprendizado das estruturas gramaticais. Percebe-se, igualmente, uma ligação entre as atividades propostas para a prática das várias habilidades. No caso da lição 6D, por exemplo, o texto (que fala da cidade de Londres) traz atividades de compreensão de leitura e apresenta o contraste de dois tempos verbais. O Banco de Vocabulário traz uma lista de lugares numa cidade (Places in the City), e a atividade oral proposta pede que o aluno fale sobre sua própria cidade. Na área de pronúncia, o aluno vai praticar nomes de cidades difíceis de se pronunciar.

Observamos, ainda, que o livro preocupa-se em expor o aluno a um expressivo volume de palavras novas, o que está de acordo com o que foi dito na apresentação do manual do professor, sem, contudo, fazer disso o seu tema central. A exposição ao léxico acontece diluída e de forma harmoniosa na prática das outras habilidades. Além disso, há uma reciclagem contínua do vocabulário, apresentado em unidades anteriores, evidência de uma combinação das abordagens implícita e explícita.

Quanto à análise feita com o American Inside Out, percebemos que o vocabulário é apresentado no contexto dos temas e tópicos de cada unidade. Em um primeiro momento, as palavras novas são trazidas à atenção do aluno de maneira explícita, através de exercícios de correspondência de palavras com figuras e de preenchimento de lacunas. Posteriormente, esse léxico é retomado por meio de atividades que permitem uma abordagem indireta. Na unidade 9, por exemplo, são apresentadas dez palavras referentes a "emoções", que devem ser ligadas a figuras ilustrativas. Em seguida, em outra atividade, os alunos devem comunicar suas emoções através de expressões faciais. Outra atividade traz diferentes situações, e o aluno deve dizer como se sente em cada uma. Nas atividades de leitura e compreensão auditiva, o mesmo vocabulário é necessário à realização das tarefas.

Observamos que as atividades procuram encorajar o aluno a lidar com o vocabulário como parte de um sistema, e não como uma mera lista de itens autônomos. Essa proposta fica evidenciada no seguimento chamado anedocte, em que o aluno deve usar trechos mais longos de discurso para atividades personalizadas de fala. O livro também oferece um grande número de combinações de palavras e expressões do dia-a-dia.

Após as análises apresentadas, concluímos que o modelo sugerido por McDonough & Shaw, de uma combinação de avaliação externa e interna, funciona a contento, na medida em que permite uma visão ao mesmo tempo abrangente e minuciosa. No caso dos livros aqui abordados, percebemos uma coerência entre as propostas explicitadas pelos autores e o posterior tratamento do léxico ao longo de suas obras.

6. Conclusão

Uma visão contemporânea sobre aquisição de língua estrangeira destaca as limitações decorrentes de processos internos não passíveis de controle. O aprendiz não adquire a língua-alvo de modo simples e direto, numa conversão automática, apesar de todos os esforços para se administrar e controlar esse processo. Na verdade, o aluno faz uso de sua interlíngua para inferir e generalizar sobre o sistema como um todo, e a aprendizagem se dá através de mecanismos individuais não perceptíveis (Skehan, apud Willis & Willis, 1996). Em conseqüência, o ambiente instrucional não necessariamente determina como o processamento, o desenvolvimento e a assimilação irão ocorrer (Ellis, 1994). Contudo, tem-se demonstrado que a instrução afeta o processo de aquisição e aprendizes expostos à instrução progridem mais rapidamente do que aqueles sujeitos unicamente a processos naturais (Long & Porter, 1985).

O reconhecimento das limitações impostas por aspectos individuais não controláveis levanta questões práticas quanto a planejamento e procedimentos metodológicos. Mas, se não é razoável esperar-se que a aquisição ocorra como produto direto da língua e processos a que se expõe o aprendiz, ainda assim, é possível que se estabeleçam condições favoráveis de contato com o novo idioma, saliência e produção do mesmo para que o aprendizado ocorra segundo as possibilidades de cada um. Com esse objetivo, cabe ao professor direcionar a atenção de seus educandos para que determinadas formas se tornem visíveis e, ao serem notadas, sejam mais facilmente internalizadas. Se esse cuidado não garante que a língua-alvo seja incorporada à interlíngua, torna-se mais provável que isso ocorra (Skehan, apud Willis & Willis, 1996).

Colocada a importância do papel do léxico na aquisição, cabe ao professor tornar seus alunos cientes da necessidade de um vocabulário rico e variado para que alcancem a tão desejada proficiência na língua alvo. A utilização de materiais autênticos e o estudo voltado para a aquisição de palavras novas são procedimentos que devem ser estimulados de maneira intencional, na busca de uma participação ativa e responsável por parte do aprendiz.

Ao compararmos o tratamento do léxico em materiais recentes e outros do início da última década, observamos uma evolução que pode estar ligada à cronologia mencionada no segmento ii deste trabalho. Os autores dos livros publicados no início dos anos 90 estavam, certamente, ainda sob a influência do credo da Abordagem Comunicativa: o princípio essencial era que nossos alunos fossem estimulados a falar, mas o que se encontra na base da fala – o léxico – não era mencionado diretamente. O vocabulário deveria ser adquirido, inicialmente, de modo indireto. As palavras quando enfocadas de maneira explícita surgiam isoladas, como a serem memorizadas, e esperava-se que posteriormente o aluno fosse capaz de utilizá-las num contexto significativo.

Já nos materiais criados a partir da influência da Abordagem Lexical, proposta por Lewis, nota-se um olhar mais cuidadoso no tratamento do vocabulário, que é ensinado de modo explícito. Essa observação se confirma ao olharmos o índice das obras recentes, em que "Vocabulário" é sempre um item presente na divisão de conteúdos. Parece-nos que as práticas orais, assim como leitura e escrita, acontecem a partir e na medida em que se verifica a aquisição lexical. Nesse cenário, o uso de gravuras é constante, as colocações são privilegiadas, e tem-se a impressão de que os autores de materiais objetivam fazer o aprendiz se dar conta de que seu desenvolvimento lexical funciona como base para uma maior proficiência lingüística oral ou escrita.

Uma visão mais realista sobre aquisição de língua estrangeira pode, a princípio, parecer desencorajadora por reconhecer profundas limitações no que se encontra ao alcance de professores e criadores de materiais. Nos livros recentes por nós analisados, e em outros de nosso conhecimento, observamos uma preocupação renovada com o ensino do léxico, conciliada às mudanças ocasionadas pelos avanços tecnológicos. Nesse novo cenário, a imagem, por exemplo, desempenha um papel relevante que pode ser percebido no uso recorrente de gravuras, filmes e video-clips. A preocupação com o visual e temas atuais é uma constante, na tentativa de despertar o interesse desse novo aluno que, inserido numa sociedade onde a informação se processa cada vez mais rápido, precisa freqüentemente de novos estímulos e desafios. Acreditamos que essas transformações não devam ser ignoradas pelos criadores de material didático e se farão cada vez mais presentes num futuro próximo. Prevemos que estes procurarão de modo crescente trazer novas tecnologias para as suas criações, buscando conciliar modernidade e recursos pedagógicos.

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Notas

1. (Tradução nossa). There is also the problem of a potential trade-off between attention to individual words and comprehension of text. Stallman (1991) found that none of several methods of drawing students' attention to words had any impact on word learning, but that such attempts to focus students' attention on words had a significant negative impact on comprehension.

CHALLENGING ORTHODOXIES: PERFORMATIVE SUBVERSION OF IDENTITY IN SHAKESPEARE'S THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

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ABSTRACT: In her groundbreaking study Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1999), Judith Butler reflects on power relations in everyday life, departing from the intersections of feminism, sociology and speech act theory. This paper focuses on critical revisiting of Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice in the light of Butler's theoretical premises. To expose the contradictions in the fabric of patriarchal discourse, Shakespeare ingenuously turns the dramatic convention of crossdressing into a subversive weapon to question gender issues. Through his creative use of double disguise he succeeds in breaking widely accepted frames.

KEYWORDS: Shakespeare; Interdisciplinarity; Feminist Criticism; Gender; Crossdressing

RESUMO: Em seu influente estudo Problemas de gênero: feminismo e subversão da identidade (1999), Judith Butler reflete sobre as relações de poder na vida cotidiana, explorando as interseções entre o feminismo, a sociologia e a teoria dos atos da fala. O enfoque principal deste ensaio contempla a releitura da peça O Mercador de Veneza, de Shakespeare, à luz das considerações críticas de Butler. Para mostrar as contradições do discurso patriarcal, Shakespeare astuciosamente transforma a convenção dramática do travestimento em uma arma subversiva para problematizar a noção de gênero. Por meio do uso criativo do duplo disfarce ele consegue romper com idéias convencionais aceitas como verdades universais.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Shakespeare; Interdisciplinaridade; Crítica Feminista; Identidade de gênero; Travestimento

In Shakespeare's time the theatre was not only a place for social gatherings but also a political institution, an arena where established values were questioned and challenged. Although playhouses were closely monitored by the State and both companies and plays had to be licensed, the institutional position of the theatre was extremely complex:

> On the one hand, it [the theatre] was sometimes summoned to perform at Court and as such may be seen as an extension of royal power; on the other hand, it was the mode of cultural production in which market forces were strongest, and as such it was especially exposed to the influence of subordinate and emergent classes. We should not, therefore, expect any straightforward relationship between plays and ideology: on the contrary, it is even likely that the topics which engaged writers and audiences alike were those where ideology was under strain. (Dollimore; Sinfield, 1985, p. 211)

In his plays, Shakespeare used to reflect on power relations in everyday life, exposing the contradictions in the fabric of the patriarchal discourse. However, he was perfectly aware of what could be said overtly and what should better be only suggested: he knew that the ideological content of a text can be much better apprehended by implicit discourse rather than explicit.

Long before Freud, Shakespeare revealed himself a keen observer of life's subtext, since he detected the covert springs of human behavior, illuminating the distance between overt behavior and masked motivations. In his play Twelfth Night (I, 5.191-201), he plays with the concepts of "text" and "subtext", by including a great deal of double-talk in the scene where we see Viola, acting as Orsino's go-between, to win the heart of Olivia. When Olivia asks the page "Now, sir; what is your text?" and, some minutes later "Where lies[1] your text?" – she is alluding to something beyond the words uttered, namely to the fact that she is able to read the message of the go-between before he opens his mouth, since she knows it is something déjà vu, a formulaic text composed by another, the usual pastiche of Petrarchan verse appropriated by Orsino to court her. When Viola asks her to uncover her face, she replies "You are now out of your text" – not realizing that it is she that is out of her text, since she misreads Viola for Cesario, and falls in love with him/her. Olivia ends up denouncing her dotage for Viola/Cesario by means of her decorous text being betrayed by her subtext (Elam, 1996, p. 148-49).

Shakespeare employs a great variety of subtextual strategies in his work. In those comedies where mistaken identities dominate, subtext can be detected not only in both discourse and action, but also in his artistic refashioning of dramatic conventions to suit his own purposes. Consequently, a great number of possibilities emerge from the implied dimensions of his texts, which permit us to

problematize the issues and contest traditional readings.

Most scholars agree that because of Shakespeare's extraordinary insight into human nature, he succeeded in portraying men and women with equal artistry and cunning, making evident women's capacity to transcend the limits of their condition within the patriarchal system. In his comedies, he ingenuously turns the dramatic convention of crossdressing into a subversive weapon to question gender issues. Through his creative use of double disguise (the boy actor impersonating a woman who puts on men's clothes), he succeeds in subverting stereotypes and questioning conventional beliefs accepted as universal truths. His strategy of blurring and confusing identities shows that rather than being a fixed attribute in a person, gender must be seen as a fluid variable which shifts and changes according to circumstance in different times and contexts.

Shakespeare's attitudes towards women are complex and demand critical attention. Through crossdressing, the bard succeeds in establishing a confusion of identities within the universe of his comedies, which contradict and subvert the traditional view of what is a woman, suggesting that the concepts of "masculinity" and "femininity" are cultural constructs and, as such, stereotyped behaviors learned along the process of socialization, which conditions the sexes differently to assume specific roles and functions as if they were part of their own nature. This naturalizing process, which sees woman as the inferior sex, is problematized, undermined, ridiculed and occasionally even subverted in Shakespeare's comedies.

Played by male impersonators travestied as female, Shakespeare's women become free from sexist prescriptive behavioral norms when disguised as men. When crossdressed, they can do things forbidden for their sex: they can move in and out of places reserved for men's affairs and assume roles supposed to be suited only for men. The disguise helps them to get liberated from the restrictions of their feminine condition, illuminating the issue of the artificial nature of all mechanisms of construction of social behavior. Shakespeare uses the convention of crossdressing as frame-break, as artistic strategy to make the audience reflect on the artifice of construction of a creature named woman: the double crossdressing of the actor can be seen as an emblem of the equality if the sexes, independently of the clothes they wear, disrupting sexual difference and calling into question the theory of binary oppositions that asserts the superiority of men.

After the 1980s and 90s, feminist criticism provided visibility to Shakespeare's women characters undervalued by traditional Shakespearean criticism. Elaine Showalter, Catherine Belsey, Carol

Thomas Neely, Juliet Dusinberry, Linda Bamber, Lisa Jardine, Jean E. Howard, among others, departing from the critical concepts of Simone de Beauvoir, have demonstrated in their critical reflections that a great number of Shakespeare's heroines are strong, intelligent and witty, showing courage, independence of spirit, versatility and verbal fluency. Most of them are determined – they know what they want and fight to achieve their goals – and some are unruly, indomitable and uncontrollable.

Rejecting all answers based on metaphysical, essentialist or deterministic concepts, the materialist-feminist critics have investigated female subjectivity in Shakespeare's plays in specific historical and theoretical contexts. Their findings show that the bard's texts allow contradictory readings: they can be interpreted as affirmations or negations of sexist ideologies. We can see them as both, reinforcements of the bases of the patriarchal system and/or mechanisms to challenge orthodoxies.

Through the activation of the subtext, word-play, rhetorical emphases, and the clever articulation of certain conventions, such as crossdressing, Shakespeare problematizes gender issues. The discourse which he inaugurates through this strategy becomes a kind of subversive language which confirms the theoretical premises of recent feminists, who have argued that the body is a "situation" (Moi, 1999, p.117) – concretely experienced while signified and socially/historically situated – i. e., a woman is not a fixed entity, but a living being in constant process of change, making and remaking herself through successive lived experiences in time while interacting with the world.

Shakespeare's discourse of crossdressing can also be related to the theory of the social psychologist Erving Goffman (1959, p. 25-76), who in The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, sees individual behavior in daily social life as a performance of the subject. His main premise is that everybody is constantly, consciously or not, representing a role and that the individual subject is a product of the social interaction rather than the author of his own performance.

In Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1999), departing from the intersections of feminism, sociology, speech act theory, among others, Judith Butler makes a reassessment of Goffman's theory of the individual's performing self and goes a step further. She is interested in how gender is constructed and attributed to individuals, trying to identify the processes through which ideology constitutes subjects. Butler also borrows from Foucault, who in his critical essays postulates the existence of the body prior to

cultural inscription; his insight that subjects are produced and controlled by regulating powers constitutes a fundamental premise of performative gender theory.

In the last section of her groundbreaking study mentioned above, entitled "Bodily inscriptions, performative subversions", Butler discusses some issues related to the performance of gender subversion:

> If the inner truth of gender is a fabrication and if a true gender is a fantasy instituted and inscribed on the surface of the bodies, then it seems that genders can be neither true of false, but are only produced as the truth effects of a discourse of primary and stable identity. In Mother Camp: Female Impersonation in America, anthropologist Esther Newton suggests that the structure of impersonation reveals one of the key fabricated mechanisms through which the social construction of gender takes place. I would suggest as well that drag fully subverts the distinction between inner and outer psychic space and effectively mocks both the expressive model of gender and the notion of true gender identity. (Butler, 1999, p. 174)

According to Butler, drag is a double inversion, since drag's outside (appearance) is feminine, while the inside (body) is masculine. Furthermore, an opposite inversion takes place, namely drag's feminine essence (inside) in a male body (outside). Butler asseverates that those behavioral traits attributed to gender create the concept of gender, and if these specific characteristics are lacking, gender does not materialize, since there is no essence that gender is prone to express or exteriorize.

This paper focuses on critical revisiting of Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice, in the light of Butler's theoretical premises. I shall concentrate my analysis on Portia, one of the androgynous heroines of the play, to investigate Shakespeare's appropriation and reconceptualization of the dramatic convention of crossdressing, which he transformed into an artistic strategy to voice his concerns about gender issues.

Through the three transvestite female roles, namely those of Portia, Jessica and Nerissa, Shakespeare both dramatizes and problematizes contemporary anxieties about women, power and money in The Merchant of Venice. His three androgynous heroines in male disguise enable him to frame the issues according to several perspectives. According to Carol Leventen,

> It is not difficult to understand the destabilizing effects of developments that implicitly challenged English women's status – as object, gift, commodity, property – in a social system that had vested interest in preserving the status-quo and defending itself against disruptive change. Nor is it difficult to imagine why Shakespeare might well have been interested in dramatizing divergent responses to these pressures and possibilities in such a way as to accommodate, and possibly provoke, similarly divergent audience responses. (Leventen, 1991, p. 65)

Portia is a rich heiress from Belmont, whose dead father still wants to exert control over her after his death, according to the prerogatives of the father in the patriarchal system: the young woman complains that she cannot choose nor refuse anyone of her suitors (I.1.1-34)[2]. However, since the very beginning, it becomes evident that everything she says is contradicted by her actions, since she is very clever in manipulating persons and situations to suit he own purposes. Bassanio's choice of the right casket, for example, is a show directed by the heroine: she literally conducts the action of her suitor by providing him with clues to choose the leaden ark. To achieve her goal, Portia hired a group of musicians who use an artifice, the rhyme-scheme of a song, to put an end to Bassanio's doubts: most of the line-endings of the lyrics rhyme with "lead". This makes us realize that Bassanio did not choose, but was chosen by her.

Immediately after this initial victory, Portia's discourse of submission and dependence, which on the surface seems to reaffirm the codes of patriarchy, because she speaks of her fragile nature, her insecurity and lack of experience, and her condition of being not very bright girl, who will be glad to submit her body and spirit to Bassanio, so that he can guide her as "her lord, her governor, her king" (III.2.149-74), is contradicted by her own counter-arguments and subsequent daring attitudes. She argues that she was "the lord/ Of this fair mansion", not the lady, and then offers him a ring, which once lost shall give her the "right" of protesting (III.2.167-68).

We can see, from the very first moment, that it is she who imposes conditions. Her subsequent initiatives, when she decides to substitute Bellario, travestied as Balthazar, determined to assume the role of the lawyer, not only to defend Antonio, but mainly to save her own marriage, show that she is neither fragile nor dependent, but, on the contrary strong-willed, intelligent, sly and even authoritative.

Leventen (1991, p.72), claims that through Portia's discourse of submission, Shakespeare dramatizes the power of patriarchal ideology, making some segments of the audience believe that the heroine has internalized the discourse of cultural imperatives, embodying the "patriarchal fantasy of an ideally compliant daughter to which Jessica is contrasted", as the disobedient, rebellious heroine. I agree with the feminist critic's arguments that although Portia manipulates a great deal, she does not challenge the system openly like Jessica. However, I disagree when Leventen (1991, p. 67) states that Portia subjects herself entirely to the game of chance in the casket plot, because "she has thoroughly internalized her father's values; the way she perceives herself is determined by her father's will, and she cannot think well of herself if she considers acting in opposition to him". I think it becomes very clear that Portia is the playwright and director of the third act of the casket plot, a play within the play, and that her submission discourse, is one more evidence of her power of dissimulation and creation: she pronounces words she is quite sure Bassanio would like to hear, and she does so to become desirable in his eyes.

Portia is constantly reinventing herself to exert power upon her future husband, always imposing conditions. This process of identity construction culminates with her entrance into the male world, disguised as a man, in this case a lawyer, where she triumphs over her adversaries. In her gender and professional performance, she proves to be equal to any man and/or lawyer. She writes down her own credentials in a letter to assume the lawyer's role, and then succeeds in twisting the law with her intelligence and language proficiency, which were considered male attributes.

Portia assumes the role of the lawyer for her own sake and not for Antonio's. She knows she must break the stranglehold of the male bond in order to solidify her power base in her own marriage. Throughout the play we gather evidence that there is a rivalry between Portia and Antonio for Bassanio's affection[3], an argument which can be legitimated by Bassanio's speech during the trial scene, when he declares that he is ready to sacrifice everything, including the love of his wife, to save his friend (IV.1.278-83).

Portia reveals great insight into stereotyped pre-established social and sexual roles, when she appropriates male prerogatives in order to legitimate her thesis that a change of clothes, discourse, behavior and attitude will be sufficient to make the all male cast of the courtroom incur in an error of judgment, which brings us to the crux of Shakespeare's problematization of gender troubles. She tells

her waiting woman, Nerissa, whom she makes assume the role of the lawyer's attendant, that they will gain visibility and respect in the courtroom:

> [...] in such a habit ,
> That they shall think we are accomplished
> With what we lack; I'll hold thee any wager
> When we are both accoutered like young men,
> I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
> And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
> And speak between the change of man and boy,
> With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
> Into a manly stride; and speak of frays
> Like a fine bragging youth: and tell quaint lies
> How honorable ladies sought my love,
> Which I denying, they fell sick and died:
> I could not do withal: – then I repent,
> And wish for all that, that I had not kill'd them;
> And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
> That men shall swear I have discontinued school
> Above a twelvemonth: I have within my mind
> A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
> Which I will practice. (III.IV. 60-78)

In her satiric discourse about the male organ, she discusses the power which masculinity represents. In fact, when travestied as a man, it is not important that she is not accomplished with what women lack; what matters is that people believe she possesses this trump, as in a poker game. Later, in the trial-scene, she shows her determination and ability to twist the law by mastering language. What she achieves when usurping the male prerogatives is a travesty of the law, since according to studies published by contemporary lawyers, Shylock's lawsuit was entirely legitimate and in accordance with the laws of Venice at that time. Shylock's defeat is cunningly realized by the heroine, whose female identity is hidden through her disguise.

In The Merchant of Venice we have a radical inversion of social and sexual roles. After her success in the courtroom, Shakespeare's heroine continues to reinvent herself with the trick of the ring, a token she had given to Bassanio on the very day she played the casket game. After her triumph at the tribunal, still in disguise, she demands the ring from him, as payment for the successful outcome of the trial, the selfsame ring which Bassanio had sworn never to

part with. Not knowing that the lawyer is Portia, he does give him/her the ring to express his gratitude and joy. When she meets Bassanio at home, she accuses him for not having valued her love-token. Completely ignoring the facts, Bassanio asks for pardon and swears eternal devotion: "Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear/ I never more will break an oath with thee" (V.1.248-49). Antonio, who was saved by Portia, feels it is his moral obligation to justify his friend Bassanio and ratify his oath.

With this victory over her rival in her husband's affection, Portia shows that she is in possession of the ring, which he recognizes to be the same he had given to the lawyer. Portia engages in a provocation, saying "I had it of him: pardon me Bassanio,/ For by this ring the doctor lay with me" (V.1.258-59). This speech contains an implicit threat of treason in case of another break of promise. Although in the end all misunderstandings are clarified as in a comedy of errors, the performance of this episode, in which again Portia assumes the role of scriptwriter and director, establishes the priority of her position as wife, and her power is reassured with Bassanio's fear of cuckoldry, a cultural anxiety of all times.

Shakespeare shows great awareness of the problematic relations between men and women. He had great insight into the anxieties of his time and he voiced them either overtly or covertly, according to his better judgment to avoid problems with censorship. Through the figure of the boy-actor and his transvestite roles, he questions the notion of an original or primary generic identity, indirectly discrediting stereotyped pre-established social and sexual roles. The principle of double inversion which is foregrounded in the creation of Shakespeare's androgynous heroines erases the distinction between the anatomy of the performer and the gender that is being performed. As Butler has aptly put it:

> [...] we are actually in the presence of three contingent dimensions of significant corporeality: anatomical sex, gender identity, and gender performance. If the anatomy of the performer is already distinct from the gender of the performer, and both of those are distinct from the gender of the performance, then the performance suggests a dissonance not only between sex and performance, but sex and gender, and gender and performance [...] In the place of the law of heterosexual coherence, we see sex and gender denaturalized by means of a performance which avows their distinctness and dramatizes the cultural mecha-

nism of their fabricated unity. (Butler, 1999, p. 175)

The vocalization of gender troubles through the creative appropriation and transformation of the convention of crossdressing dramatizes, in a highly sophisticated way, the ideas Shakespeare intended to project. He constructs a kind of performative text in which the constitutive elements, such as conventions, formal devices and words themselves become voices in a complex argument which allow him to interrogate the orthodoxies of his culture and discredit the misogynistic attitudes of his time.

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Notes

1. Shakespeare plays with the pun implicit in the verb "to lie" which includes several meanings, such as not to tell the truth and to copulate.
2. All references and quotations from Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice are taken from the Arden Shakespeare edition of the play, listed in the bibliography, hereafter indicated, in parentheses (act, scene and lines) in the text.
3. In an essay entitled "The cuckoo's note: male friendship and cuckoldry in The Merchant of Venice", Coppélia Kahn argues that Shakespeare "structures the ring plot so as to parallel and contrast Antonio and Portia as rivals for Bassanio's affection, bringing out a conflict between male friendship and marriage which runs throughout his works" (Waller, 1991, p.129).

"CRUEL ARE THE TIMES": AN ANALYSIS OF SCENE II, ACT IV IN THREE PRODUCTIONS OF MACBETH

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Macbeth, Shakespeare's bloodiest tragedy, has a plot of murder after murder. The most shocking one is that of Macduff's whole family. This is the moment in which Macbeth definitely becomes a serial killer, ordering the murder of innocent women and children. Before, when he hires men to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance, also a child, it could be argued that he is trying to defend his permanence on the throne. But Macduff's family poses no threat to him. Worse still, he knows that Macduff has fled to England and that his wife and children are alone and helpless. In the playtext, this terrible massacre occupies all of scene ii in Act IV and basically happens onstage: Lady Macduff discusses with Rosse why her husband abandoned her; Rosse leaves; the Lady exchanges some bitter banter with her son about his father; a messenger comes to warn her and flees; murderers appear at her castle and stab Macduff's son; and the last stage direction in the scene reads "Exit Lady Macduff crying 'Murder!' and pursued by the Murderers."

I would like to analyze how this barbarous scene is acted out in three productions. First, the made-for-TV film of 1979, which closely follows Trevor Nunn's acclaimed stage production of 1976, with Ian McKellen and Judi Dench in the main roles. Second, Roman Polanski's 1971 film, Macbeth, certainly one of the most graphically gory adaptations of a Shakespearean play ever brought to the screen. Finally, William Reilly's Men of Respect, which updates the story to the U.S. in 1991, trades kings and thanes for mobsters and thugs, and uses the kind of English these though people would use today.

I feel I must justify my choice, for Men of Respect is not considered "real" Shakespeare, since it does not use his language. Akira Kurosawa's Throne of Blood, loosely based on Macbeth, faced the same predicament when it was released in 1957. Peter Brook, for one, though praising the film, did not consider it a Shakespearean production because it did not adopt the text. Some decades later, however, it has become "a part of our thinking about Shakespeare's Macbeth" (Davies 154). Few scholars would deny to see it (and Ran as well) as filmed Shakespeare. Men of Respect does not share this privilege. The message seems to be: it is acceptable to update Shakespeare's English—as long as this is done in another language, like Japanese, and pref-

erably by a canonic director, like Kurosawa. To cite an example of this prejudice, Stephen M. Buhler dedicates a whole book to the subject of screen adaptations, Shakespeare in the Cinema: Ocular Proof, but not a single word to Men of Respect. It is not even in the index. I want to analyze this film because, if, ultimately, the aim in performance analysis is to liberate the performance from the text, little could be as liberating as this 1991 production.

Having said that, I want to stress that in this paper I am dealing with a TV film and two movies for the screen, not with any stage production. Not even Nunn's made-for-TV movie can be regarded as a faithful embodiment of his successful 1976 production for the Royal Shakespeare Company, since the movie uses a different language, adequate for its medium, although for Bernice Kliman "television, that hybrid medium, can leap more towards its stage side, less towards its film side" (101). In any case, we must be careful not so see films as the definitive performance text (which means a text that includes not only verbal language, but also music, light, costumes etc). James C. Bulman cites Larnier to warn us of the tendency of replacing "the old textuality with a new form of performance textuality" (2-3). This is an essentialistic and totalitarian streak that must be overcome. A theater performance, after all, is ephemeral, but a movie stays fixed, "frozen in time," and can be viewed over and over again (Halio 19). But just because we appreciate, say, what Polanski does with the scene of the massacre of Macduff's family, does not mean we should expect every invasion of the castle to be treated the same way.

In Trevor Nunn's TV movie, both Lady Macduff and her son wear white. She wears a crucifix around her neck, and we hear bells on the background, so the impression is that she might be in a convent, not in her castle. Rosse is dressed in black to serve as a contrast to her purity. Since this production, like its stage predecessor, only cut ten percent of the lines in the playtext, the scene remains quite wordy. The dialogue between Rosse and the Lady in the beginning of the scene, for one, is intact. While the boy cleans a sword, perhaps unknowingly getting ready to fight, the two adults talk about Macduff's leaving Scotland. Rosse seems concerned, whereas the Lady looks conformed, albeit sad. He starts the speech "But cruel are the times when we are traitors / And do not know ourselves" (lines 18-21) almost as an aside, with great feeling, and the Lady touches his arm in a sympathetic move as he finishes.

When Rosse says that, if he stays, "It would be my disgrace and your discomfort," (line 28), the Riverside edition of the playtext explains that it means "I should weep." This is not the way I read it, and it is not how it is played in Nunn's production. I understand Rosse's line as an indication that Lady Macduff may say more awful things about her husband, and later on she might regret having said them. Ian McDiarmid's acting favors this interpretation, for he looks ashamed, rather than about to weep, after the Lady tells him her boy is fatherless. McDiarmid opens his arms when he says "I am so much a fool, should I stay longer," and then leaves abruptly. John Barton observes that a short line like "I take my leave at once" (line 29) usually represents a pause, and the actor needs to choose between pausing before or after delivering it (31). McDiarmid chooses to break it in the middle, after "I take my leave," giving it a larger sense of urgency (see Appendix).

Rosse, as interpreted by Ian McDiarmid (the villain in the most recent Star War movie), indeed does not know himself. We could see him less as a traitor than as a typical politician, who changes sides according to the tide. Ian McKellen comments in an interview present in the DVD of Macbeth that when the prime minister of Britain, Ryan Wilson, saw a performance in 1976, he said that the most familiar character in it was Rosse, who takes advantages of political situations. Rosse is a character that, even more than others, will have to be shaped by the actor. A. C. Bradley points out that all the characters in the play except Macbeth and his Lady are sketches, not individualized, and interchangeable (326). For Harold Bloom "[t]he drunken porter, Macduff's little son, and Lady Macduff are more vivid in their brief appearances than are all the secondary males in the play, who are wrapped in a common grayness" (517). Harry Berger Jr. admits that Rosse, "in spite of his predominance, remains essentially a choric figure, the voice of the thanes" (87). It is important to note that the thanes in this production do not look fit to fight. They are politicians rather than warriors, polite rather than practical men of action, as emphasized by Kliman (106). Thus, in Nunn's production both Rosse and later in the scene another thane, Angus, are decorous enough to be worried about Lady Macduff's fate, but, of course, not brave enough to hang around to defend her as danger approaches (McDiarmid even grimaces when he pronounces the word fear on line 5).

In Polanski's film, on the other hand, Scotland is such a corrupt society that the thanes seem more than physically strong and warlike—they are murderers themselves. Rosse is the best example. In this movie in which forty percent of Shakespeare's lines are cut (Rothwell 50), after all the alterations Rosse becomes the most abominable of characters, even more abominable, perhaps, than Macbeth

himself. Here Rosse helps to defeat Cawdor, supports Macbeth, not only supervises but takes part in Banquo's murder (he becomes the mysterious third murderer), disposes of the two murderers, bribes a servant to open the gates to Macduff's castle, then betrays Macbeth because the king prefers Seyton, informs Macduff, pretending to be upset about something he himself has caused, and finally removes the crown from Macbeth's severed head and gives it to Malcolm. As Rothwell puts it, John Stride's Rosse "is the quintessence of the smirking sociopath" (52), an "embodiment of evil" as significant as Iago, Edmund, and Aaron the Moor (54). Kliman, however, does not see Rosse as a Iago because the thane is ticked by ambition, not by mere evil (127).

In the 1971 film, scene ii in Act IV starts with children playing in the courtyard of Macduff's castle. Rosse and the Lady, with her arms crossed, have a quick conversation. When the Lady mentions that even "the poor wren" would defend her offspring against the owl (lines 9-11), she points with her head to the kids playing off-camera, referring to them as "her young ones." Rosse looks in that direction and smiles. Little does the Lady know that the owl stands right in front of her. The saddest point is that she trusts Rosse: he is her cousin, and when he lists Macduff's qualities (15-17) she nods, agreeing with him. Naturally, lines 18-21, which mention treason and knowing traitors, are omitted, for this Rosse knows himself very well, and does not necessarily see the times as cruel. A cynical traitor, he hugs and kisses the Lady and her son, and mounts his horse preparing to leave. While Lady and son are seen holding hands entering the castle, we follow Rosse gesturing to the gatekeeper to leave the gate open. The murderers arrive just as he turns his back, but it is certain that he sees them coming up the trail and vice-versa.

In Reilly's Men of Respect there are no Rosse or messengers. In fact, this might be the scene in the film which departs most vividly from the play's plot, for Macduff is still in his castle, so to speak. That is, Macbeth is not so cruel and merciless as to order the killing of women and children; his objective is to kill Macduff, and the murder of the rest of the family is a mere side effect. Besides, the means he employs, as we shall see later, sound less savage than the invasion Macbeth promotes in Shakespeare's playtext (and much less savage than how this invasion is portrayed in the two other films). In Men of Respect a little boy plays with cards in front of his house. Two suspicious-looking men appear, asking him where his dad is. At this point we still do not know who those men or what their intentions are. They may well be looking for Macduff (in the film called Duffy) in order to kill him. The boy goes inside and tells his father, who is shaving, about the men. Duffy asks them to wait in the kitchen, and the boy inquires whether it is necessary for them to go to the zoo with two bodyguards. Duffy tries to fool him into thinking that the men are coming along just for fun, but the boy outsmarts him, as we can see in his line "You expect me to believe that?", which is as spunky as the lines Macduff's boy says. Duffy looks at him in admiration while Mrs. Duffy comes down and seems not too happy, as her body language depicts (she puts her hands in her pocket) in seeing that they will have company in such a simple matter as visiting the zoo (see Appendix).

In the playtext, the second part of scene ii starts when Rosse leaves, and it involves a conversation between Lady Macduff and her son, in which she tells him his father is dead, and he negates it. The boy's lines provide a bit of comic relief in a moment filled with horror, because we know what is going to happen, since we have heard Macbeth's command to invade the castle and "give to th'edge of th'sword / [Macduff's] wife, his babes, and all the unfortunate souls / That trace him in his line" (IV.i 151-3). For Bradley, the boy "is perhaps the only person in the tragedy who provokes a smile" (333). He is witty—maybe too witty for his age—as he beats his mother at every turn. All she can do is call him "poor bird" and "poor monkey."

In Nunn's film there is no laughter between mother and son during this chat, only sad, shy smiles. The Lady tries to embrace her child as she tells him about his father, but he disentangles himself, for he does not want to hear his mother promoting Macduff's death or calling him a traitor. About twelve lines are cut here, but the scene is still long, interrupted only by the arrival of a nervous messenger, who is none other than a thane, Angus. As soon as he appears, the Lady immediately stands up and hides the boy behind her, proving that she, unlike Macduff, has "the natural touch" of what it means to be a mother (line 9). Meanwhile, the little boy gets his sword, in an instinctive act of protection. The Lady is scared, but the boy acts "like a man," one of the themes in Macbeth, and remains brave and fearless. Since the messenger is a thane whom Lady Macduff probably knows well, his first lines, "I am not to you known" (65-6), are cut out. After the thane delivers the line "Which is too nigh your person" (72), the three of them hear a noise. The thane-acting-as-messenger's reaction is to flee on the spot. The frightened Lady asks "Whither should I fly?" looking in his direction, but he is already gone. Holding her son, she becomes resolute when she says, "But I remember now" (74). The rest of her lines, until the murderers appear, are said al-

most as an aside, since the boy shows no reaction at all. This might work on stage, but on TV it seems a bit strange for mother and son to be so calm and passive knowing that the murderers are already inside the castle. Or maybe the actor playing the boy is unconvincing, but something does ring false in this part of the scene.

In Polanki's film seventeen lines of the dialogue between mother and son are cut, and the whole messenger role and Lady Macduff's subsequent speech are left out. However, somehow the messenger is present, for we can observe on the background two hoodwinged falcons that act as messenger birds. In any case, the Lady and child remain unwarned of the danger. But we do not: not only have we watched Macbeth's order, Rosse's bribe, and the murderers coming in, but now we start hearing off-screen screaming as early as the boy asks "What is a traitor?" The terrified screams continue throughout, though it takes a while for the characters to hear them. When they hear the shouting, they stop talking, so the Lady's last line to her son, here, is "God help thee, poor monkey." Polanski's and Kenneth Tynan's (the famous critic, and scriptwriter of the film) decision to heavily edit the lines makes sense: after all, who would pay any attention to them with all the yelling on the background?

While this shouting is going on, however, and while mother and son talk, Lady Macduff is very active. She never stops: she picks up clothes on the floor, hangs them, throws water on her son, fixes the bed etc. The boy is taking a bath, nude, obviously, standing up inside a wooden tub. Now, too much has been made of Polanski's film being a Playboy production. Purist critics obsess with Lady Macbeth's nakedness in her sleepwalking scene, and very sexist critics call the naked witches an image so horrifying as the blood in the playtext (for example, Pearlman 254). Even the naked boy being bathed by his mother is considered a gift for pederast voyeurs (Rothwell 50). The real question is not whether these scenes would be present if it were not a Playboy production, but whether scholars would obsess over them if the Playboy label did not appear in the film, for these scenes are far from sexy. I prefer Bruna Gushurst's explanation that nudity in this movie is used to make the characters more vulnerable (qtd. in Kliman 139), rather than a gift for voyeurs. I mean, one has to be a very sick voyeur to gain sexual gratification out of a bloody production like Polanski's Macbeth.

Though we might be too absorbed by the off-screen shouting and by the onscreen nudity to notice, telling stage business happens during this scene. For instance, the boy has a green ball with him while taking his bath, and he throws it on the floor after his mother tells

him his father is a traitor. For Halio, stage business can illuminate "an aspect of the play that might otherwise remain hidden or obscured" (65). We can see this when the Lady answers the boy about how she will do for a husband with the notorious line, "Why, I can buy me twenty at any market" (line 40), she throws a vase of water on him. This, I think, is an attempt to balance the boy's wit by giving the mother some wit of her own. We can also see this in the sardonic gesture she makes with her hand when she mentions that traitors must be hanged, imitating hanging with her hands. Indeed, Polanski's society is so full of violence that even mothers play with their children about hanging men.

In Men of Respect the context is different: the boy does not care to find out if his father is a traitor, but if he is a wise man. His mother, Mrs. Duffy, is much more supportive of her husband than any of the Lady Macduffs in the two other films, probably because he is still at home, shaving, and not off to England. She answers that "He's your father and he loves you, and that's all you need to know." The witty boy, smiling, replies that "It doesn't answer my question." And she, straightening his shirt and telling him to behave, shows that she, too, can be witty by making a pun, "You're the only wise guy I know." This is as far as the conversation between mother and child goes, for the camera reveals Duffy answering an unwanted phone call, and insisting to "George," the caller, that he is "out of it."

The third and last part of scene ii only runs five lines (80-5) in the playtext, but it is the most shocking part, visually speaking, for it is here that the murderers come face to face with their victims. Lady Macduff expresses her ultimate loyalty to her husband as she refuses to tell the murderers where he is located, and answers instead, "I hope, in no place so unsanctified / Where such as thou mayst find him" (81-2). When a murderer calls him a traitor, the boy reacts in some way not specified by stage directions, only accusing the murderer of being a liar and a villain. The murderer says, "What, you egg!" and stabs him. According to the directions, the little boy dies on stage, not before urging his mother to run away.

I have to admit that, whenever I read the play, I see the stage direction related to young Macduff's death the same way I see the one regarding Iras in Act V, scene II in Antony and Cleopatra: with some suspicion. How do they die so fast? Not that I have seen many people die in front of me to know how long it takes, but in films, where all my forensics knowledge comes from, it usually takes a while. Thus, I consider these deaths a crux that directors staging performances have to deal with. But some scholars, like David Worster in his fasci-

nating article "Performance Options and Pedagogy: Macbeth," reason that we should read stage directions in Shakespeare's plays as mere editorial choices, without making the mistake of seeing them as "'intended' or 'natural' or 'obvious' or even just the 'best'" (368). So, does the boy die onstage? If so, what happens to the body? Is it left onstage? Does Lady Macduff run away carrying it with her? E. A. J. Honigmann argues that the child's actual dying happens offstage, and that Shakespeare does so in order to prevent our hatred of Macbeth too soon. According to him, the first death onstage only occurs in V.vii.11 (137-8), Siward's murder. Of course, we have to ponder whether it makes a difference if young Macduff is simply slain, and then crawls off to die offstage, or if he immediately dies onstage of his wounds. Is the first option any less violent than the second? How the three films deal with this crucial moment of the playtext provides an interesting analysis.

In Nunn's movie, two of the murderers appear with stocking masks covering their faces, creating a terrifying effect. The camera shows Lady Macduff moving back a few steps, protecting her son, trying to escape the first murderer, only to notice that there is another murderer behind them (Kliman points out that he is played by the same actor who plays Macduff in the film, Bob Peck, implying that he is guilty for having left his family. But we cannot really see his face because of the mask). Then she tries to move sideways, and yet a third assassin appears: this time it is Seyton, without any disguise[1]. He is also the one to accuse Macduff of treason. The boy says, "Thou liest, thou shag-ear'd villain!", which causes the first murderer to hold him in his lap and shake him up and down with his dagger. This scene, albeit abhorrent, does not work too well because, frankly, the boy looks already dead before being killed. His way of saying "He has kill'd me, mother: / Run away, I pray you!", very slowly and broken, before falling to the floor, can hardly be considered good acting. Lady Macduff kneels down, touches the boy's blood, and cries "Murder!" four times. We do not see who holds her arms, who covers her mouth, or who cuts her throat, for the camera is focused on her. But she is held with her arms open, in the position of a crucifixion, and her throat is cut onscreen, while men deny her even the right to scream.

All the three films use the very cinematic technique of dissolving to cut this scene and go on to the next one. That is, one image is gradually juxtaposed by another, and the two frames simultaneously appear onscreen for a couple of seconds. But each film shows an altogether different character and has diverse purposes in their dissolves, as we shall soon see. In Nunn's dissolve, for instance, while we watch

Lady Macduff dying, the next scene already shows Macduff in a full shot, looking very concerned.

Polanski has affirmed that the violence inflicted on the Macduff castle mimics the Nazi invasion his own house suffered during World War II (Pearlman 253), but echoes of his wife Sharon Tate's murder by Charles Manson are also present, especially in the third part of scene ii, when Lady Macduff leaves her room as she finally hears the shouting. She sees a smiling man coming up the stairs and goes back to the room, trying to protect her child. The man goes in too, followed by another murderer. The first man employs his sword to pick up the vase she used to bathe her child, and smashes it on the floor. He slowly moves to the other side of the room, stopping to look at the messenger birds, and then analyzing the objects on the mantle over the fireplace. Rothwell believes "[t]he film offers no more chilling shot than the spectacle of Ian Hogg [...] as First Thane contemptuously sweeping the ornaments off the terrified Lady Macduff's mantle" (54). This whole part has no dialogue. The thane finally breaks the silence with the question "Where is your husband?" Lady Macduff is still proud and fearless as she answers him. The second murderer, who has not moved over to the other side of the room, stands by the door, so now the Lady and her son are surrounded. The second murderer laughs at the Lady's response, and it is he who accuses Macduff of treason. The camera cuts quickly from the man at the fireplace throwing everything on the floor to the boy's reaction, moving over to the second murderer to kick and hit him. Now Lady Macduff is scared: she does not even know where to look. The second murderer stabs the boy on the back, at the same time saying "Young fry of treachery!" The boy then goes slowly to his mother and informs her of his death, but does not tell her to run away. When Lady Macduff sees the man's dagger, she hugs the boy and gives off a silent scream. Then she observes the blood on her hands. As the first man sits down on the bed that she had straightened, the second murderer struggles with her, taking the boy from her grasp, throwing him on the floor and grabbing her. All the gestures here indicate she will be raped—the first man laughs and apparently waits for his turn on the bed, the second murderer tries to subdue her. She somehow manages to hurt his eye, open the door, and run out. In the corridor she sees, and so do we, two soldiers holding a screaming woman to the floor, while another rapes her. The Lady goes to the first door, unnoticed by the soldiers, and sees two corpses of children covered in blood. The camera moves to a nearby room which is burning, tragic music begins, and we are able to glimpse at a cross in the middle of the fire before

the fire covers all.

The dissolve in this film involves a doctor, watching through a diamond-shaped window. We are back to Macbeth's castle, as if it were possible to spy on Macduff's castle from there, as if the doctor were watching what happened to Lady Macduff. It is now the sleep-walking scene. By changing the order of the scenes (what comes after the family massacre in the playtext is the long and unanimously panned scene between Macduff and Malcolm), Polanski reinforces the bond between the two ladies. This bond has already been established in the framing of the castles' gates, when in the beginning of the film Lady Macbeth receives a letter from her husband. The two ladies, after all, have something in common: both will suffer horrible deaths.

In Reilly's film Mrs. Duffy's and her son's deaths are much more impersonal, almost accidental. When Duffy's conversation over the phone starts taking too long, the movie cuts to his wife and child waiting impatiently in the car. As the boy, sitting on the driver's seat, plays with the window, she complains, "Your father doesn't know how to take a day off." Finally, Mrs. Duffy sighs and instructs her son to move over. They exchange seats, she turns on the engine, and the camera cuts to the house, where we see Macduff saying, "I'm hanging up." A huge explosion intrudes the household and the men fall to the floor. Duffy is the first to stand up, and he cries "Oh Jesus, no!" as he rushes out. While we hear indistinct cries of Duffy from the outside and the noise of a phone off the hook, the camera pans over the debris on the floor, until it stops at a shattered family picture. It is unnecessary to spell out what has happened to Duffy's wife and son because the camera has already done so for us. But the dissolve in this film is the cleverest: as the image of the family portrait begins to fade, the image of Macbeth/Battaglia staring upfront starts to appear. The camera thus literally frames him! This is a relevant touch because we have not seen Battaglia's ordering the murder, only the witches/fortunetellers advising him to be aware of Duffy.

Even though the idea of a wife starting a car that explodes and being killed instead of her husband is a bit too reminiscent of the patron of all gangster movies, The Godfather (not to mention that Battaglia and Don Corleone share the same first name, Michael, or that one of Duffy's bodyguards uses a beret, which is what everyone seems to wear in Corleone's Sicily), the film still presents smart links to other sections of this production. For instance, Duffy's child plays with cards, and now Battaglia and his henchmen do the same thing. In the following scene, when Lady Macbeth/Ruthie will appear to be obsessed over dirty linen, Battaglia asks her, "Is this necessary?",

which is an echo of the boy's question to Duffy. The repetition of this line makes us think of the futility of Macduff's family's death. Are their deaths truly necessary to Macbeth? There is no point to them: they only seem to make Macduff, who was "out of it," want to seek vengeance against Macbeth.

We can see how three different films deal with the cruxes in this bloodbath that is Act IV, scene ii, in three different ways, showing that there is no "correct" or "appropriate" manner to shoot (or stage) a Shakespearean play. Even the three interruptions of the same scene, all using the cinematic technique of the dissolve, are completely distinct: one privileges a victim, Macduff. Another dissolve privileges a doctor who is at Macbeth's castle, implying that in Polanski's warrior society everyone is guilty. Yet another dissolve privileges the literal framing of Macbeth as the only guilty subject. In a playtext that has little or no stage directions, each director, screenwriter and actor is free to stage the action the way they see fit. And even if the playtext were full of directions, thinking that we can be psychics able to predict exactly what Shakespeare had "intended" is naïve at best. After all, Shakespeare died more than 350 years ago. If his plays still live, and Macbeth is very much alive, it is because of the people who translate and adapt them to the stage and screen.

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Notes

1. In Nunn's film, the pronunciation of Seyton's name sounds very much like Satan. This goes hand in hand with the director's decision to place him in the scene of the family's massacre. In Polanski's production, however, the pronunciation of the first syllable in Seyton is /si:/. That may be so because we have another Satan in the film, Rosse.

Appendix

THE PLAYTEXT. Act IV, Scene II—Fife. A room in Macduff's Castle.

Enter Lady Macduff, her son, and Rosse.
L.Macd. What had he done, to make him fly the land?
Ross. You must have patience, madam.
L.Macd. He had none;
His flight was madness. When our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.
Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear. 5
L.Macd. Wisdom? to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not,
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight, 10
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear, and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.
Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you school yourself. But for your husband, 15
He is noble, wise, judicious, and

best knows
The fits o'th' season. I dare not speak much further,
But cruel are the times when we are traitors,
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumor
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way, and move. I take my leave of you;
'Shall not be long but I'll be here again.
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before. My pretty cousin, 25
Blessing upon you!
L.Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.
Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once.
[Exit Rosse]
L.Macd. Sirrah, your father's dead; 30
And what will you do now? How will you live?
Son. As birds do, mother.
L.Macd. What, with worms and flies?
Son. With what I get, I mean, and so do they.
L.Macd. Poor bird, thou'dst never fear the net nor lime,
The pit-fall nor the gin. 35
Son. Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.
L.Macd. Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for a father?
Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?
L.Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market. 40
Son. Then you'll buy'em to sell again.
L.Macd. Thou speak'st will all they wit, and yet, i'faith,
With wit enough for thee.
Son. Was my father a traitor, mother?
L.Macd. Ay, that he was. 45
Son. What is a traitor?
L.Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.
Son. And be all traitors that do so?
L.Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hang'd. 50
Son. And must they all be hang'd that swear and lie?
L.Macd. Every one.
Son. Who must hang them?
L.Macd. Why, the honest men. 55
Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.
L.Macd. Now God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father? 60
Son. If he were dead, you'ld weep for him; if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.
L.Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!
Enter a messenger.
Messenger. Bless you, fair dame!

I am not to you known, 65
Though in your state of honour I am perfect.
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly.
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence with your little ones,
To fright you thus, methinks I am too savage; 70
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer. [Exit Messenger]
L.Macd. Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world—where to do harm 75
Is often laudable; to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defense,
To say I have done no harm?
Enter Murderers.
What are these faces?
I Mur. Where is your husband?80
L.Macd. I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.
I Mur. He's a traitor.
Son. Thou li'st, thou shag-ear'd villain!
I Mur. What, you egg! [Stabbing him]
Young fry of treachery!
Son. He has kill'd me, mother:
Run away, I pray you! [Dies] 85

[Exit Lady Macduff, crying Murder, and pursued by the Murderers]

Macbeth – Trevor Nunn (1976/8)

Boy/Son cleans his sword. Lady Macduff, dressed in white, wearing a crucifix, with her hair covered, talks with Rosse. Bells ring on the background.
L.Macd. What had he done, to make him fly the land?
Ross. You must have patience, madam.
L.Macd. He had none;
His flight was madness. When our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.
Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.
L.Macd. Wisdom? to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not,
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her loved ones in her nest, against the owl.

All is the fear, and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.
Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you school yourself. But for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o'th' season. I dare not speak much further,
But cruel are the times when we are traitors,
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumor
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way, and move.[She holds his arm] I take my leave of you;
'Shall not be long and I'll be here again.
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before.[Kneels down to talk to Son] My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!
L.Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.
Ross. I am so much a fool should I stay longer.
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.
I take my leave [slight pause] at once.
[Exit]
L.Macd.[calls Son with her hand] Sirrah, [pause, kneeling down, holding Son] your father's dead,
And what will you do now? How will you live?
Son. As birds do, mother.
[Pushes her] My father is not dead, for all your saying.
L.Macd. Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for a father?
Son. [pushes her again, now disentangling himself] Nay, how will you do for a husband?
[The camera is on him. We see the back of her head]
L.Macd.[sadly]. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.
Son. [sitting down] Was my father a traitor, mother?
L.Macd. Ay, that he was.
Son. What is a traitor?
L.Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.
Son. And be all traitors that do so?
L.Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hang'd.
Son. And must they all be hang'd that swear and lie?
L.Macd. Every one.
Son. Who must hang them?
L.Macd. Why, the honest men. [Touching his face, shy smile]
Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.
L.Macd. [slightly shaking her head, low chuckle] Now God help thee, poor monkey!
[She hears a noise. Immediately stands up, hiding the boy behind her. It's a thane, Angus. The boy gets his sword]
Angus. I doubt some danger does approach you nearly.

Be not found here; hence with your little ones,
To fright you thus, methinks I am too savage;
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. [They hear a noise.] Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer. [Flees]
L.Macd. [looking at where Angus went] Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. [Resolute] But I remember now
I am in this earthly world—where to do harm
Is often laudable; to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defense,
To say I have done no harm?
[Hugs her son, kisses his head]
[Two men with their faces covered approach. L.Macd. goes back a few steps, always holding her son. A man on the back too. She tries to escape, a third man appears on the side. It's Seyton]
Seyton. Where is your husband?
L.Macd. [slowly, pronouncing every word] I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.
Seyton. He's a traitor.
Son. Thou li'st, thou shag-ear'd villain! [Reacts]
Mur. What, you egg! [holds boy, sits him on his lap, moves dagger]
Son. [murd. still holding boy, his knife inside] He has kill'd me, mother:
Run away, I pray you! [Murd takes out knife, Son falls, dead]
[Lady Macduff kneels down, touching his blood. Cries looking at the body]
L.Macd. Murder! Murder! Murder! Murder! [Her arms are held, arms stretched out, as in a crucifixion. A hand covers her mouth. Another cuts her throat]
[The scene dissolves to Macduff standing alone, worried. Theme music as the scene dissolves].

Cast of Characters
Lady Macduff – Susan Dury(the same actress who plays Witch 3).
Ross – Ian McDiarmid (also plays the Porter)
Son – Stephen Warner (also plays Fleance)
Seyton – Greg Hicks (also plays Donalbain)
Macduff – Bob Peck

The scene takes approx. five minutes.

Macbeth – Roman Polanski (1971)

Inside Macduff's Castle, but out in the courtyard.. Kids playing with a fool, sheep, ducks. Laughter. Cut to Lady Macduff and Rosse, walking around, talking..
Ross. You must have patience, madam.

L.Macd.[her arms crossed] He had none;
His flight was madness. When our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.
Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.
L.Macd. Wisdom? to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? [background: a page prepares Ross' horse] He loves us not,
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear, and nothing is the love.
Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you school yourself. [gives her two kisses on the cheek] But for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o'th' season. [L.Macd. nods, agreeing with him].
I take my leave of you.
'Shall not be long but I'll be here again:

Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward [the Boy, blindfolded, comes to him. A man takes off his hood]
To what they were before.—My pretty cousin, [takes him in his arms, gives him two friendly slaps] Blessing upon you!
L.Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless. [she hugs Ross]
Ross. I take my leave at once. [arranges his cape and goes to the gate]
[L.Macd. and Son, hand in hand, go inside. As soon as they turn their back, Ross makes a gesture for the man to open the gate to murderers. He mounts his horse. The gate keeper opens the other door. Door squeaks, gate keeper hurries inside. Ross waits until the murderers approach, turns around, then leaves. Several men on horse enter.]
[Cut to a room in the Castle. L.Macd. heats water on a fireplace. Son, naked, stands inside a wooden tub. He holds a green ball.]
L.Macd. How wilt thou do for a father?
Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?
L.Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market. [Throws water at him with a vase. He recoils. Horses approaching on the soundtrack]
Son. Was my father a traitor?
L.Macd. Ay, that he was. [Son throws the ball on the floor]
Son. What is a traitor? [L.Macd. holds a worn towel to dry him. Covers his head with towel. We hear the first scream, one of surprise]
L.Macd. Why, one that swears and lies. [Wraps another towel around him. Baffled screams]
Son. And be all traitors that do so?
[L.Macd. collects clothes from the floor]
L.Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hang'd. [makes a gesture with her hand and neck, indicating hanging. Noise too]
Son. Who must hang them?
[L.Macd. never stops: hanging clothes, straightening the bed]
L.Macd. Why, the honest men.
Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang them up. [Screaming off-screen increases]
L.Macd. God help thee, poor monkey!
Son. If he were dead, you would weep for him.
[Screaming continues. They hear it for the first time, stop, startled. She goes outside the room, sees a smiling man coming up the stairs. Goes inside, protects Son. The man goes in too. Another man follows. I Mur., with his sword, gets the vase she was bathing her son with and throws it on the floor. Goes around the room, looking. Stops and plays with falcons. Grabs a sculpture on the fireplace of a knight on a horse, smiles]
I Mur. Where is your husband?
L.Macd. [very proud, standing up erect, still fearless] I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him. [one of the men laughs]
[L.Macd. and Son are surrounded, for one man is at the door, and I Mur. is at the fireplace]
2 Mur. He's a traitor.
Son. [goes to man at the door and kicks and hits him] Thou li'st, thou shag-ear'd villain!
2 Mur. What, you egg! [Cut to man at fireplace throwing everything on the floor. L.Macd. looks at fireplace. She doesn't know where to look. Now she is scared]
2 Mur. Young fry of treachery! [stabs Son, a single stab on the back, as he says this line. Knife is clean, but he cleans it slightly on his clothes]
Son. He has kill'd me, mother:
[He goes slowly to L.Macd. She hugs him, sees the man's daggers, shouts a silent scream. Sees the blood on his back and on her hands. Hears scream coming from outside. I Mur. sits down on the bed she had straightened. 2 Mur. struggles with her, takes Son from her arms, throws him on the floor, grabs her. I Mur, lying down on bed, only observes, laughing. 2Mur tries to subdue her, they fight, she hurts his eye, opens door, runs out]
[In the corridor, two soldiers are holding a screaming woman to the floor, another is raping her. The men laugh. L.Macd. stops. She gains courage, moves in their direction, goes to first door, unnoticed by soldiers.]
[Opens the door, sees two corpses of children, with lots of blood]
[Camera moves to a nearby room

which is burning. Tragic music]
[We see a cross in the midst of the fire. Then the fire covers all.]
[Fire continues as it dissolves to the doctor, looking through a diamond-shaped window. It's the sleepwalking scene].

Cast of Characters
Lady Macduff –Diane Fletcher
Ross –John Stride
Son – Mark Dightam

The scene takes approx. four minutes.

Men of Respect – William Reilly (1991)

Scene opens with a boy playing with cards in the front of his house. Two men approach.
Man 1: Hey, kid, your old man at home?
Boy: Just a minute.
[Goes inside. Men follow. Boy speaks to a room]
Boy: You got two suspicious characters at the door. You wanna see?
Duffy: [shaving] Oh yeah. Bob, Paulie, come on in. I'll be right with you.
[Men go into the kitchen]
Boy: Is this necessary?
Duffy: Hell, yeah. It's just... They like the zoo, they haven't been in a while, so I asked them along.
Boy: You expect me to believe that? [slightly shakes his head]
[Duffy gives him a friendly punch. Touches his hair. Looks at him in admiration]
[Boy sits down next to stairs. Men at the kitchen. Mrs. Duffy comes down]
Mrs. Duffy: Is your father ready?
Boy: Who knows. [points to the kitchen]
Mrs. Duffy: [putting her hands in her pockets] How you doing, boys?
Man 1: We're doing fine.
Man 2: Hi, Mrs. Duffy.
Boy: Mom, can I ask you a question?
[Go back. She sits]
Boy: Is Pop a wise guy?
Mrs. Duffy: Where did you pick that up?
Boy: I hear things.
Mrs. Duffy: Well, don't hear that. He's your father and he loves you, and that's all you have to know.
Boy: [smiling] It doesn't answer my question.
Mrs. Duffy: Behave yourself. [Straightening his shirt] You're the only wise guy I know.
[Duffy comes out of the bathroom. On the background, Mrs. Duffy goes on talking to boy, pointing her finger at him]
Duffy [to men]: Yeah, look, keep a little behind today. The old lady, she goes crazy.
[Phone rings. Duffy picks it up. Exchanges a glance with Mrs. Duffy]
Duffy: Yeah? Jesus, George, it's a day off here today. George... I'm going to the zoo with my kid, George. George, it's not my beef anymore. I washed my hands off it.
[Cut to Mrs. Duffy and Boy inside the car. Boy at the driver's seat, playing with the window]
Mrs. Duffy [reprehending the boy]: Psst. Your father doesn't know how to take a day off.
[Eats something. Both chewing]
Duffy: [on the phone] It's not my problem. I'm out of it. George look, look, look. What do you have to call me on Sunday for?
[Men behind him with their arms crossed]
Mrs. Duffy: [inside car. Sighs. To boy] Move over. [They exchange seats. She turns on the car]
[Cuts to the house]
Duffy: I'm hanging up.
[Explosion. Men fall.]
Duffy: Oh Jesus, no! [goes out]
[Camera shows phone. Phone off the hook beeping. Glass. Broken family portrait. Indistinct cries from Duffy. Dissolve to Battaglia, sitting, looking straight ahead]

Cast of characters
Duffy – Peter Boyle
Mrs. Duffy – Julie Garfield
Boy – Rick Washburn
Battaglia – John Turturro

This scene lasts approx. three minutes.

"REMEMBERING HEARTS"[1]: THE EXPERIENCE OF MEMORY IN MRS. DALLOWAY (NOVEL AND FILM)

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ABSTRACT: Mrs. Dalloway, by both Virginia Woolf (novel, 1925) and Marleen Gorris (film, 1997) are texts whose construction depends on the reverberation of past into the present. The characters in these texts can be defined, both metaphorically and metonymically, as "remembering hearts". Considering that the process of adaptation essentially constitutes an act of reading/interpretation, this paper aims at discussing the issue of memory as an experience lived by the characters and the impact that the representation of memory provokes in terms of different narrative strategies, mainly when we compare the resources of the verbal text with those of the filmic text.

KEYWORDS: filmic adaptation; intertextuality; memory; narrative strategies

1. Introductory considerations on adaptation: from the notion of fidelity to the concept of creation and interpretation

Though it is common sense to consider that to adapt is to change, to modify, so as to make it anew, most of the discussions on adaptations revolve around questions of fidelity to the 'original' text. George Bluestone (1957, p. 5), in his Novels into film, mentions some of the statements usually made by such 'fidelity' critics: "The film is true to the spirit of the book;" "It's incredible how they butchered the novel;" "It cuts out key passages, but it's still a good film". Morris Beja (qtd. in McFARLANE, 1996, p. 9), pondering over the 'guiding principles' the filmmaker would have at her/his disposal when adapting literature, questions: "What relationship should a film have to the original source? Should it be "faithful?" Can it be? To what?"

In "Adaptation," Dudley Andrew (1992, p. 421) discusses the concept of transposition of one medium into another in relation to the matter of interpretation. He remarks that "in a strong sense adaptation is the appropriation of meaning from a prior text". This appropriation of meaning has several gradations: it may vary from, in one extreme, a relation of fidelity to the "original" text, or it may have a relation of simply "referring," or alluding, to the earlier text, in the other extreme (1992, p. 420). In any case, the process of adaptation

not only involves "appropriation of a prior meaning", but also a process of selection, choice, substitution, addition, cuts, and certainly an interpretation as well as modification of the material to be translated and produced in the other medium. Andrew (1992, p. 420) explains that "the adaptation can feature the original sign as its signified or its referent. Adaptations claiming fidelity bear the original as a signified, whereas those inspired or derived from an earlier text stand in relation of referring to the original".

Considering that to adapt is to appropriate a prior meaning, it is crucial for the screenwriter and filmmaker to have a general understanding of the text to be adapted in order to decide which aspects of the 'original' text's signified should be foregrounded in the adapted text. In other words, the process of adaptation already constitutes an a priori reading; as such, as Andrew (1992, p. 421) argues, "it can put into play the intricate mechanisms of its signifiers only in response to a general understanding of the signified it aspires to have constructed at the end of the process". It is exactly this fact that makes it so difficult for one to accept the so-called fidelity principle to the source text, when dealing with adaptations. Beja's questions, "Can it be faithful? To what?" keep echoing in our minds. Even if the adaptation claims to be faithful, it will always be a partial faithfulness. As Peter Reynolds (1993, p.1) reminds us, "What the spectator sees and hears is what he or she is allowed to see, and to set the agenda by foregrounding one issue or set of issues is to marginalize others".

Another significant reason for highlighting one issue at the expense of others relates to the process of adaptation as involving other texts surrounding or permeating the more tangible text of the novel to be visually translated. In "The literary adaptation: an introduction," John Ellis (1982, p. 3) refutes this common and traditional assumption that to adapt is "to reproduce the contents of the novel on the screen". For him, the real aim of adaptation lies elsewhere; as he claims, "the adaptation trades upon the memory of the novel, a memory that can derive from actual reading, or, as is more likely with a classic of literature, a generally circulated memory" (ELLIS, 1982, p. 3). As such, a discussion of adaptation will always entail a consideration of the source text itself, plus the way that text is viewed and inserted in a wider cultural and historical context, i.e., the circulated discourses accompanying the source text.

The aspects the adapter chooses to emphasize and neglect are guided by several other factors, besides the verbal text itself, including the demands of the market, the reputation of the author to be adapted, the existence of a ready-made audience, the different ways

the author has already been read and interpreted by the critical tradition, the way the adapter understands the source text and the peculiarities of the media through which the texts are expressed. Such aspects are responsible for locating adaptation at a crosscutting of dialogues, which are enacted and actualized among different authors and media, different texts, different audiences, different cultures and different times. Awareness concerning these issues provides a relevant basis for a discussion of the effects that the adapted text creates. In this sense, the process of adaptation also involves going beyond the "question of representing the written work in relation to [its] time," so as to "bring to representation the time that knows them – that is our time – in the time when they originated" (BENJAMIN, qtd. in JAUSS, 1992, p.165).

These considerations point to the impossibility and inefficacy of using the fidelity principle as a guide and criterion for the discussion of adaptations, since the intrinsic value of a film does not necessarily depend on its faithfulness to, or deviation from, the source text. As Linda Hutcheon (2006, p. 20) suggests, "(...) one way to think about unsuccessful adaptations is not in terms of infidelity to a prior text, but in terms of a lack of the creativity and skill to make the text one's own and thus autonomous". Therefore, more fruitful readings might result from the investigation of how verbal concepts are translated into visual language and what (new) effects are generated – as well as for what purposes – from the transformations, accommodations, and negotiations that the process of adaptation entails. I certainly side with Brian McFarlane (1996, p. 10) in his Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation, when he says that:

> The insistence on fidelity has led to a suppression of potentially more rewarding approaches to the phenomenon of adaptation. It tends to ignore the idea of adaptation as an example of convergence among the arts, perhaps a desirable - even inevitable - process in a rich culture; it fails to take into serious account what may be transferred from novel to film as distinct from what will require more complex processes of adaptation; and it marginalizes those production determinants which have nothing to do with the novel but may be powerfully influential upon the film. Awareness of such issues would be more useful than those many accounts of how films 'reduce' great novels.

McFarlane (1996, p. 10) goes on to talk about the issue of

intertextuality as "represent[ing] a more sophisticated approach, in relation to adaptation, to the idea of the original novel as a 'resource'". His argument finds resonance in several other theorists discussing the issue, such as Robert Stam (2005) and Linda Hutcheon (2006). For Stam (2005, p. 25) "The trope of adaptation as a 'reading' of the source novel suggests that such as any text can generate an infinity of readings, so any novel can generate any number of adaptational readings which are inevitably partial, personal, conjunctural, interested". The three adaptations of Jane Austen's Emma, for instance, produced between 1995-1996, as well as the several visual translations of Pride and Prejudice, can illustrate the different ideological concerns behind the adaptation as a final product to be consumed.

Linda Hutcheon, in A theory of adaptation (2006, p. 20), also emphasizes the process of adapting as one that involves interpretation and creation. Hutcheon enumerates some of the reasons behind the adapters' purpose to adapt:

> (...) [the adapters'] aim might well be to economically and artistically supplant the prior works. They are as likely to want to contest the aesthetic or political values of the adapted text as to pay homage. This, of course, is one of the reasons why the rhetoric of 'fidelity' is less than adequate to discuss the process of adaptation. Whatever the motive, from the adapter's perspective, adaptation is an act of appropriating or salvaging, and this is always a double process of interpreting and then creating something new.

Having these principles in mind, the present discussion will focus on a consideration of the filmic adaptation of Virginia Woolf's Mrs Dalloway, by Marleen Gorris (1997), paying special attention to the relationship between time and memory, and to how these two concepts get materialized in the different media, literature and film.

There is a general agreement among scholars dealing with adaptations that certain texts resist being translated to the screen[2]. In general terms, when a text gets adapted it is the story (rather than the other narrative elements) which is transferred to the screen. Transforming a literary text into a filmic text, commonly speaking, means to dramatize it as a narrative story. In this respect, Hutcheon (2006, p. 15) states that "linear realist novels, it would appear, are more easily adapted for the screen than experimental ones (...)". Following this premise, a novel like Mrs. Dalloway, both innovating and experimental in terms of its narrative strategies – mainly when one

considers the lyrical and introspective tone of the novel – would at first constitute a hindrance to the visual translation. The adaptation of the novel by Marleen Gorris incorporates the text's introspective nuances, which proves that the cinema also possesses strategic resources to express inner conflicts and thoughts [3]. I hope the discussion below can illustrate some of the issues permeating the relationship between the process of adaptation and the question of memory and time in Mrs. Dalloway, thus contributing to elucidate in what way(s) the representation of memory gets materialized in verbal and audiovisual means as well as the different effects arising from such distinct forms of expression.

2. The relationship between memory and narrative strategies in Mrs. Dalloway (novel and film)

Memory may be considered as the first condition for the existence of literature, mainly when one thinks over Henri Bergson's (2006, p. 176) argument, in Matéria e memória, that "(...) every perception is already memory"[4]. The statement leads one to think, among other aspects, of the gesture of getting distanced from the act of perception and its eventual transfiguration in literary form. However, besides this general property characterizing the function of memory in literature, the present text aims at analyzing memory and its specific implications as an explicit strategy of narrative construction in Mrs. Dalloway.

Virginia Woolf's Mrs Dalloway (1925) and the filmic adaptation by Marleen Gorris (1997) are constructed through the reverberation of past experience in the present. Past life and memory possess such a crucial role in this narrative (verbal and audiovisual versions) that its characters may be defined, both metonymically and metaphorically, as "remembering hearts". J. Hillis Miller (1993, p. 46), in a critical text about the novel, says that "storytelling, for Woolf, is the repetition of the past in memory, both in the memory of the characters and in the memory of the narrator". For Miller (1993, p. 46), "*Mrs Dalloway* (...) is a brilliant exploration of the functioning of memory as a form of repetition".

The novel is narrated in third person, but in a way that the "story" is filtered through the perceptions, feelings and thoughts of the characters (FRIEDMAN, 1967, p. 127), a technique called multiple selective omniscience – whose function is to unveil and dramatize the characters' mental processes (LEITE, 1989, p. 48). Both the technique of multiple selective omniscience and free indirect discourse, used in conjunction in Mrs. Dalloway, constitute "a hybrid discourse, in

which the character's voice invades the formal structure of the narrator's discourse as if both could talk as one, thus giving rise to a 'dual' voice" (REIS & LOPES, 1988, p. 277). The adoption of such a focus of narration aligns with the need to explore the characters' subjectivity and inner worlds, a fact which is intimately associated with memory and the recurrent evocation of remembrances.

At the beginning of the novel, when Clarissa goes out to buy flowers for her party, two elements are decisive to provoke a link between present time and past time: the freshness of that morning and the squeak of the door's hinges. In Memória e vida, Bergson (2006, p. 93) argues that "(...) the appeal to which the evocation responds departs from the present; likewise, it is from the sensitive and motor elements of the present action that the remembrance withdraws the heat that endows it [the remembrance] with life". The morning – whose freshness, according to Clarissa, aligns with the presence of children on a beach – and "a little squeak of the hinges which she could hear now" (WOOLF, 1987, p. 5) are both responsible for making Clarissa rescue the sensations experienced in the summer of Bourton, in the open air, when, at the age of eighteen, she could share experiences with Sally and Peter. The sensation brought by this morning in June – embodied in the expressions "What a lark, what a plunge" (WOOLF, p. 5) – constitutes both a sensation of now and a sensation of the past; or perhaps one should say it is a present sensation enlarged and made more conspicuous through (because of) the Bourton experience. According to Bergson (2006a, p. 173), "(...) our whole psychological life conditions our present state". In Mrs. Dalloway, we have access only to fragments of the characters' psychological lives, but these fragments are decisive for an understanding of their subjectivity and the way they face life. In fact, it is that past psychological experience lived by Clarissa, and rescued now through her memory, that endows her present subjectivity with density and depth.

As Clarissa walks along the streets of London, we are guided, through her perceptions, to consider the precariousness of time (and the recurrent presence of Big Ben and its strokes are an index of that) and to witness her love for "life; London; this moment in June" (WOOLF, p. 6). "[Clarissa] could remember scene after scene in Bourton" (WOOLF, p. 8) and these remembrances gradually reveal her affective relationship with Peter, with Sally, and eventually with Richard. The process of remembering is further permeated by evaluations as if in an attempt to understand the choices she made in the past, mainly those behind her breaking (though she apparently loved him) with Peter and her eventual marriage with Richard. Bergson

reminds us that "(...) if a certain perception evokes a remembrance, one should think of the circumstances that preceded and accompanied the past situation, and also those following it, for they might shed some light on the present situation that can help escaping from it" (2006b, p. 62). In Clarissa's case, I would not say there is a wish on her part for quitting her present life circumstances, but rather a search to understand and evaluate the emotional relationships she lived, since the process of remembering constitutes a possible way of exploring the subjective meanings inherent in the lived experience.

When Clarissa enters the park (other characters and their memories also inhabit the park) it is now the wind, mentioned earlier in the first lines of the novel, that together with other natural elements (the trees, the grass, the leaves) trigger again Clarissa's thoughts related to Bourton. She thinks of Peter and considers the fact that although "they might be parted for hundreds of years (...) some days, some sights [could bring] him back to her calmly, without the old bitterness (...)". And Clarissa concludes, in a revealing way, as if it were an epiphany, that "that perhaps was the reward of having cared for people; they came back in the middle of Saint James' Park on a fine morning (...)" (WOOLF, p. 8).

When Clarissa arrives at the park gate (WOOLF, p. 9) – and, as we know, gates, doors and windows metonymically represent frontiers, limits and borders (in this case, one might think of the relations between inside and outside; near and distant; present and past; youth and old age; lost time and memory) – she reveals herself as complex in her contradictions: "She felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged" (WOOLF, p. 9). It is also at this moment that Clarissa reflects on her loneliness and the danger of living: "(...) she always had the feeling that it was very, very dangerous to live even one day" (WOOLF, p. 9).

Before arriving at the flower shop – after all, that was Clarissa's purpose when leaving home – her passing by the park and the streets is alternated with her thoughts, conjectures and remembrances. Several of the novel's passages (cf. WOOLF, pp. 8-14) at this moment are marked by the presence of verbs typical of free indirect style, such as "to think" and "to remember"; other verbs, like "bring back", "recover" and "survive", and also the modal "would" contribute to reinforce the different temporalities played in the narrative. The use of the word "scene" (WOOLF, p. 8), saturated with visual meanings, constitutes an index of something that is dramatized, thus made alive again. And we come across the crucial question: "What was she trying to recover?" And further the conclusion of regret: "Oh if she could have

had her life over again!" (WOOLF, p. 11).

Clarissa's arrival at the flower shop is preceded by thoughts that refer to the war (Mrs. Dalloway was published in 1925), so as to anticipate the introduction of another relevant character in the novel, Septimus Warren Smith, a soldier who fought in the war and now lives the terrible effects of the traumatic experience. The pleasure Clarissa feels with the variety of the flowers, the beauty of their diverse colours, their different smells, all of this is broken by a noise that sounds like an explosion in the street. It is exactly this noise that serves as a transition between the exit of a character from the narrative "scene" and the entrance of another; from this moment on, we leave Clarissa's mind as a narrative filter and enter Septimus's mind. Clarissa's personal memory is left aside for a moment so that the reader can have access to Septimus's memories of the war, and get to know about his deplorable emotional and psychic state as a consequence of his participation in the war.

The portrayal of these two characters enables Woolf to construct a framework for her novel: on the one hand, Clarissa, the party, the flowers, celebration, personal memory (though we know that, to a certain extent, every memory is social); on the other, Septimus, the war (whose historical reference is also associated with Peter), madness, pain, suicide, death. Septimus and his remembrances of the war transcend the personal drama to denounce the nonsense of the war and also to criticize the inefficacy of the medical treatment to which shellshock patients were submitted.

Clarissa and Septimus are emblematic characters, constructed upon the varied effects of violence. In Clarissa's case, we should consider the violence of the social rules and strict conservative moral codes, which provoke her fear of yielding to pleasure and breaking away with traditional values of civility and social conduct. In this respect, Sally constitutes a counterpoint in the narrative structure, since she represents the rebelliousness and subversion that Clarissa lacks. When Clarissa's memories of Sally come out she wonders: "(...) this falling in love with women. Take Sally Seton; her relation in the old days with Sally Seton. Had not that, after all, been love?" (WOOLF, p. 30). And later on Clarissa concludes: "Sally it was who made her feel, for the first time, how sheltered the life at Bourton was" (WOOLF, p. 31). In Septimus's case, violence is firstly referred to through the actions of the war itself and through the recovery of its images by means of memory. Violence is now made present through his incapacity to get integrated to life again, to everyday conviviality, once he cannot get rid of the dead official's image and of the guilt he feels for

having been unable to save him. There is an ironic tone in the way the war narrative is constructed, mainly when we consider the repetition (eight times) of the information that "[Septimus] could not feel" (WOOLF, pp. 78-81), and at the same time his observation that "human beings have neither kindness, nor faith, nor charity beyond what serves to increase the pleasure of the moment" (WOOLF, p. 80). The same ironic tone can be perceived when Septimus notices that "His wife was crying, and he felt nothing; only each time she sobbed in this profound way, this silent, this hopeless way, he descended another step into the pit" (WOOLF, p. 81).

Besides the violence of the war, that keeps accompanying Septimus through his memory, he still undergoes the violence of the medical treatment he is forced to undertake. Ironically, Septimus reveals himself to be more lucid during the medical appointment. The dialogue is emblematic of the power inherent to the doctor – supposedly, one who possesses and controls scientific knowledge – and of how this power is exercised over the patient; at the same time, through Septimus's ironical comments, the dialogue unveils how inefficient the treatment is.5

When considering the filmic adaptation of Mrs. Dalloway, a crucial difference concerns the importance that the war sub-plot acquires at the very beginning of the film, whose opening scene already shows Septimus and the explosions, accompanied by the spatial and temporal reference – Italy, 1918. In this way, it is the war and its devastating effects that provide a framework for the film Mrs Dalloway. The relevance that the war acquires in the film also gets materialized through the use of slow motion scenes, mainly those showing Evans, the dead official. In A linguagem cinematográfica, Marcel Martin (2003, p. 215) calls our attention to the several meanings that this technical resource may produce, as for instance, "scenes of violent death frequently shown in slow motion, so as to emphasize the dramatic lasting of the fatal moment". In Mrs. Dalloway, the slowness of Evans's images serves both to introduce another temporal reality and to emphasize the permanence of the memories that they invoke.

Eventually, Septimus's presence in the park, where both Clarissa and Peter also wander (though in different times) and muse into the past, generates a significant contrast: whereas Clarissa departs from present sensations to plunge into the past; whereas she absorbs the street noises, the silence of the park, so as to link external spaces with inner spaces (memory and the present); Septimus gets recollected inside himself and gets to view the space around him as reflections of his war remembrances; most of the time, Septimus be-

haves as if there were no present life any longer (except for the rare moments of affective interaction with Rezia, his wife): his present reality is still that of the war and its violence.

Another significant difference when considering the adaptation concerns the expression of the characters' subjectivity through memory – both the memory they possess about themselves and the memory the others have about them. In the novel, as we have seen, the use of free indirect discourse and multiple selective omniscience foreground the non-pronounced discourse of the characters, rather than the narrator's discourse; the latter tends to get distanced, to situate most of the time in the background, so that the characters may dramatize their inner conflicts. This kind of discourse employs several linguistic resources – such as the use of different verbal times alluding to different kinds of past; digressions; juxtaposition of thoughts that link the present to the past – which, though vividly representing the characters' mental and emotive experience, cannot be compared to the immediacy (or perhaps we should say, illusion of immediacy) inherent to the audiovisual discourse. In the film – perhaps because of the premise defended by some theorists that filmic time is always in the present 6 – we have not only the visual dramatization of memory, but are faced with the characters themselves, when young; that is, the process of evocation in the novel is replaced, in the film, by the lived experience itself (lived then and now re-enacted). Most of the verbal narrative, filtered through the characters' process of remembering, is expressed to the spectator by means of dialogue, thus making the situations enacted, dramatized. This change in terms of narrative strategy enhances the dramatic potential and emotional weight of the experiences portrayed, since the "process of telling" (represented by summary, typical of verbal narrative) is replaced, in the film, by mise-en-scène and dramatization.

The last parts of the novel and the film can illustrate further differences between literary and filmic discourse. In a first moment the party constitutes a place of confluence, where several apparently disconnected elements are made to converge: for instance, it is at the party that Clarissa gets to know, through Holmes (Septimus's doctor), about his patient's suicide, thus allowing celebration and death to touch and converge. The impact provoked by the sudden news makes Clarissa quit the party and hide in her bedroom. Here, another recurrent element in the narrative is made visible: the window – which almost always constitutes an index of plunging into a past or inner time. Similarly to past situations (Bourton, London), when Clarissa used to stay at the window to contemplate the sky, now, at her bedroom window, she reflects about apparently dissonant aspects: at first, the presence of an old woman by the window in the opposite flat calls her attention; Clarissa then thinks of the night, of the sky, of the clouds, of the wind; she also reflects about Septimus's suicide while she listens to the clock's strokes. Similarly to what happens throughout the narrative, again at the end of the novel we notice that the remembrances and reflections are shaped by chronological time, which limits life in material terms. To a certain extent, it is as if Clarissa were projected in the old woman herself, in her loneliness. Again, there is a suggestion of fusion of different times and experiences. In the film, Clarissa's moment by the window is accompanied by her thoughts and reflections through voice-over.

In both the novel and the film Clarissa's permanence at the window is juxtaposed to Sally's and Peter's stay in the library, away from the party. Their remembrances are again responsible for reuniting the three of them (though they are in different spaces) through the recovery of the Bourton summer experience. One of the most significant thoughts by Sally (which is omitted in the film) concerns Clarissa's (lack of) happiness and the impossibility of living life in a profound way, so as to transcend the surface: "(...) for what can one know even of the people one lives with every day? She asked. Are we not all prisoners? She had read a wonderful play about a man who scratched on the wall of his cell, and she had felt that was true of life – one scratched on the wall" (WOOLF, p. 170). This in fact constitutes a substantial metaphor for an understanding of the focus of narration employed in the novel. Instead of the omniscience and homogeneity of one narrator, we have a plurality of visions and narrative focuses that rather doubt and question than affirm. This act of "scratching on the surface", deep in its allusion to the impossibility of discovering the essence of things, finds resonance in an argument elaborated by Woolf herself, in "Modern Fiction" (1986, p. 1998): "It is the sense that there is no answer, that if honestly examined life presents question after question which must be left to sound on and on after the story is over in hopeless interrogation that fills us with a deep, and finally it may be with a resentful, despair".

3. Concluding remarks

Whereas in the novel, the dialogue between Sally and Peter is alternated with their remembrances, sometimes even making the reader forget there is an initial dialogue – a fact which helps to create a sense of distance in relation to the experience presented –, in the film there is an emphasis on dialogue, with the transformation of

what is delivered as thought (in the novel), in speech; that is, information the reader obtains in the novel through free indirect speech is transmitted, in the film, through direct speech, dialogue, scene ("scene" is used here as different from "summary"; cf. Booth). Besides that, narrative information is also condensed. Differently from the novel, where time is made elastic, allowing for a gradation of distinct past times, and consequently a more substantial fragmentation of the temporal and subjective question, the film tends to make the temporal question more compact so as to reduce it to a more homogeneous dimension. Such displacements dilute the distance between the portrayed experience and the spectator, at the same time they enhance the dramatic and emotive tone through dramatization.

Going back to the title of this text – "remembering hearts" – we could say, in a certain exaggerated way, that the novel potentializes the characters' life experiences, principally Clarissa's, through evocation and memory – with the sense of distance peculiar to them – whereas the film does that with a "heart-like" sensibility. However, no matter the differences resulting from the varied modes of representing memory and the choices adopted in the film, both versions of Mrs. Dalloway – principally through Clarissa – reveal that the most immediate property of memory is "to assure the continuity of time thus allowing the resistance of otherness, of the 'time that changes', of the ruptures which constitute the destiny of every human life (...)" (ROUSSO, 2005, p. 95). Mrs. Dalloway (verbal and audiovisual versions) significantly exemplifies the fact that "[memory] constitutes an essential element of identity, of one's perception and the perception of the others" (ROUSSO, 2005, p. 95).

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Notes

1. Cf. "But oh, we have remembering hearts", a line from the poem "Response", by Mary Ursula Bethell (1987), which inspired me to entitle my text (see bibliography for complete reference).
2. John Caughie (1997, p. 45), for instance, refers to "texts whose central defining ironic trope resists easy translation into the visual". Metalinguistic and poetic texts are also usually considered to resist being adapted.
3. This is precisely the argument Eisenstein makes in "Da literatura ao cinema: uma tragédia americana". In: Xavier (org.), 1983.
4. The translations to English of this and the subsequent passages are mine.

UM RETRATO DE MARINHEIROS DE CABO VERDE

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RESUMO: Após a publicação de dois grandes romances, Moby-Dick e Pierre, Herman Melville começou a escrever contos para as revistas norte-americanas Harper's e Putnam´s, talvez porque nenhum dos dois romances tenha sido muito bem recebido pela crítica coeva, nem bem sucedido comercialmente. A sua produção mostra-se notável: em menos de quatro anos, ou seja, entre o final de 1852 e o começo de 1856, publicou quinze narrativas breves nas duas revistas. Numa dessas histórias, "Os 'tugas" (abreviação de "portugas"), o autor faz uma descrição dos marinheiros portugueses, sempre dispostos a embarcar nos navios norte-americanos, com gratificações abaixo do preço. O texto de Melville, escrito em tempos da escravidão, é um depoimento do ambiente de racismo que testemunhara a bordo dos baleeiros em que viajou. Nesse artigo discuto aspectos dessa representação oitocentista norte-americana.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: literatura norte-americana, século XIX, marinheiros

ABSTRACT: After publishing two great novels, Moby-Dick and Pierre, Herman Melville started to write short stories for Harper's e Putnam´s magazines, maybe because both his novels were not well received by the critics, nor were a commercial success. His production is remarkable: in less than four years, i.e., between the end of 1852 and the beginning of 1856, he published fifteen short narratives in those magazines. In one of these stories, "The 'gees" (an abbreviation of "portuguees"), the author describes some Portuguese sailors, always ready to board American ships, at low pay. Melville's text, written at the time of slavery, is a testimony of the racist atmosphere that he witnessed on his travels on whalers. In this article I discuss aspects of this American 19th century representation.

KEYWORDS: American literature, 19th century, sailors

A freqüente sugestão de que o épico Moby-Dick não teria sido o mesmo se Melville não tivesse lido os Lusíadas e a evocação em White-Jacket ("for the last time, hear Camoens, boys!")[1] seriam indícios suficientes do apreço de Melville pelos portugueses se não tivesse

também dedicado dois sonetos ao autor do épico lusitano. "Camöens (Before)" e "Camöens in the Hospital (After)" é um díptico poético sobre o processo de escrever, que, oscilando entre Tasso e Camões, Melville decidiu-se pela identificação com o poeta português (Bryant, 2001).[2]

Admirador de Camões, Melville lera os Lusíadas na tradução de William Mickle (The Lusiad; or the Discovery of India, 1776) assim como os poemas de Camões traduzidos por Lord Viscount Strangford (Poems, From the Portuguese of Luis de Camoens, 1803) (Monteiro). A presença camoniana em Melville e os paralelismos intertextuais e pessoais entre ambos há muito têm sido objeto de estudo em meios acadêmicos; considerem-se, a este propósito, as referências feitas por George Monteiro em "Melville's Camões and the Figure of the Artist", posteriormente desenvolvidas em seu livro The Presence of Camões: Influences on the Literature of England, America, and Southern Africa.[3] Monteiro mostra um longo percurso de estudos sobre a conexão de Melville com Camões, encontrando já em 1924 um estudo de Merritt Y. Hughes associando a baleia branca com o gigante Adamastor.[4] Outros estudiosos norte-americanos como Lewis Mumford, Newton Arvin, Leon Howard, Luther Mansfield e Howard Vincent teceram considerações mais e menos extensas, baseadas nos documentos organizados por Jay Leda.[5] A partir de 1960 seriam encontradas as primeiras referências em língua portuguesa sobre a relação entre os dois escritores feitas por Augusto Meyer, Gilberto Freyre e Américo da Costa Ramalho, entre outros. Esses trabalhos pioneiros foram seguidos de vários outros, podendo-se inferir a partir do grande número de comentários disponíveis que a glorificação dos descobrimentos marítimos assim como outros aspectos da cultura lusitana faziam parte do universo melvilleano. Ao focalizar uma narrativa nos portugueses (ou nos cabo-verdianos, como se verá), portanto, o autor norte-americano debruçava-se sobre indivíduos que, além de conhecer, admirava.

Ao longo do século XIX, os navios baleeiros de Nantucket e New Bedford freqüentemente interrompiam suas viagens nas ilhas cabo-verdianas Brava e Fogo com o fito de recrutar marinheiros para trabalhar a bordo. Terminada a expedição, alguns desses tripulantes voltavam para os Estados Unidos, onde firmavam residência, trabalhando nas plantações. Essa pequena comunidade e sua interação com o homem branco nativo é ficcionalizada por Melville na breve narrativa The 'Gees ou Os 'tugas, na minha tradução. Melville recria o ambiente de racismo que testemunhara em suas viagens retratando de forma extremamente devastadora as relações entre os homens. Publicada pela primeira vez em março de 1856 na Harper's

New Monthly Magazine, essa história é sobre interação de um pequeno grupo de marujos com seus capitães na Nova Inglaterra.

É a história mais curta de toda ficção breve de Melville do período de 1853 a 1856, não tendo recebido muita atenção da crítica. Houve quem fizesse uma leitura literal, atribuindo a Melville tal atitude em relação à raça e à escravidão (Kaplan), outros viram no texto uma sátira (Karcher, Bickley). A argumentação de Carolyn Karcher, por exemplo, em "Melville's The 'Gees: a forgotten satire on scientific racism",[6] e depois mais extensamenteem Shadow over the Promised Land,[7] fundamenta-se na suposição de que teria sido uma reação de Melville a uma crítica publicada na Putnam's de julho de 1854 que apresentava evidências científicas de etnólogos que apontavam para uma distinção fixa entre as raças, de que haveria uma hierarquia biológica na qual o negro ocuparia a mais baixa posição. Segundo a autora a ficção seria um reductio ad absurdum dessa etnologia racista, uma sátira concretizada na personagem do narrador preconceituoso. Para outros, o texto é uma antecipação do que escreveria a respeito da indiofobia em "O vigarista" anos mais tarde.

No entanto, é certo que o texto foi escrito em tempos de escravidão, pouco antes da guerra civil, por alguém que testemunhou a bordo de um navio baleeiro as tensões dessas relações e as retratou de modo corrosivo, sem poupar o seu público. A discussão sobre raça é proposta pelo narrador, que diz logo no início que para descrever os 'tugas abordará também o tema do preconceito.

Os 'tugas

A palavra 'tuga, que dá o título à ficção, é uma abreviação de portuga, corruptela de português (uma possível tradução da abreviação supostamente feita pelos marinheiros em inglês: Gee - Portuguee – Portuguese, com conotação depreciativa). No entanto, os 'tugas são mestiços descendentes do cruzamento de condenados portugueses e negros africanos originários de Cabo Verde e não de Portugal, como indica o título. Portugueses, portanto, eram apenas os ancestrais dos 'tugas, que teriam sido enviados para a ilha alguns séculos antes.

Trata-se de um retrato multifacético dos marinheiros cabo-verdianos, acrimonioso, com uma certa ironia e pretensão de realismo. Não se propõe a indexar os valores, as virtudes, nem as qualidades excepcionais de um povo, nem sua grandeza histórica e, embora aponte para alguns de seus vícios, tampouco o desqualifica. Trata-se de um projeto duplo com dois enunciados que se querem verdadeiros: ao retratar os 'tugas exalta-os, pois retrata o notável e por isso surpreende, mas logo, por inversão, decreta execrável aquilo

que retrata. Ao rebaixá-los com traços caricaturais, rebaixa também todo o universo narrado e com ele o que fez o retrato. O tema da história, que é uma resposta à pergunta "Que diabos é um 'tuga?", portanto, desdobra-se nessas duas experiências: a do sujeito observado e a do sujeito que observa. O caráter polissêmico dessa imagem, por conseguinte, revela-se na observação de todos os sujeitos envolvidos na narrativa.

O marinheiro que conta a história concentra tal pluralidade de significados. Ora é condescendente, ora agressivo, ora irônico, mas sempre pleiteia objetividade. Seu relato em primeira pessoa é curto, recheado de humor, jogos de palavras, inversões e comparações. Cria empatia, buscando a cumplicidade dos ouvintes com uma narração que visa entreter e instruir, a respeito de um assunto pouco conhecido. Contudo, ao ridicularizar as inadequações de um grupo social torna-se recriminável. Mal iniciada a exposição, revela-se mais intolerante do que os protagonistas da intolerância ao explicar que "de todos os homens, os marinheiros são os mais preconceituosos, especialmente no que se refere à raça", referindo-se em seguida aos 'tugas como "criaturas de uma raça inferior".

Segundo ele, há dois tipos de 'tugas, os que vivem no mar e os que vivem em Nantucket e New Bedford. Estes últimos são sofisticados e não são tão facilmente identificáveis, pois "podem ser confundidos com cidadãos naturalizados queimados pelo sol". No ambiente dos marinheiros não se encontram 'tugas em posição de comando, sendo todos trabalhadores braçais que se contentam em cumprir ordens em troca de baixa remuneração. As histórias individuais são sobre um 'tuga com elefantíase e outro aleijado, ambos tendo o propósito de ludibriar seus capitães, querendo ocultar a deficiência para embarcar em troca de pouco ou nenhum dinheiro ou de alguns biscoitos.

As metáforas de animais não são poucas, associando-os à zebra, ao cavalo, à aguieta, ao veado e ao macaco:

> He has a serviceably hard keel, a kick from which is by the judicious held almost as dangerous as one from a wild zebra. (Melville 1987:348)[8]

> One must study them, just as to know and be a judge of horses one must study horses. (Melville 1987:349)[9]

> Like the negro, the 'Gee has a peculiar savor, but a different one – a sort of wild, arine, gamy savor, as in the sea-bird called haglet . Like venison, his flesh is firm but lean. (Melville 1987:348)[10]

> That the monkey-jacket was originally so called from the circumstance that that rude sort of shaggy garment was first known in Fogo. They often call a monkey-jacket a 'Gee-jacket. (Melville 1987:350)[11]

Também ao descrevê-los fisicamente, o seu relato evoca os animais, pois poucos são os traços humanos dos 'tugas, as suas especificidades anatômicas sobressaindo-se às espirituais.

> His physicals and spirituals are in singular contrast. The 'Gee has a great appetite, but little imagination; a large eyeball, but small insight. Biscuit he crunches, but sentiment he eschews. (Melville 1987:147)[12]

Os traços fisionômicos são descritos com termos pouco encomiásticos como "desproporcional", "boca grande", "pescoço curto",

> His complexion is hybrid; his hair ditto, his mouth disproportionally large, as compared with his stomach; his neck short, but his head round, compact, and betokening a solid understanding. (Melville 1987:347)[13]

A questão do hibridismo tem recebido muita atenção recentemente em meios acadêmicos, mas não é na sua acepção de fenômeno cultural que foi empregada na descrição do protagonista. Quando escrita, provavelmente, aproximava-se da concepção darwiniana do século XIX, a qual pode ser percebida na seguinte definição do Oxford English Dictionary, deduzindo-se que as implicações biológicas do termo eram associadas à descrição do 'tuga: "The offspring of two animals or plants of different species, or (less strictly) varieties; a half-breed, cross-breed, or mongrel". [A cria de dois animais ou plantas de espécies diferentes, ou variedades (menos exato); um mestiço, raça cruzada, ou vira-lata].

Para provocar o riso, as incursões do narrador também são depreciativas ("a green 'Gee being of all green things the greenest... owing to the clumsiness of their feet.. ... green 'Gees are wont, in no inconsiderate numbers, to fall overboard the first dark, squally night") (Melville 1987:348)[14] Se, por um lado, os marinheiros mestiços são inferiorizados, por outro, a descrição dos homens brancos (dos capitães e de alguns marinheiros) também é não é menos intolerante: são

preconceituosos, desdenhosos, cruéis, exploradores. Chamam os 'tugas apenas quando há algum trabalho pesado a ser feito, para depois ignorá-los e jamais tratam-nos pelos seus nomes, reservando-lhes sempre a mesma abreviação ("Here, 'Gee! You 'Ge-e-e-e!") (Melville 1987:350). Avaros recrutam os marinheiros de Cabo Verde por não exigirem salário, violentos distribuem generosas quantidades de bofetadas, tabefes e socos. Mas é principalmente na ação de recrutar os marinheiros, que em muito lembra um leilão de escravos, que são retratados de modo corrosivo, como se depreende das instruções que o narrador oferece a um capitão inexperiente:

> Get square before him, at, say three paces, so that the eye, like a shot, may rake the 'Gee fore anda ft, at one glance taking his whole make and build – how he looks about the head, whether he carry it well; his ears, are they over-lengthy? How fares it in the withers? His legs, does the 'Gee stand strongly on them? His knees, any Belshazzar symptoms there? How stands it in the region of the brisket? etc., etc.
> Thus far for bone and bottom. For the rest, draw close to, and put the centre of the pupil of your eye – put it, as it were, right into the 'Gee's eye; even as an eye-stone, gently, but firmly slip it in there, and then note what peck or beam of viciousness, if any, will be floated out. (Melville 1987:349)[15]

Tais instruções não seriam necessárias para o único marinheiro a ter nome, o experiente capitão Hosea Kean. Conhecedor de 'tugas e sempre em alto-mar, poderia complementar as informações do narrador acrescendo-as de violência: sua competência sobre o assunto permite-lhe que invada a casa do 'tuga e aponte-lhe uma pistola na cabeça antes de recrutá-lo.

Os quakers mencionados tampouco são retratados com condescendência. Embora o narrador diga que tiveram o nobre intuito de enviar cinco 'tugas para a escola de Darmouth, "instituição fundada em parte com o objetivo de ensinar os clássicos e a matemática superior aos índios selvagens", a ironia do enunciado logo é trazida a lume. Sabia-se então serem os quakers avessos ao ensino, assim como a comparação dos 'tugas com os índios selvagens é apenas mais um matiz da maneira ácida de a eles se referir.

Encontram-se, portanto, neste texto melvilleano, sinais simultâneos de referencialidade ao mundo real e ao universo ficcional.

Se descrição é escancarada nas suas feições sórdidas, se sátira encontra-se no limiar do escárnio; como ficção, o efeito é o de uma composição incômoda, controversa, dicotômica. Formulado de modo particularmente polissêmico veicula idéias antagônicas, apontando para a natureza espúria das relações entre os homens. Mais do que um compromisso histórico é um testemunho que suscita atordoamento.

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tific racism", American Quarterly XXVII (1975: 421-42).
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8. Tem um calcanhar duro que é muito útil, o seu chute é considerado quase tão perigoso quanto o de uma zebra selvagem (Todas as traduções são minhas).
9. Precisa-se estudá-los, assim como se precisa estudar os cavalos para se conhecer e julgar os cavalos.
10. Como o preto, o 'tuga tem um odor peculiar, mas diferente – um tipo de odor selvagem, marinho, com aroma de caça, como o da ave marítima chamada aguieta. Como a carne de veado, a sua é firme e magra.
11. porque a jaquetinha-de-macaco dos marinheiros foi originalmente chamada assim porque essa espécie de roupa desalinhada foi vista pela primeira vez no Fogo. Muitas vezes chamam a jaquetinha-de-macaco de jaquetinha-'tuga.
12. O seu físico e o seu espiritual fazem um contraste singular. O 'tuga tem um bom apetite, mas pouca imaginação; um grande globo ocular, mas pouca visão. Mastiga os biscoitos, mas evita os sentimentos.
13. O seu aspecto é híbrido e o seu cabelo idem; a sua boca é desproporcionalmente grande se comparada com a sua barriga; o seu pescoço é curto, mas a sua cabeça redonda, compacta, o que indica uma inteligência sólida.
14. um 'tuga verde é a mais verde de todas as coisas verdes... por causa da grosseria dos seus pés, ... um número grande de 'tugas verdes costuma cair no mar na primeira noite escura de tempestade.
15. Fique diante dele a uns três passos para que o olho, como um tiro, possa atravessar o 'tuga da popa à proa, percebendo num golpe de vista toda a sua forma e estrutura – como ele se parece na cabeça, se a carrega direito; as suas orelhas, são compridas demais? Como são as suas juntas? As suas pernas, o 'tuga consegue firmar-se nelas? Os seus joelhos, terão sintomas de Belshazzar? Qual o estado do seu peito? etc., etc.
Isso para o esqueleto e para a parte inferior. Para o resto, chegue bem perto, ponha o centro da pupila do seu olho – coloque-o como se fosse dentro do olho do 'tuga, mesmo como um olho de gato, suavemente, mas com firmeza, e observe se há uma mancha ou um travo de vício a flutuar.

AMBROSE BIERCE E MACHADO DE ASSIS: DIÁLOGOS COM AS FILOSOFIAS DE FINAL DO SÉCULO XIX

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines Ambrose Bierce as a literary counterpart of Machado de Assis in the United States. Although different in upbringing and cultural background, both writers addressed the literary and philosophical dilemmas of their age in a similar manner. Rejecting the scientific tenets of realist and naturalist fiction with its emphasis on objectivity, omniscience, and linearity, they opted for narratives dealing with the complex workings of the mind and influence of human predispositions in our conceptions of reality. Theirs was a view of reality grounded on the uncertain and ambiguous aspects of human existence. Bierce's short fiction portrays the realm of the mind as unmappable, multifaceted, and operating in conjunction with the whole repertoire of human emotions. He questions the traditional body-mind dichotomy common in traditional 19th century rational discourses. Likewise, Machado's short fiction enacts the complexity of existence by showing that nature does not behave in predictable patterns. Like Bierce, his is a fiction that privileges ambiguity and uncertainty instead of clarity and predictability.

KEYWORDS: Bierce; Machado; filosofia; arte; pragmatismo

Ambrose G. Bierce, jornalista, satirista e contista desaparecido no México em 1914, tem sido uma fonte de mistério e especulações das mais variadas no mundo literário estadunidense. Durante seu tempo ganhou a fama de "bitter Bierce" por seus ataques veementes a escritores, políticos, líderes religiosos e celebridades nas colunas de jornais por onde passou, em especial, o San Francisco Examiner, jornal que fez dele uma figura respeitada e ao mesmo tempo detestada na costa oeste do Estados Unidos. Porém, o grande mistério acerca de Bierce envolve seu desaparecimento. Frustrado com a vida, família e carreira, o setuagenário Bierce parte em outubro de 1913 de Washington D. C. em uma viagem pelos campos de batalha da guerra civil onde lutou. Contam seus biógrafos que após passar por várias cidades do sul estadunidense, atravessou para o México, então em meio a uma revolução, e se uniu ao exército do revolucionário Pancho Villa. Em uma carta escrita pouco antes de sua partida, escreveu dizendo que ser fuzilado como gringo em meio à revolução era melhor do que

morrer devido à doença ou queda de uma escada (MORRIS, 1995, p. 249). Ao desaparecer sem deixar rastros, tornou-se uma figura envolta em mistério. Acredita-se que sua morte ocorreu em 1914, mas a verdade é que ninguém sabe ao certo como e onde desapareceu. Inúmeras investigações já foram realizadas em busca de indícios que esclareçam seu desaparecimento, mas esforços têm sido em vão. A aura de mistério em torno de Bierce até levou o escritor mexicano Carlos Fuentes a retraçar e imaginar os últimos meses assim como a morte de Bierce em Gringo Viejo, romance que serviu de base para o filme "Old Gringo".

Se por um lado não há consenso entre biógrafos, intelectuais e curiosos quanto ao lugar e causas de seu desaparecimento, por outro, o que a maioria dos críticos concorda é que seus contos estão entre as melhores produções literárias dos Estados Unidos do final do século dezenove. Embora seu talento como contista só tenha sido reconhecido bem mais tarde, o que não se nega hoje em dia é que Bierce deixou uma marca influente nas letras de seu tempo, marca essa que influenciou vários escritores em décadas subseqüentes. Nos Estados Unidos, entre os que têm sido vistos como herdeiros de seu estilo e temática estão Stephen Crane e Ernest Hemingway. Contudo, a influência de Bierce não se restringe ao hemisfério norte apenas. Howard M. Fraser, em um artigo iluminador, discute as grandes semelhanças entre Bierce e argentino Jorge Luis Borges, principalmente no que se refere ao tratamento do tempo, da mente e do fantástico. No final, ressalta que "o modo como Borges articula os mistérios da suspensão temporal indica que o espanófilo americano é um precursor do argentino anglófilo..."[1] (1977, p. 180). Esta semelhança entre Borges e Bierce é assinalada de forma espirituosa pela romancista britânica Brigid Brophy ao observar que Bierce na verdade não morreu, mas se refugiou nos Andes e ressurgiu na América do Sul sob o pseudônimo de Jorge Luis Borges, após o mundo ter reconhecido suas críticas às tendências culturais e política de fin de siècle (apud DAVIDSON, 1984, p. 5). A influência de Bierce também tem sido apontada por Luis Harss e Barbara Dohmann nas obras do escritor argentino Julio Cortázar, especialmente no que se refere ao gótico e ao fantástico (1967, p. 211). Cathy Davidson reitera os comentários de Harss e Dohmann ao observar que Cortázar presta a mais clara homenagem a Bierce ao replicar em seus contos vários recursos utilizados pelo escritor estadunidense. Ambos forçam o leitor, complementa Davidson, a serem cúmplices durante a leitura, assim como se recusam a fazer uma distinção clara entre fantasia e realidade, artífice e verdade (1984, p. 128). Davidson vai um pouco

além das influências de Bierce na América Latina e chega a apontar, por exemplo, a influência do autor no escritor de ficção japonesa contemporânea Ryunosuke Akutagawa (1984, p. 130-131). Como se pode observar, os recursos narrativos de Bierce, assim como sua visão crítica da arte e cultura de seu tempo, extrapolaram fronteiras nacionais, culturais e alcançaram escritores em lugares certamente inimagináveis pelo próprio escritor.

Seguindo esta mesma linha crítica, este ensaio se detém no século dezenove e examina a produção de Bierce juntamente com a de um escritor brasileiro que à primeira vista parece não ter nada em comum com o contista do hemisfério norte – Machado de Assis. Machado, ao contrário de Bierce, não nasceu em um lar com tradição cultural e nenhuma chance teve de conseguir uma educação escolar formal. Apesar de ter escrito e trabalhado para jornais cariocas, seu estilo crítico foi bem mais sutil e menos agressivo, embora não menos contundente. Tampouco viajou para longe do Rio, e muito menos participou de uma guerra.

Apesar destas diferenças, o que se observa ao analisar a produção literária de ambos é uma sintonia em relação aos dilemas culturais e literários de final de século. Enquanto a maioria dos escritores embarcava no bonde do realismo e naturalismo, Bierce e Machado produziam narrativas que desafiavam a linearidade do tempo, a certeza dos postulados do conhecimento e a complexidade das percepções humanas. Portanto, partindo do pressuposto de que tanto Bierce quanto Machado, além de preocupações estéticas, seguiam uma agenda particular em suas atividades literárias, este ensaio analisará "O homem e a cobra" e "Um luta feroz", de Bierce[2], e "O jogo do bicho" e "Ex-cathedra", de Machado, como críticas ao paradigma racional em voga no final do século dezenove, crítica essa evidenciada na articulação de uma epistemologia que ressaltava a força e influência das predisposições humanas em juízos de valor e concepções da realidade.

Em vários momentos de suas respectivas carreiras, tanto Bierce quanto Machado se mostraram céticos para com os rumos da cultura literária de final do século dezenove. No Brasil, o ambiente intelectual se deixava seduzir pelos preceitos do realismo literário, o qual Machado via com grande suspeita. Numa crítica aberta ao romancista português Eça de Queiroz, falava da subserviência desse à "reprodução fotográfica e servil das coisas mínimas e ignóbeis" (1962, p.156). As produções literárias e culturais também não escapavam a influência do cientificismo promovido especialmente pelo positivismo de Comte. Em muitas partes do país, academias, que funcionavam como

santuários do conhecimento e da ciência, disseminavam a doutrina do pensador francês, e com isso, um número significante de escritores e intelectuais se uniram ao movimento na esperança de ali encontrar a renovação cultural, artística e política do país (GUIMARÃES, 1987, p. 25-30). Nos Estados Unidos, o positivismo não encontrou o solo fértil que teve no Brasil. Contudo, o clima de otimismo para com os benefícios da ciência experimental também afetou o cenário das ciências humanas e artes. Uma nova concepção de mundo centrada na observação e experimentação substituía o conhecimento intuitivo, filosófico e teológico. Como observa David E. Shi, "cientistas empiristas ensinavam as pessoas a não se maravilharem com fenômenos naturais, mas sim a experimentar e racionalizar, discernir e dissecar, classificar e comparar" (1995, p. 97). Em uma série de definições publicadas em um jornal semanal e mais tarde compiladas sob o título de The Devil's Dictionary, Bierce censurou este tipo de visão do mundo. Definiu espirituosamente o termo realismo como "a arte de retratar a natureza como vista por sapos" e razão como "pesar probabilidades na escala do desejo" (1993, p. 101). Estes foram os contextos, portanto, que levaram Bierce e Machado a produzirem narrativas que desafiaram os modelos epistemológicos vigentes nas últimas décadas do século dezenove.

Dois contos que exemplificam o antagonismo de Bierce quanto à confiança exacerbada nos postulados da ciência e do racionalismo são "O homem e a cobra" e "Uma luta feroz". Se à primeira vista parecem tematizar os mistérios da mente ou psicose, uma análise mais cuidadosa revela uma intenção paralela – trazer à tona as limitações de um sistema de pensamento ou abordagem da existência humana. Se o racionalismo científico intentava divorciar a figura do indivíduo das representações da realidade, nestas narrativas Bierce demonstra que o indivíduo com seus interesses e pré-disposições são elementos ativos em postulados do conhecimento e constituição do real.

Em "O homem e a cobra", Bierce coloca a capacidade racional do personagem central em xeque ao expor não somente suas limitações, mas também o papel de suas inclinações e do ambiente em suas percepções do mundo. No final, em um esforço para entender racionalmente um fato diante de si, o protagonista acaba ironicamente sucumbindo às forças irracionais que tentou combater desde o início. Neste conto, o narrador descreve Harker Brayton, um homem culto e aparentemente acostumado a enfrentar situações adversas de forma racional e metódica. O texto abre com o personagem hospedado em casa de um amigo seu, estudioso de répteis, lendo sobre serpentes e

seu poder de hipnotizar pessoas. O personagem ri diante do que acredita ser uma ingenuidade e total falta de senso crítico do autor do texto. De repente, dois pontos luzentes chamam sua atenção debaixo da cama. Descartando como possível reflexo das lamparinas a gás penduradas no teto, tenta pôr de lado o fato. Porém, seus olhos continuam a voltar-se para os pontos de luz, que desta vez, parecem um pouco mais brilhantes. Volta seus olhos para o livro, mas, para seu espanto, o que parece estar a sua frente agora são os olhos de uma serpente:

> Revelavam, quase diretamente sob o corrimão do pé da cama, a forma enrodilhada de uma enorme serpente – os pontos de luz eram seus olhos! Sua cabeça horrível e achatada, lançada para frente, partindo do centro da espiral e repousando na camada externa, estava projetada em sua direção, os contornos de suas mandíbulas brutais e amplas e testa de jeito idiota servindo para mostrar a direção de seu olhar malevolente. (p. 82)

Mesmo assustado com o que via, Brayton tenta lidar com a situação calmamente. Pensa em tocar a campainha e chamar os empregados, mas não quer dar sinal de fraqueza. Como um indivíduo metódico, prossegue analisando o caso cuidadosamente a fim de determinar se o animal é perigoso: "De que modo seria venenoso, mesmo se o fosse? Era venenoso? Seria uma jibóia? Seu conhecimento dos perigos da natureza não o possibilitaram saber" (p. 84). Após ponderar o caso, resolve sair do aposento. É a partir deste ponto na narrativa que o comportamento de Brayton começa a tomar rumos irracionais. Tudo começa quando o personagem percebe que ao tentar dar um passo em direção a saída, na verdade começa a se dirigir para perto do animal. Seus pés não acompanham seu raciocínio, e quanto mais procura afastar-se dos pontos luminosos, mais as o animal o atrai para si. A cobra começa também a tomar outras proporções, com seus olhos aumentando e parecendo sóis ofuscantes, com cores brilhantes. Entra então em estado de alucinação, imaginando estar às margens do Nilo ouvindo canções de um passado distante. De repente, se encontra em um lugar chuvoso com arco-íris no céu, e vê em seguida um enorme cobra com uma coroa na cabeça olhando para ele com o mesmo olhar de sua mãe.

Após uma série de delírios, Brayton é totalmente tomado pelo encanto da cobra. No final, já deitado no chão, sua aparência muda. Começa inconscientemente a imitar os movimentos serpentinos do

animal. O narrador descreve grotescamente a morte de Brayton: "Havia espuma em seus lábios; caia em flocos. Fortes convulsões invadiam seu corpo, com ondulações quase serpentinas. Curvava-se no quadril, sacudindo suas pernas de um lado para o outro. E cada momento o colocava mais perto da serpente. Atirou suas mãos para frente para se apoiar, ainda constantemente avançando apoiando-se nos cotovelos" (p. 86). Quando seus anfitriões, Dr. Druring e esposa, ouvem um estranho barulho vindo do andar de cima, correm ao quarto de Brayton e o encontram caído no chão. A conclusão que tiraram foi que Brayton tivera um ataque. Ao supervisionar o quarto em busca de indícios, notam algo estranho sob a cama. Ao puxá-lo, descobrem uma cobra empalhada com dois botões em forma de olhos.

O conto "O homem e a cobra" tematiza e questiona tendências racionalistas ao demonstrar os limites da capacidade de raciocínio lógico de Brayton. Isto é, quanto mais Brayton tenta explicar o que se passa diante de si, menos controle tem sobre seus atos e comportamento. O texto mostra que a princípio o protagonista se mantém firme e interpreta a visão como o reflexo de algum objeto no quarto. Todavia, à medida que os minutos passam, o objeto passa a fasciná-lo, e "impulsos os quais não lhe ocorria analisar" o impelem a dirigir seu olhar em direção aos dois pontos luminosos (p. 86). Chega a um ponto onde o que vê não são mais pontos luminosos, mas um olhar "com um significado, com desejo malévolo" (p. 82). Ao perder o controle e deixar-se tomar pelo medo, o lado irracional prevalece e Brayton entra em estado de choque. Em Brayton, Bierce encena, portanto, as delimitações de uma mente racional ao mostrar em ação uma gama de emoções que escapam ao controle e poder de explicação lógica do protagonista.

Bierce mostra, desta maneira, que atitudes mentais operam em conjunto com uma variedade de elementos. Isto é, pensamentos não são entidades lógicas operando isoladamente, sem vínculo com o mundo emocional do indivíduo, suas propensões, interesses e motivações. Como dizia William James, pensador contemporâneo de Bierce, todo pensamento faz parte de uma consciência individual, e tem sua origem, na dinâmica de impressões internas e externas (1981, p. 220). As percepções de Brayton, bem como suas alucinações, são produtos de vários fatores. Por exemplo, o livro que lê quando nota os dois pontos de luz fala de serpentes e sua capacidade hipnotizadora. Também se encontra no momento na casa de Dr. Druring, um estudioso de répteis, que mantém em sua casa várias espécies de cobras, inclusive algumas que comem umas as outras. Algumas até escapam do serpentário e rondam pela casa. Estes elementos

certamente contribuem para que Brayton veja uma coisa e imagine outra.

A mesma visão de racionalidade e fenômenos mentais estão presentes no conto "Uma luta feroz", que tem como pano de fundo a guerra civil dos Estados Unidos. Aqui, como em "O homem e a cobra", Bierce também se concentra nas operações mentais de um único personagem e sua vã tentativa de controlar uma gama variada de emoções. Como Brayton, o personagem principal fica como que obcecado por um objeto que no final acaba levando-o à loucura e à morte. Acima de tudo, Bierce demonstra que a mente não é uma entidade separada do corpo, mas opera em conjunção com esta, estando sujeita à influência de crenças e interesses pessoais.

Como Brayton, Brainerd Byring é uma pessoa de sucesso que se orgulha de sua capacidade de autocontrole. Foi sua determinação e tenacidade que o fizeram subir no exército, levando-o ao nível de segundo tenente: "Havia se alistado nos primeiros dias da guerra como soldado, sem conhecimento militar sequer, e foi promovido para primeiro sargento de sua companhia devido a sua educação e modo engajante..." (p. 299). Mesmo tendo um medo mórbido de cadáveres, isso nunca o impossibilitou de cumprir com seus deveres de oficial. A narrativa aponta mais de uma vez seu perfil de bravura.

Seu lado racional se torna mais evidente na noite em que fica responsável por um grupo de homens cuja missão é guardar o local onde estão acampados. Espalhados por toda a floresta e instruídos a permanecerem em silêncio, tinham que relatar qualquer movimento estranho nas redondezas. Byring, como comandante, escolhe um local seguro e se coloca à disposição de seus soldados para qualquer eventualidade. Enquanto pondera a respeito da escuridão e das muitas formas que vê a seu redor, percebe um jato de luz sobre algo que não havia notado antes. Ao se aproximar, descobre que é um cadáver, o que o faz dar um passo atrás numa mistura de medo e repugnância. Daquele momento em diante, muda sua percepção do ambiente ao seu redor. Apesar de tentar se manter calmo, seus olhos insistem em se voltar na direção do corpo inerte: "No entanto, manteve seus olhos naquela direção até [o corpo] parecer mais distinto". De fato, continua o narrador, à medida que Byring olhava para o corpo, este "parecia ter-se movido um pouco mais perto" (p. 301).

Como um indivíduo racional, Byring tenta todo tipo de estratégia para permanecer em controle de suas emoções. Primeiramente, racionaliza que o medo é proveniente de séculos de superstição e crença no sobrenatural naturalmente herdado de seus antepassados: "o que nós herdamos como superstição nossos ancestrais bárbaros

devem ter considerado uma convicção razoável". Continua racionalizando sobre a religião de seus ancestrais e do quanto suas crenças em certas propriedades de cadáveres deve ter passado para gerações futuras. "A antiga crença na malevolência do corpo desapareceu das crenças e até mesmo da tradição, mas deixou sua herança de terror, que é transmitida de geração a geração - é uma parte de nós tanto quanto nosso sangue e ossos", finaliza Byring (p. 301).

Estes e outros pensamentos ajudam Byring a se manter em controle, mas assim que se acalma, seus olhos insistem em se voltar na direção do corpo. Agora pode ver todo o corpo no chão, que reconhece como o de um soldado confederado. Mais uma vez, luta contra seus medos voltando a raciocinar filosoficamente:

> Talvez nossos ancestrais asiáticos centrais não tivessem o costume de enterrar corpos. Neste caso, é fácil entender seu medo dos mortos, que se constituíam realmente uma ameaça e mal. Traziam pestilências. Crianças eram ensinadas a evitar o lugar onde jaziam, e fugir caso se deparassem inadvertidamente com um cadáver. (p. 302)

Nesta altura o tenente Byring percebe que está segurando com tanta força sua espada desembainhada que suas mãos chegam a doer. Sua posição é outra também. Está inclinado para frente, como que pronto a atacar o inimigo. O narrador comenta que agora Byring pode jurar que corpo está se movendo. Ao hesitar entre o medo e raciocínio lógico, um tiro na linha da barricada desencadeia os instintos de guerra e autodefesa de Byring, fazendo com que avance para cima do soldado morto. A narrativa termina falando na confusão de tiros e gritos, cavalos correndo e soldados atirando em todas as direções. Na manhã seguinte, um capitão e um soldado saem cedo para fazer um levantamento da batalha na noite anterior. Numa encruzilhada, está o corpo do oficial federal e soldado lado a lado. Ao examinar os corpos, vê que Byring morreu por sua própria espada, e que o corpo que jaz ao seu lado, em estado de putrefação, cheira mal. Porém, o corpo de Byring mostra feridas recentes, o que atesta que haviam lutado ferozmente.

Se à primeira vista este conto parece tratar dos efeitos psicológicos da guerra, em outro nível, Bierce examina também os limites da racionalidade e dos processos através dos quais a mente concebe a realidade. A crítica do paradigma racional é mais evidente na inabilidade de Byring em lidar com seus medos através de raciocínio lógico. Para manter-se a postos e enfrentar seus medos, Byring, como

mostrado no texto, recorre a todo tipo de filosofia e conhecimento histórico-científico sobre cadáveres. Como um evolucionista, crê em herança genética e adaptação ao ambiente: "Eu herdei [o medo]... suponho que vá precisar de mil anos – talvez dez mil – para a humanidade superar este medo" (p. 301). Byring concebe o medo como fraqueza humana que pode ser vencida através de disciplina mental e bravura. No entanto, como mostra Bierce, apesar de suas tentativas, o elemento humano prevalece. Na batalha que é travada em seguida, Bierce expõe a fragilidade das fronteiras entre o racional e irracional, questionando assim a legitimidade da dicotomia mente-corpo exaltada pelo pensamento cartesiano.

Semelhante a Bierce, Machado também privilegia narrativas que expõem as falácias e limitações das tendências racionalistas de seu tempo. Como demonstram os contos a seguir, ele questiona a confiança exacerbada no poder da razão como único instrumento capaz de explicar as complexidades da realidade, quer interna ou externa. Machado vai um pouco adiante e questiona também o modelo newtoniano de descrição dos fenômenos, isto é, a visão de que a natureza flui num padrão seqüencial linear, padrão este que uma vez descoberto, dará ao indivíduo a capacidade de prever futuros comportamentos dos fenômenos da natureza. À maneira de Bierce, ele ressalta o fator humano com toda sua complexidade e imprevisibilidade como elemento constituinte de nossas formulações da realidade.

"Jogo do bicho" apresenta em tom lúdico e cômico o ceticismo de Machado para com o modelo racionalista de conhecimento e da realidade. O conto discorre sobre os altos e baixos financeiros de Camilo, o personagem central, que trabalha no escritório da Marinha. Como os personagens de Bierce, Camilo é também retratado como um homem metódico que acredita que o mundo opera de maneira lógica e previsível. Porém, Camilo crê ainda que ao decifrar esta lógica, poderá não somente prever mas também manipular resultados futuros. Esta visão racional e metódica de Camilo é percebida logo no início da narrativa, quando o leitor se depara com o episódio em torno de seu casamento. O texto comenta que Camilo se apaixona por uma jovem e casa com ela três meses depois. Contudo, o fator que o leva ao casamento não foi tanto o amor que sentia como o fato de esta possuir uma escrava que prometeu acompanhá-la onde quer que fosse. Camilo vê isto como um investimento: "A idéia de que a preta os servia de graça, entrou por uma verba eterna no orçamento" (p. 123). Para Camilo, trabalho gratuito significava segurança financeira. Outro episódio revelador é sua atitude para com seu trabalho. Quando

seu colega de escritório falece, ele friamente vê isso como seu passaporte de ascensão no trabalho. O texto fala que ele "acompanhou o enterro do colega, quase a rir. Em casa, não se conteve e riu. Expôs à mulher tudo o que se ia dar, os nomes dos promovidos, dois, um tal Botelho, protegido do general e ele" (p. 123).

Porém, a crença de que existe uma ordem lógica na natureza fica mais evidente quando Camilo decide tentar a sorte no jogo do bicho. A fascinação de Camilo com este jogo começa quando, ao se encontrar endividado, decide apostar nesta forma popular de loteria. Aposta cinco tostões no macaco e para sua surpresa, ganha muito mais do que inicialmente colocara no jogo. Esta primeira vitória leva Camilo a ver no jogo do bicho a saída para seus problemas financeiros. Decide então apostar mais vezes no macaco, desta vez sem sucesso. Tenta outros animais então, como o gato, cachorro, avestruz e perde novamente. Em uma ocasião, aceita a sugestão do jornal e aposta no gato. Ganha desta vez.

É a partir deste momento que começa a imaginar existir uma lógica por traz do sorteio de animais. Se descobrir esta lógica, pensa Camilo, poderá finalmente encontrar a chave que desvendará os mistérios do jogo e fará dele um eterno ganhador. Sua empreitada seguinte é descobrir então essa fórmula. Após várias tentativas frustradas, suspeita que o "bicheiro entrava na boa fortuna dos bichos, e quis ligar-se-lhe por um laço espiritual" (p. 125). Pede então que este seja o padrinho de seu filho. Para seu desapontamento, este apenas lhe diz que deve ser "fiel" a um bicho. Após considerar a sugestão do amigo, apostou na cobra por uma semana inteira sem sucesso. Muda então para o carneiro após ver um carro cujo número correspondia àquele animal, atropelar um menino. Para seu desespero, perde novamente.

Apesar de todas estas perdas, Camilo insiste em achar que se decifrar qual animal tem mais probabilidade de ser sorteado, e apostar neste sempre, ganhará a sorte grande. Fica então a ruminar uma maneira de fazer esta descoberta. O texto fala que isso se torna a obsessão de Camilo. Às vezes, "entrava por uma rua com os olhos no chão, dava quarenta, sessenta, oitenta passos, erguia repentinamente os olhos e fitava a primeira casa à direita ou à esquerda, tomava o número e ia dali o bicho correspondente". Tenta, em outra ocasião "o processo de números escritos e postos dentro do chapéu", o número dos bilhetes do tesouro e "cem outras formas, que se repetiam ou se completavam" (p. 127). Em todas estas tentativas perdia dinheiro. Aposta então no leão, aproveitando a sugestão de seu compadre de que este animal não era sorteado já algum tempo. Joga e ganha finalmente cinco mil réis. A esta altura, sua dívida com o jogo já é

bem maior, chegando, segundo o narrador, na casa dos seis mil réis. Apesar disso, Camilo celebra a vitória gastando metade do dinheiro em comida, vinho e jóia para a esposa.

O conto acima resumido, apesar do tom leve e aparentemente brincalhão, é mais do que um exemplo de perseverança ou perigos do jogo. Aqui, o texto trata das limitações do paradigma científico ao retratar Camilo como a epítome da mente racional. Como os personagens dos contos de Bierce, Camilo acredita poder controlar um fenômeno através do raciocínio lógico e ordenado. Ele crê ter a realidade um padrão lógico, com princípios governados por leis que quando descobertos podem ser manipulados. De seu casamento planejado, sua tentativa de ascensão na marinha à busca por riqueza e prestígio na loteria, vê a natureza como "um sistema regido por alguma força misteriosa, mas apta a ser descoberta" (DIXON, 1992, p. 41). Esta crença leva Camilo a tentar toda a sorte de estratagemas para descobrir a lógica do jogo do bicho.

De acordo com William James, o racionalista "parte dos inteiros e universais, e exagera sobre a unidade das coisas"; o mundo do racionalista, acrescenta James, é "limpo e nobre. As contradições da vida real estão ausentes dele. Sua arquitetura é clássica. Princípios da razão traçam seus contornos, necessidades lógicas cimentam suas partes" (2000, pp. 4; 8). Camilo exemplifica esta noção de mundo ao acreditar que fenômenos são guiados por princípios que ao serem descobertos revelarão a unidade, previsibilidade e estrutura da realidade. Mais ainda, de posse desse conhecimento, poderá usá-lo a seu favor.

Em resposta a esta perspectiva, Machado propõe em "O jogo do bicho" uma ótica onde a imprevisibilidade e complexidade imperam. Como Camilo descobre mais tarde, o mundo está repleto de curvas e paradas dificilmente previsíveis. Ao casar com uma jovem que traria uma escrava, Camilo imagina lucro, mas logo descobre, com o adoecimento desta, que vai ser uma despesa a mais no orçamento. O mesmo acontece em seu trabalho. A morte de seu colega de departamento não resulta necessariamente em sua tão esperada promoção: "não houve reforma; Camilo acomodou-se e foi vivendo. Já então tinha algumas dívidas, descontava os ordenados, buscava trabalhos particulares às escondidas" (p. 124). No jogo, sua obsessão por resultados rápidos o leva ainda mais ao endividamento.

Um outro conto com a mesma visão crítica do racionalismo é "Ex cathedra". Aqui são expostas mais uma vez as falácias de uma lógica newtoniana guiada pela premissa de que o mundo é constituído de elementos previsíveis, que quando decifrados darão acesso às leis

operantes do universo. Neste conto Machado acrescenta, como Bierce, que tendências e pré-disposições individuais desempenham um papel preponderante em configurações da realidade. Isto é, a noção de um observador onisciente capaz de formular conceitos universais de forma imparcial acerca da vida se constitui uma quimera.

A narrativa em "Ex cathedra" está centrada em Fulgêncio, que como Camilo, também se revela um ser metódico e objetivo em seus empreendimentos. Fulgêncio, como Camilo, também embarca numa busca por uma fórmula chave. O texto fala que "vivia do escrito, do impresso, do doutrinal, do abstrato, dos princípios e das fórmulas" (p. 457). Sua paixão por teorias e abstrações chega a tal ponto que sua afilhada, Caetaninha, tenta afastá-lo, sem êxito, de suas atividades intelectuais.

> Era seu mal; lia com excesso, lia de manhã, de tarde e de noite, ao almoço e ao jantar, antes de dormir, depois do banho, lia andando, lia parado, lia em casa e na chácara, lia antes de ler e depois de ler, lia toda a casta de livros, mas especialmente direito (em quer era graduado), matemáticas e filosofia; ultimamente dava-se também às ciências naturais. (p. 457)

Apesar do tom caricaturista, esta descrição de Fulgêncio revela um homem que vê o conhecimento como produto do intelecto, fórmulas e abstrações. Como um intelectual, raramente sai de casa e interage com as pessoas.

Como Camilo, Fulgêncio também abraça um projeto onde acredita poder ter sucesso se colocar em ação seu raciocínio lógico. Este projeto envolve casar sua afilhada com seu sobrinho Raimundo, que acabara de se mudar para sua casa após a morte de seu pai no norte do país. Como Caetaninha não tinha perspectivas de casamento à vista, nada mais lógico do que casá-la com Raimundo, pensa Fulgêncio.

Porém, o que chama atenção logo de início são os meios pelos quais Fulgêncio pensa aproximar os dois jovens. Como uma pessoa metódica, decide optar por uma abordagem racional, já que, segundo ele, "as calamidades ou os simples dissabores nas relações do coração provinham de que o amor era praticado de um modo empírico; faltava-lhe a base científica" (p. 459). Para Fulgêncio, o motivo dos muitos problemas em relações amorosas provinha da falta de conhecimento das origens, razões e estrutura dos sentimentos humanos. Portanto, sua tarefa agora era iniciar Caetaninha e Raimundo no mundo das operações racionais dos sentimentos. Busca então em sua biblioteca

os materiais necessários e começa a montar um programa em vinte capítulos, com "noções gerais do universo, uma definição da vida, demonstração da existência do homem e da mulher, organização das sociedades, definição e análise das paixões, definição e análise do amor, suas causas, necessidades, e efeitos" (p. 459). O que se vê no programa de Fulgêncio é, portanto, uma abordagem totalmente cartesiana, desprovida de qualquer ênfase no aspecto pessoal ou emocional dos sentimentos humanos.

No restante da narrativa, Machado se concentra em Fulgêncio e sua aplicação do método. Numa noite leva o casal para fora e dá uma longa palestra a respeito da origem do universo. Impressionado, o casal pedia mais, e no final de cinco meses, já possuíam o que Fulgêncio acreditava ser uma boa base em geografia e astronomia. No sexto mês parte para o capítulo sobre a existência do homem, com "uma demonstração em regra, profundamente cartesiana" (p. 460). Entretanto, enquanto discute, Fulgêncio nota que o casal facilmente se distrai. Neste dia, se distraiam olhando borboletas que voavam ao redor deles. Fulgêncio não entende como alguém pode se impressionar com borboletas, que sempre voam da mesma maneira. Outra vez se distraíram olhando um casal de andorinhas, que para Caetaninha pareciam dizer uma a outra "que não era bom haver filosofia no muro das chácaras" (p. 461). Em outra ocasião, Caetaninha nota um par de besouros como que se declarando um ao outro. Quando Fulgêncio decide preparar-se para a etapa final de seu projeto, uma série de palestras sobre metafísica, organização das sociedades, definições e classificações do amor e paixão, algo inesperado acontece. Machado conclui dizendo que enquanto Fulgêncio prepara suas aulas no estúdio, na varanda algo muito natural se passava: "um trovão de beijos, segundo disseram as lagartas da chácara" (p. 462). Os únicos a presenciarem este momento foram as lagartas e gafanhotos.

Neste conto, como em "Jogo do bicho", se percebe mais uma vez a agenda crítica de Machado em relação à confiança exacerbada nos postulados da ciência. Na descrição de Fulgêncio, percebe-se o ceticismo de Machado para com o cientificismo presente nos diferentes segmentos da cultura de seu tempo. Para Fulgêncio, o amor é algo que poder ser posto à prova científica, previsto, e mais importante, controlado. Seguindo o método analítico, Fulgêncio acreditava poder aproximar e fazer com que Caetaninha e Raimundo ficassem juntos. Contudo, o que Fulgêncio descobre, apesar de sua relutância, é que há aspectos da natureza que fogem às regras e fórmulas científicas. No caso em questão, Machado mostra que a natureza é mais complexa e imprevisível do que se imagina. A razão,

apesar de ser útil e prática, só pode explicar uma parte dos fenômenos da vida.

Em contraste ao mundo metódico e analítico de Fulgêncio, Machado coloca dois indivíduos abertos ao inesperado, em sintonia com outros sentidos humanos como a visão, olfato e aroma. Enquanto Fulgêncio busca conhecimento anulando estes elementos, Caetaninha e Raimundo aprendem observando, sentindo e ouvindo o mundo. Enquanto Fulgêncio entende que o amor é explicável através de princípios metafísicos, Caetaninha e Raimundo vêem este sentimento como expresso na natureza nas mais variadas formas. Ao criticar sistemas filosóficos baseados em princípios racionais, James salientou a necessidade de uma filosofia que "não apenas exercite seus poderes de abstração intelectual, mas que faça uma conexão positiva com o mundo real de vidas humanas finitas" (2000, p. 14). Fulgêncio exemplifica o tipo de intelectual que não se conecta com o mundo de experiências humanas. Vê o mundo em forma de abstrações onde elementos empíricos nada contribuem.

Apesar da diferença em conteúdo e tom das narrativas – Bierce prefere explorar o gótico e Machado situações do cotidiano – fica evidente que um traço em comum aproxima os dois autores da América oitocentista. Ambos vão além de preocupações estéticas ao articular através de seus enredos e personagens uma crítica velada, porém incisiva ao cientificismo de final de século dezenove, tendência essa que ameaçava de certa forma o que viam como autonomia da arte. Bierce, ao optar pelo estilo gótico, não diminui em nada seu tom crítico ao realismo jornalístico de W. D. Howells e Henry James, expoentes do realismo estadunidense. Afirmava Bierce que, sem talento e imaginação literária, escritores como Howells e James "acreditam que o que não é interessante na vida torna-se interessante nas letras – os atos, pensamentos, sentimentos de pessoas comuns, as vidas e amores de bobalhões, joões-ninguém, ignorantes e milionários" (apud MORRIS, 1995, p. 169). Em Brayton e Byring, Bierce confronta esta visão realista da literatura ao analisar as complexidades da psique humana. Nestes dois personagens, fica evidente o quão tênue é a linha entre o racional e irracional, o medo e a coragem. Tanto Brayton como Byring acreditavam ter evoluído a um estágio que os colocava acima dos impulsos irracionais, que os punha em controle das pré-disposições humanas. Brayton ri ao ler que não muito tempo atrás as pessoas acreditavam nos poderes hipnóticos das serpentes. Byring igualmente medita sobre a irracionalidade do medo que seus antepassados tinham de cadáveres. Bierce demonstra nestas narrativas, no entanto, que apesar do avanço do conhecimento, ainda

existem áreas do comportamento humano impossíveis de serem explicadas pelo método racional. Nos dois textos analisados, deparamo-nos com personagens que sucumbem vítimas de impulsos misteriosos oriundos das mais recônditas camadas da psique humana. No caso de Brayton, os supostos olhos da serpente minam seu raciocínio lógico pouco a pouco a ponto de levá-lo à imitação dos próprios movimentos do animal. Byring, por sua vez, trava uma luta ferrenha com um cadáver pensando ser este um inimigo pronto a destrui-lo.

Machado, à semelhança de Bierce, também via com olhos céticos os preceitos estéticos de final de século, onde, segundo ele, predominava um "realismo sem condescência... a sensação física" (p. 164). Contrapondo-se ao que via como superficialidade do realismo e naturalismo literário, criticou os pressupostos científicos desta tendência ao privilegiar em suas narrativas os impulsos e pré-disposições humanas em concepções da realidade e juízos de valor. Articula, desta forma, uma epistemologia sedimentada não em certezas cartesianas, mas no vago e no incerto. Tanto em Camilo como em Fulgêncio, Machado coloca o racional à prova, demonstrando no final que a natureza não se presta facilmente a taxonomias e pressupostos metodológicos. A razão pode explicar apenas uma parte dos fenômenos naturais, pois há por traz deles uma gama de elementos que fogem a regras fixas e fórmulas universais. Em suma, Machado articula uma crítica ao racionalismo científico de final de século ao delinear uma epistemologia baseada no incerto, ambíguo e imprevisível. Bierce, de forma semelhante, critica o cientificismo de seu tempo apontando o quão tênue é a linha entre o racional e irracional, isto é, o quão complexo e imapeável é o terreno da psique humana.

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Notas

1. Todas as traduções de comentários críticos acerca da produção literária de Ambrose Bierce são de minha autoria.
2. As traduções dos textos ficcionais de Bierce são igualmente de minha autoria.

EXPERIÊNCIAS DE PROFESSORES DE LÍNGUA INGLESA EM ESCOLAS PÚBLICAS MUNICIPAIS E ESTADUAIS NO INTERIOR DE MINAS GERAIS: NARRATIVAS QUE EMOCIONAM

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RESUMO: Neste artigo apresento as experiências vivenciadas por professores de língua inglesa em escolas públicas municipais e estaduais da região centro-oeste do estado de Minas Gerais. As experiências, coletadas através de narrativas, apresentam os problemas que os professores enfrentam e as maneiras como lidam com eles. As narrativas emocionam, pois evidenciam a determinação à superação dos problemas enfrentados. Na conclusão, discuto como as experiências podem servir de ponto de partida para a formação de professores de língua inglesa que, tendo conhecimento delas estarão mais bem preparados para lidar com os desafios do ensino na rede pública.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: professores de inglês, experiências, narrativas.

ABSTRACT: In this paper I focus on municipal and state public school English teachers working in the central-western region of Minas Gerais. Their teaching experiences collected through narratives recount problems faced in class how they are dealt with. The narratives are moving as evidence of teachers' efforts to overcome problems in spite of restricting teaching conditions. I discuss how experiences can be the starting point for teacher development programs in that experiences will aid preparing future teachers to deal with the challenges of teaching English as a foreign language in public schools.

KEYWORDS: English teachers, experiences, narratives.

Introdução

A partir de 1996, com a LDBEN – Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional e, de 1998, com os PCN's – Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais, e de outros instrumentos legais que passaram a exigir a formação do profissional na área de ensino, a educação continuada deixou de ser uma iniciativa isolada para se tornar uma etapa na vida de todo professor. Não é mais possível atuar profissionalmente sem que se reflita sobre a prática, buscando uma ação mais informada com o objetivo de melhorar a atuação profissional. Em decorrência

desse movimento, tem aumentado a oferta de cursos de pós-graduação lato-sensu direcionados à formação continuada de professores de língua inglesa que buscam se capacitar para ascender profissionalmente, atendendo às demandas educacionais trazidas pela LDBEN e pelos PCN's.

O Contexto para o Levantamento de Experiências

Em um curso de especialização em ensino de língua inglesa, oferecido por uma instituição universitária na região centro-oeste de Minas Gerais e direcionado a docentes já graduados, tive a oportunidade de lecionar e conhecer um grupo de quatorze professores que atuavam, em sua grande maioria, em escolas públicas municipais e estaduais da região[1]. Durante a disciplina que ministrei – Didática no Ensino de Língua Inglesa (com carga horária de trinta horas/aula), em vez de levar receitas prontas que prometessem sucessos duvidosos, busquei incentivar os professores a refletirem sobre suas experiências em sala de aula com o objetivo de pensar a ação nesse contexto como uma resposta à situação vivenciada.

Nesse processo, colocando em prática os preceitos da pesquisação (Schön 1983, Wallace 1998) para conhecer melhor as situações de ensino nas quais atuavam, solicitei aos participantes que redigissem uma narrativa sobre o que vivenciavam como professores de língua inglesa nas escolas em que lecionavam. Essas narrativas serviram de base para o levantamento dos temas que foram trabalhados durante a disciplina. Através de reflexões sobre as ações do professores através das narrativas, o grupo foi instigado a fazer uma crítica das ações relatadas, pensando sobre o que fariam de diferente em situações similares. O objetivo final era a busca de soluções alternativas que estivessem em sintonia com uma abordagem comunicativa para o ensino de língua inglesa. Esse objetivo foi perseguido em conseqüência de discussões preliminares que buscavam definir qual seria o conceito que deveria orientar a ação de um professor de língua inglesa em sala de aula. O conceito orientador que foi consensualmente acordado no grupo foi o que compreende o ensino da língua inglesa para a comunicação e a interação entre comunidades discursivas.

A partir das reflexões dos participantes sobre diferentes ações de seus colegas em uma determinada circunstância, houve um debate, levando a discussões que propiciaram aos participantes uma nova compreensão do que acontece na sala de aula. O debate, por exemplo, sobre como um determinado professor lidou com o problema do grande número de alunos em sua sala de aula e a implementação de

atividades de fala nessa situação, levou a outras discussões paralelas, tais como: sobre a natureza da aprendizagem sob uma perspectiva sócio-interacionista e desenvolvimentista; sobre a questão do controle do professor e o seu reflexo na dependência do aluno no professor e o conseqüente não desenvolvimento da desejada autonomia; sobre a correção dosada e a importância do erro no desenvolvimento da interlíngua. Enfim, uma discussão que permitiu que a teoria fosse utilizada para refletir sobre a prática. A partir dos debates, os participantes eram desafiados a buscar outras soluções possíveis que estivessem em consonância com a teoria discutida na disciplina e que fosse de encontro ao conceito orientador da ação do professor de LI, i.e., o desenvolvimento da comunicação para a interação em sala de aula como uma comunidade discursiva.

Dessa forma, as narrativas forneceram contexto para que fossem discutidos problemas de ensino, de disciplina, de carência de recursos, de avaliação; com alunos; com colegas ou superiores ou, ainda, problemas em como lidar com condições de ensino nem sempre favoráveis. Assim, a discussão sobre a didática do ensino de língua inglesa foi abordada como uma questão complexa onde uma metodologia fixa tem poucas chances de vir a responder satisfatoriamente ao contexto em que o professor atua. Buscou-se avaliar a situação de ensino e suas características para buscar a melhor solução possível ao contexto, levando os participantes a refletir sobre os resultados, buscando uma melhoria constante.

Durante o processo de escritura das narrativas no curso Didática no Ensino de Língua Inglesa, os professores foram informados do interesse da professora como pesquisadora em suas experiências em sala de aula. Conseqüentemente, foi pedida autorização expressa para que as narrativas que constituíram o material didático do curso pudessem vir a ser utilizadas como dados para a pesquisa sobre experiências de professores de língua inglesa em salas de aula. Foi ainda, garantida aos participantes a preservação da sua identidade na divulgação de trechos dessas narrativas. Dessa forma, as narrativas são identificadas apenas com o nome da cidade onde leciona o professor. O uso do masculino é também uma escolha para a preservação da identidade dos professores que as escreveram.

A Análise das Narrativas

A análise das narrativas seguiu os procedimentos que Donato e McCormick (1995) utilizaram para a análise de portifólios e que foram adotados na análise de transcrições de entrevistas com estudantes (Miccoli 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004). Os passos para a análise

de narrativas foram: leitura com o objetivo de identificar os temas que se encontram nas narrativas escritas pelos professores participantes; a identificação gera uma listagem com os temas mais e os menos freqüentes; a partir dessa listagem, faz-se um agrupamento de temas por campos de experiência, que precisam ser identificados com um nome que sintetize o conteúdo de cada agrupamento; os resultados desse processo são apresentados nos conteúdos das narrativas que revelam as experiências que constituem os desafios que são enfrentados diariamente por esses professores.

As Experiências dos Professores na Rede Pública

Apesar de haver muita alusão à importância do papel do professor na transformação da sociedade através de sua ação educacional (Arroyo 2001, Gaddoti 2003, Ruiz 2003) ignora-se o contexto onde se dá a ação desse professor. No caso da educação pública, esses autores não se remetem à precariedade das condições de ensino nem à apresentação de maneiras de se lidar com o desafio que o contexto de ensino representa para o ofício do professor. A formação de professores direcionada ao exercício profissional idealizado não me parece adequada. É correto reafirmar o compromisso com a mudança na formação do professor (Arroyo 2001, Gaddoti 2003, Ruiz 2004). No entanto, deixar de se discutir o contexto em que o exercício profissional se dará e o desafio de se comprometer com a mudança, representa uma omissão que, a meu ver, prejudica a formação de professores, pois não os prepara para lidar com a realidade do ensino na sala de aula. Para que os professores em processo de formação façam da sua futura ação em sala de aula uma possibilidade de transformação da realidade, é preciso oferecer a eles a oportunidade de refletir sobre a prática, mostrando a eles maneiras para lidar com desafios (Miccoli 2005).

Proponho o contato com experiências de professores em exercício como uma boa maneira de fazer com que professores em formação tomem conhecimento do que é o ensino de língua inglesa na sala de aula de instituições públicas, além de oferecerem uma oportunidade de integrar teoria e prática. É com esse objetivo que apresento na Tabela 1 os temas das experiências que predominam nas doze narrativas de professores que trabalham em escolas publicas de pequenas cidades do interior de Minas Gerais. Duas narrativas não foram utilizadas para a análise de temas – a narrativa de um professor que trabalhava em um instituto de línguas e de um professor que trabalhava apenas dando aulas particulares, ambos da cidade de Formiga.

Tabela 1: Temas nas Narrativas

Temas em Ordem Decrescente
Condições de Ensino
Ensino de Inglês em Sala de Aula
Estudantes
Professor
Materiais de Ensino
Avaliação

De acordo com a Tabela 1, nas narrativas coletadas, predomina a menção às condições de ensino vivenciadas por professores de língua inglesa. É a partir dessas condições que os professores caracterizam e descrevem o ensino de língua inglesa que é possível realizar nessas condições. O ensino que é possível constitui o tema das experiências que são mais freqüentes nas narrativas após as que se referem às condições de ensino. Em seguida, aparecem como tema os estudantes e os professores que remetem às experiências que os têm como referência. Finalmente, os temas – material de ensino e avaliação agrupam as experiências relativas a existência ou não de materiais didáticos e à questão da avaliação da aprendizagem nas narrativas.

O tema Condições de Ensino é o mais freqüente nas narrativas dos professores de Minas Gerais. Em Miccoli (2000, 2001, 2003, 2004) caracterizo as experiências contextuais, tais como as que se encontram sob o tema Condições de Ensino, como experiências indiretas à ação na sala de aula, pois elas influenciam o que acontece dentro da sala de aula. Como elas também estão presentes nas experiências de professores, mantenho a categorização anterior. Dessa forma, o tema condições de ensino é caracterizado como uma experiência indireta de natureza contextual, pertencente à subcategoria das experiências institucionais.

O segundo tema que predomina nas narrativas, i.e., o tema Ensino de Inglês em Sala de Aula, pode ser caracterizado como um tema de natureza direta, i.e., como inerente à sala de aula, pois tem sua origem nesse contexto. Essas experiências podem ser caracterizadas como pertencentes à subcategoria experiências do ensino. No entanto,

em Miccoli (não publicado), as experiências do ensino são caracterizadas como experiências de natureza pedagógica por terem a ver com a percepção dos professores sobre o ensino. Dessa forma, caracterizo essas experiências como de natureza direta, pertencentes à categoria de experiências pedagógicas.

O terceiro tema mais freqüente nas narrativas contém as experiências dos professores com estudantes. Nesse caso, estamos mais uma vez frente a um tema que inclui experiências de natureza direta, i.e., se originam na sala de aula, mas cuja natureza não é pedagógica e sim social, pois emergem das interações dos professores com seus alunos. Dessa forma, as experiências nesse tema podem ser consideradas como de natureza direta, pertencente à categoria de experiências sociais.

As percepções dos professores sobre si mesmos são o quarto tema mais freqüente nas narrativas, incluindo relatos sobre as experiências dos professores como professores. Temos um tema de natureza social, pois essas experiências dos professores acontecem na relação que estabelecem com seus alunos. Dessa forma, compõem uma outra subcategoria da categoria social de experiências diretas.

Os dois últimos temas materiais de ensino e avaliação correspondem à categoria de Experiências Pedagógicas, compondo a subcategoria de Experiências Paralelas às Atividades de Sala de Aula. Dessa forma, na Tabela 2 apresento as experiências dos professores que incluem nos temas identificados na Tabela 1.

Tabela 2: Natureza das Experiências dos Professores nas Narrativas

Experiências De Natureza	Categoria de Experiências	Subcategoria das Experiências
Indireta	Contextuais	Institucionais
Direta	Pedagógicas	de Ensino
Direta	Sociais	de Estudantes
Direta	Sociais	de Professores
Direta	Pedagógicas	Paralelas às Atividades em Sala de Aula

Faz-se necessário esclarecer que, apesar de haver várias outras categorias e subcategorias de experiências de professores, elas não aparecem nesta categorização. Isso se justifica pela base de dados que dá origem a esta categorização – as narrativas. Dessa forma, com uma base de dados maior, as experiências dos professores compreendem, além destas experiências diretas, as experiências emocionais e nas experiências indiretas, as experiências pessoais, as de crenças e de metas, que não foram encontradas na base de dados oriundos das narrativas.

Experiências que Emocionam

A análise dos tipos de experiências que são narradas por professores de escolas públicas no interior de Minas Gerais se completa através do acesso a trechos dessas narrativas. Os professores que contam suas experiências em salas de aula nos fazem refletir sobre como podem variar tanto as condições de ensino, principalmente entre as escolas municipais e estaduais. O que predomina ainda são professores ensinando língua inglesa em contextos pouco favoráveis ao desenvolvimento de um plano de ensino que leve aos resultados desejados – alunos conscientes do papel de uma língua estrangeira e participantes de uma comunidade discursiva através do uso dessa língua estrangeira. Esses objetivos estão assim expressos nos PCNs: "garantir ao aluno seu engajamento discursivo... pelo envolvimento do aluno com os processos sociais de criar significados por intermédio da utilização de uma LE." (Brasil, 1998, p. 9).

No entanto, há algumas iniciativas que se destacam por serem diferentes do que predomina. Poucas escolas com professores trabalhando em contextos favoráveis ao ensino de línguas. O diferencial nessas escolas é uma orientação superior que pode vir através da prefeitura, ou da direção da escola. Entretanto, não é só nessas escolas que há um diferencial. Nas escolas em que as condições são adversas ao ideal para o ensino de língua inglesa, são os professores que fazem a diferença. É nesse aspecto que as experiências emocionam, pois os professores buscam a superação das limitações com pequenas ações que representam tentativas de solução para problemas do cotidiano da sala de aula e que só podem ser consideradas como louváveis.

Na apresentação dos dados, inicio com trechos das narrativas que se referem ao contexto em que os professores trabalham, que representam as experiências institucionais. Pelo conhecimento da situação precária do ensino no Brasil, o que se espera encontrar nas narrativas são descrições de contextos pouco favoráveis ao

desenvolvimento de um plano, mas há exceções. Isso é confirmado em nove narrativas, a saber: Itaúna, Luz, Formiga, Campo Belo, São Roque de Minas, Bambuí e Itapecerica[2]. Cinco mencionam explicitamente o problema de número de alunos em sala de aula em salas pequenas, que varia entre 40 e 45 alunos, o que faz com que as turmas sejam, invariavelmente, heterogêneas.

Em apenas duas narrativas, encontramos referência a recursos didáticos que vão além do giz e do quadro. Em Itaúna e em Campo Belo as escolas onde esses professores trabalham têm televisões e vídeos à disposição de professores, mas esses são compartilhados, dificultando o acesso do professor. Entretanto, a mesma escola que têm esses recursos em Campo Belo, oferece aos seus professores apenas um mimeógrafo para uso restrito à elaboração de provas. Essa mesma limitação é vivenciada pelos professores de Itaúna e de São Roque de Minas, que têm mais uma limitação – o uso de apenas duas folhas de papel por bimestre por aluno. Nas escolas em que lecionam os professores de Luz e um dos professores de Formiga o professor não tem acesso a qualquer outro recurso além do quadro e giz.

No entanto, três narrativas contrariaram a expectativa de se encontrar vivências negativas no ensino de língua inglesa em escolas públicas no interior. Um professor de Formiga vivencia uma experiência que considera privilegiada, pois leciona em um curso livre montado pela prefeitura, por mais estranho que isso possa parecer. Um outro professor da mesma cidade vive uma situação diferenciada, pois a direção e a supervisão da escola valorizam e elogiam o professor de inglês. Mas, é a experiência do professor de uma escola municipal da cidade de São Roque de Minas que é singular, pois de acordo com a professora a contexto para o ensino é 'favorável'; em suas palavras:

> Uma das situações de ensino na qual trabalho pode ser descrita como totalmente favorável ao ensino de língua inglesa. A escola, o ambiente, os materiais, tudo interfere positivamente na minha maneira de trabalhar. É uma escola pública municipal, de ensino fundamental I (1ª a 4ª série) e a diretora sabe da importância do aprendizado da língua inglesa, então ela não mede esforços para que esse aprendizado aconteça e da melhor maneira possível.
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> Quando comecei meu trabalho nessa escola, lá não havia aulas de inglês, conseqüentemente nem material para o professor. Porém, a escola comprou os livros que eu indiquei e eu comecei a usá-los nas 3ª e 4ª série. É uma coleção excelente, cada aluno tem um livro que a escola empresta, o student book. Eu tenho as fitas, o workbook de onde tiro alguns exercícios e o Teacher's book. Desde então, tenho realizado um trabalho satisfatório e de boa qualidade. Tenho nessa escola uma turma de 4ª série que gosta muito de inglês e tem respondido às minhas expectativas. Eu, às vezes, consigo pequenos diálogos em língua inglesa na sala de aula e acho isso o máximo, pois vejo que para uma turma de crianças, isso é satisfatório e acho que é uma situação de communicative teaching, porque são crianças ainda e conseguem se comunicar, falar e entender usando uma língua estrangeira.
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> O material que uso com eles sugere várias atividades de comunicação e eu uso o que torna as aulas bem interessantes. Não uso só o livro, levo muitas figuras, cartazes e jogos para as aulas, trabalho as datas comemorativas, as festas da escola, falo sobre as situações que eles vivem na cidade, que é uma cidade turística e recebe muitos turistas estrangeiros, passo fitas de vídeos sobre o que eles vêem no livro. Essas atividades variadas não tornam cansativo o uso do livro que se torna somente o início, o brainstorm para as aulas. As crianças gostam de usar o livro, de ouvir as histórias e até me pedem para usar o livro quando não o levo pra sala.
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> É muito agradável trabalhar com o inglês nessa escola ((nome da escola omitido)). Nessa situação as aulas são interessantes e sei que essas crianças conseguirão em pouco tempo uma boa comunicação em inglês.

O professor está em uma situação de ensino diferente dos demais pelo papel fundamental da direção que valoriza a disciplina e o professor. A iniciativa para a compra de material e os procedimentos adotados para garantir o acesso ao material didático certamente propiciam uma experiência de aprendizagem que apenas a longo prazo poderá vir a se aproximar dos objetivos expressos nos PCNs.

Mas, para a maioria dos professores a situação não é essa. Para essa maioria, são apenas as iniciativas pessoais e restritas à sala de aula de apenas um professor que fazem a diferença e é isso que encontramos na narrativa do professor da cidade de Bom Despacho, que não se deixa abater pelas condições desfavoráveis ao ensino e procura fazer o melhor dentro do que está ao seu alcance. Esse é o

tipo de narrativa que emociona:

> A situação de ensino na qual trabalho pode ser descrita como árdua e ao mesmo tempo produtiva e prazerosa... Ministro aulas de Língua Estrangeira (LE) em uma escola Estadual que tem o perfil da maioria das escolas públicas. É localizada em um bairro simples, seu alunado é em sua maioria crianças e adolescentes oriundos de uma classe social economicamente baixa vivendo em situação precária, muitos não têm o básico (alimentação, vestuário, moradia e saúde) necessário para uma vida digna, sofrendo também pelo desequilíbrio, uma carência afetiva muito forte.
> A direção, supervisão e professores da escola têm consciência deste fato, e procuram desenvolver, apesar de toda dificuldade, um trabalho de qualidade, mas não é fácil... A falta de ajuda governamental é um dos fatores que prejudicam o ensino e o aprendizado nas escolas publicas. A maioria das salas de aulas são superlotadas, o que limita o trabalho do professor, que não consegue em um período curto de tempo, dar atenção individualizada a todos. Os livros didáticos de Língua Estrangeira (LE), oferecidos pelo governo, não correspondem à realidade dos alunos. Há falta de material didático, desde o giz colorido, folhas chamex, aparelho de som até mesmo computadores, o que limita o trabalho do professor. A falta de cursos profissionalizantes e capacitação para o professor (principalmente de LE) também limitam seu desempenho. Sem falar no descrédito com que é visto o ensino de língua estrangeira por colegas de ensino e comunidade escolar. Cabe a mim, como educador de LE, planejar e executar meu trabalho de maneira tão eficiente que passe a ter credibilidade perante aos alunos e a comunidade escolar criando uma atmosfera favorável ao ensino da LE. Confesso que ensinar inglês nesta situação não é fácil, mas consigo realizar meu trabalho de forma positiva. E para que isto aconteça, é necessário uma disciplina árdua de minha parte na preparação das aulas e na forma de conduzi-las. Tenho que manter um entusiasmo constante para influenciar os alunos. Manter-me atualizado e com recursos próprios (o que não é fácil), freqüentar cursos e cursinhos de LE para garantir meu conhecimento e fazer jus a minha profissão. Não tenho duvida de que meu trabalho é comunicativo, embora reconheça suas limitações. Procuro trabalhar com temas transversais, ligados ao afetivo dos alunos, buscando respeitar o meio em que estão inseridos, construindo o conhecimento a partir dele e conduzindo-os ao interesse pelo conteúdo de LE, que creio possibilitará um futuro melhor que a atual situação em que se encontram inseridos.
> Esta responsabilidade é árdua. É preciso acima de tudo accitar os fatos e posicionar-me de maneira ativa no que diz respeito à defesa do nosso ensino (LE), enfatizando a importância do mesmo na esfera social. É preciso ir além e fazer com que a comunidade escolar passe a entender e a valorizar o ensino da língua estrangeira na escola publica.

O que emociona na narrativa do professor de Bom Despacho é seu senso de responsabilidade perante o seu oficio. O professor se refere ao planejamento e ao exercício eficiente de sua profissão para ter credibilidade perante os seus alunos e a comunidade escolar para criar uma atmosfera favorável ao ensino de língua inglesa. Apesar das condições de ensino precárias, esse professor procura fazer a diferença e diferentemente dos textos que tratam do que seja ser professor ou da formação do professor em termos ideais (Arroyo 2001, Gaddoti 2003, Ruiz 2003), há uma referência explícita a quais são as pequenas ações que fazem a diferença: um compromisso com a disciplina e com uma ação em sala de aula que tenha metas definidas onde a motivação do professor é fundamental para o que acontece na sala de aula. Muito se fala sobre a questão da motivação do aluno em sala de aula (Brown, 1994), mas a do professor é tão importante quanto a motivação do aluno e esse professor confirma essa importância. Na sala de aula se travam relações de ensino e aprendizagem e nesse processo a maneira como professores e alunos se posicionam influenciam o resultado. Se o professor não estiver motivado, não há motivação de aluno que resista.

Há ainda nessa narrativa um testemunho de uma consciência profissional. Por um lado, o professor se vê como educador e com isso busca formas de "criar uma atmosfera favorável". Dessa forma o professor assume seu papel de transformador da sua realidade de trabalho. Por outro lado, a referência à defesa do ensino de língua estrangeira remete a uma especificidade que deve ser valorizada e defendida pelo professor. Se o professor não valorizar seu oficio é bem provável que

ele não seja valorizado por direção ou outros colegas professores. Finalmente, está nas entrelinhas da narrativa do professor de Bom Despacho a importância da comunicação entre direção e professor, que por exercer um ofício com especificidades deve buscar o apoio da instituição, tal como fez o professor de São Roque de Minas, que pesquisou materiais, indicou sua compra e buscou uma forma para fazer com que esses materiais pudessem ser usados pelos alunos. Mas, nem todos os professores têm a experiência do professor de Bom Despacho, que já tinha X anos de experiência.

Uma última narrativa nos emociona por dois motivos; pela apresentação de uma situação de ensino definida como 'complicada', mas que apresenta muito bem a complexidade dos problemas que são enfrentados diariamente pelo professor e pela busca de soluções na 'tentativa' de realizar um ensino comunicativo:

> A situação de ensino na qual trabalho pode ser descrita como "complicada". Trabalho numa escola publica com alunos de 5ª a 8ª séries considerados carentes. Não há livros didáticos de língua inglesa para os alunos e todas as atividades têm que ser passadas no quadro, o que toma a maior parte da aula. A escola até dispõe de uma TV e um vídeo, mas quando não estão estragados, estão ocupados, pois são apenas uma TV e um vídeo para o uso de toda a escola. No entanto, não é apenas a falta de recursos materiais o que dificulta o meu trabalho (isso eu consigo "dobrar" com o uso do meu próprio aparelho de som e com um mês de espera na fila do vídeo), há problemas também relacionados aos alunos. As turmas são muito grandes, em torno de quarenta alunos e bastante heterogêneas.
> Graças ao programa de "inclusão escolar" e ao sistema de "ciclos", numa mesma classe encontram-se alunos com dificuldades de aprendizagens imensas, até mesmo com problemas mentais, alunos semi-analfabetos e que já estão na 7ª ou 8ª séries, alunos que só vão a escola uma vez ou outra e aqueles poucos alunos que levam os estudos realmente a sério.
> Ensinar inglês na minha situação é muito difícil. Despertar o interesse dos alunos e motiva-los torna-se uma tarefa complicada uma vez que a grande maioria dos alunos não tem o menor interesse em aprender. É comum quando proponho alguma atividade, até mesmo um jogo, ouvir a pergunta "Quantos pontos vale?" e se a atividade não é valorizada, o interesse cai pela metade. O tempo das aulas é curto, duas aulas semanais de 50 minutos para tanto conteúdo não são suficientes, ainda mais quando se tem que passar todas as atividades no quadro e esperar os alunos copiarem. Isso torna as aulas muito cansativas, mas não há muitos recursos para fugir dessa situação porque a escola só dispõe de um mimeógrafo e papel apenas para provas. Algumas vezes peço a colaboração dos alunos e levo os textos xerocados, mas isso não pode ser feito com muita freqüência devido à situação financeira dos alunos.
> Meu ensino "tenta" ser comunicativo porque em várias situações me vejo atuando e até pensando como uma professora tradicional. Isso pode até ser devido a minha relativa pouca experiência (2 anos em escola publica) e também à preocupação com o cumprimento do programa estabelecido que bem mais centralizado em gramática do que nos outros aspectos da língua. Mesmo assim procuro passar os conteúdos de uma maneira significativa e contextualizada para que eles não se sintam perdidos e para que compreendam o funcionamento das estruturas e consigam se comunicar, nem que seja um pouco, utilizando a língua inglesa. Gosto muito de trabalhar com músicas, jogos e situações imaginárias onde os alunos possam utilizar os conteúdos estudados. São situações simples, como por exemplo "a eleição da pessoa mais habilidosa da classe" que fiz numa turma de 6ª série. Pedi para que os alunos discutissem em grupos de 4, quais habilidades cada um possuía e elegessem o aluno que tivesse mais habilidades, em seguida esses alunos se apresentavam diante da turma exprimindo suas habilidades usando o auxiliar 'can'. Logo após, elegemos o mais habilidoso da turma. Não é possível trabalhar com situações muito elaboradas por causa do tamanho das turmas, falta de recursos, tempo, etc, mas à medida que venho trabalhando e estudando, tenho novas idéias, troco experiência, identifico e conserto minhas falhas.

Nessa narrativa o professor retrata a situação de ensino que o conhecimento da realidade da educação brasileira que se reconhece como cotidiana. Emociona na narrativa a ausência de lamentações e

de referência ao estado como responsável pelos problemas e pela tradicional isenção do professor em relação à situação. Ao contrário, emociona encontrar o depoimento de que o professor leva seu próprio aparelho de som para a sala de aula. Emociona encontrar referências a programas de inclusão escolar que fazem com esse professor tenha que lidar com dificuldades de aprendizagens de vários tipos onde o professor usa as aspas para questionar o programa de inclusão escolar e a organização em ciclos, pois não recebe qualquer forma de orientação específica para lidar com esses programas. Como, por exemplo, no relato de um outro professor ter tido uma aluna cega em sala de aula sem ter sido comunicada pela direção da instituição e sem a existência de quaisquer recursos que viabilizassem um tratamento em sala de aula de acordo com as limitações dessa aluna[3]. O exercício profissional em situações para o qual o professor não foi preparado é de se admirar, pois o professor trabalha com a intuição e com a criatividade. Finalmente, emociona a tentativa de ser comunicativo. Ser comunicativo em salas de aula com alunos que não querem aprender é um desafio que o professor tenta enfrentar com ações simples como contextualizar e tornar as situações significativas para os alunos. Emociona o reconhecimento de 'não ser possível trabalhar com situações elaboradas' e a disposição de manter-se atualizado através de pesquisa e estudos de forma a identificar áreas na prática que podem vir a ser melhoradas.

Essas narrativas, apresentadas integralmente, correspondem a uma amostra significativa dos dados, i.e., três das doze narrativas que constituíram a base de dados analisados. Nelas as experiências dos professores permitem uma apreciação diferente da que predomina no conhecimento que temos sobre o ensino de língua inglesa em escolas públicas. Ao contrário do que se imagina, há professores comprometidos que buscam lidar com os problemas como desafios a serem superados e não como problemas irremediáveis. É fato que esse número ainda é pequeno para se afirmar que há mudanças no quadro geral; afinal, três em doze, representa apenas 25% dos dados. Mas, esse dado, apesar de ser modesto representa uma mudança em andamento, por isso deve ser valorizada. Deve ser valorizada porque esses professores, ao buscarem soluções para os problemas que enfrentam dentro de suas possibilidades, não penalizam seus alunos pelos baixos salários que recebem. Além disso, deve ser valorizado o fato de todos, inclusive aqueles cujas narrativas não surpreendem, custearem pessoalmente sua melhor capacitação para o exercício da docência mesmo em condições que deixam muito a desejar.

Conclusão

Neste artigo apresentei uma categorização para as experiências vivenciadas por professores de língua inglesa em exercício em pequenas cidades da região centro-oeste do estado de Minas Gerais com o objetivo de trazer o contexto da sala de aula e as experiências nele vivenciadas para o centro das discussões na formação de professores. As experiências narradas pelos quatorze professores que gentilmente cederam as narrativas escritas para a disciplina de Didática no Ensino de Língua Inglesa que lecionei em um curso de especialização em Ensino de Língua Inglesa foram analisadas e nelas predominou a referência a experiências institucionais, de ensino, de estudantes, de professores, e as experiências paralelas às atividades em sala de aula.

O conteúdo dessas experiências emociona porque apesar das condições adversas nas quais esses professores lecionam, encontra-se evidência de que há professores comprometidos com a qualidade e com a busca de um ensino que venha a atender aos objetivos estabelecidos nos PCNs. Através de posturas e ações que mesmo que simples ou restritas a uma única sala de aula, busca-se superar limitações e melhorar a qualidade do ensino de língua estrangeira em escolas públicas.

Além disso, a reflexão sobre a prática a partir de experiências vivenciadas por professores prepara um futuro professor ou o professor em capacitação para lidar com a realidade do ensino na sala de aula. Entretanto, essa reflexão deve oferecer a eles maneiras para lidar com desafios para que, em longo prazo, a transformação da realidade não seja uma utopia, mas um fato.

O uso das experiências em sala de aula, tanto as bem sucedidas quanto as mal sucedidas oferecem a possibilidade de se integrar teoria e prática. Por exemplo, a discussão sobre as condições precárias de ensino na rede pública deve ser reconhecida para que se possa vislumbrar sua superação. Essa é uma discussão importante que deve ser parte das discussões sobre o ofício do professor de língua estrangeira durante a formação de novos professores. Como se pode manter um professor motivado frente a carências constantes? Acredito que a discussão do ideário de um educador só faz sentido se aliado à discussão do contexto em que o exercício profissional se dá. Sem a discussão da realidade e da possibilidade de intervenção na realidade os textos de pesquisadores que buscam a formação de educadores compromissados com a transformação e o futuro (Arroyo 2001, Gaddoti 2003, Ruiz 2003) parecem muito distantes da realidade do professor que vivencia o dia a dia do ensino nas salas de aula de escolas públicas.

A discussão sobre experiências pode vir a diminuir essa distância e a preparar futuros professores e professores em exercício a fazer da mudança uma realidade.

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Notas

1. Os quatorze professores vinham das seguintes cidades: Bambuí, Bom Despacho, Campo Belo, Formiga, Itapecerica, Itaúna, Luz, Pium I e São Roque de Minas.
2. São apenas sete cidades, mas nove narrativas, pois havia mais de um professor de uma mesma cidade.
3. Essa informação foi prestada por um professor durante as discussões a partir das narrativas durante a disciplina de Didática no Ensino de Língua Inglesa.

PRIMÓRDIOS DO ENSINO DE LITERATURA INGLESA NO BRASIL (1870-1951)

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ABSTRACT: This article investigates the process of institutionalization of the teaching of English literature in Brazil since its beginnings, when it became an object of study/teaching and was thus included in the official secondary curriculum, by an imperial decree in 1870, until 1951, when it was officially excluded from the national secondary schools. Besides the official legislation about Brazilian secondary education, some textbooks of English literature published in Brazil during the period were analyzed and used to illustrate and support the arguments which are here developed. The conclusion is that the teaching of English literature, in Brazil, is intimately related to the publication and circulation, in the country, of the textbooks of History of English literature, or of History of Universal Literature which included, among their chapters, one dedicated to English literature, written by Brazilian authors/teachers, as well as to the institutionalization of its teaching in the nineteenth century educational system.

KEYWORDS: English Literature; History of Education; Literary History; Teaching of Literature

Introdução

A literatura inglesa, antes de ocupar um lugar central no currículo nacional inglês, isto é, antes de estabelecer-se como única disciplina acadêmica capaz de abranger não somente a alta cultura da "sociedade polida", mas também o "caráter nacional", o que ocorreu com a sua inclusão definitiva nos programas de Oxford e Cambridge, no final do século XIX, e com o "Newbolt Report", de 1921 (Doyle, 1989), teve que vencer os preconceitos dos que a consideravam um tipo de instrução específico para mulheres e operários, ou mesmo homens de segunda e terceira categoria, como sugere um depoente da Comissão Real reunida em 1877 (Eagleton, 1983, p. 30).

Isso porque a disciplina não era considerada digna da formação de um gentleman, que já nas Grammar Schools tinha contato com as línguas e literaturas clássicas. Ademais, mesmo tendo entrado nos estabelecimentos de instrução secundária a partir da década de cinqüenta do século XIX, com o estabelecimento do sistema de exames

públicos controlados por Oxbridge, o estatuto acadêmico das línguas e literaturas clássicas, que tinham como suporte as Grammar Schools – as quais davam acesso aos cursos superiores –, manteve-se por muito tempo intacto, uma vez que os locals – como se chamavam os exames públicos – eram desprestigiados por aceitarem candidatos de países do "terceiro mundo", como a Jamaica (Howatt, 1988, p. 133-134).

Não fica difícil, portanto, perceber que a institucionalização dos "estudos ingleses", como fenômeno político e cultural, consistiu, em grande parte, em colocar a língua e a literatura inglesa a serviço de um grande projeto nacionalista, projeto este que não se restringiu à Inglaterra, uma vez que deu suporte ao imperialismo colonial britânico do século XIX, fazendo da literatura uma instância privilegiada na empreitada cultural do Império em suas colônias (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1989).

Uma boa ilustração da progressiva separação do estudo da língua e da literatura inglesa de disciplinas clássicas como a retórica pode ser exemplificada com a descrição do desenvolvimento do inglês feita por Ian Michael, que o divide em quatro fases: na primeira (1525-1720), além da leitura e da ortografia, havia dois componentes principais: a gramática, que também estava relacionada à lógica, e a retórica, mais ligada à pronúncia. Na segunda fase (1720-1770), separam-se os aspectos expressivos e interpretativos da retórica, compartilhando as matérias, às vezes, o nome de "inglês". Na terceira fase (1770-1820), na medida em que se amplia o termo "inglês", os componentes principais deste ensino são: literatura, composição e gramática. A pronúncia se vincula, nesse momento, à retórica expressiva. Na quarta fase (1820-1870), finalmente, entra um elemento adicional: o estudo histórico, tanto da literatura como da língua (Michael, 1987, p. 372-385).

Desse modo, a institucionalização do ensino da literatura inglesa relaciona-se com o processo de construção da identidade nacional inglesa, ou da "inglesidade" (englishness), constituindo-se um importante instrumento da política de afirmação e consolidação do império britânico. Nessa perspectiva, a configuração da literatura inglesa como disciplina confunde-se com a delimitação e ressignificação do termo "literatura", e assim com a elaboração do seu próprio conceito: a expressão do espírito, ou da cultura, de um povo (Oliveira, 2008).

O caso brasileiro

No Brasil, é durante a consolidação da quarta fase identificada por

Michael (1987) que a literatura inglesa se constitui como objeto de ensino. Em 1.º de fevereiro de 1870, Paulino José Soares de Souza, Ministro do Império do gabinete de Itaboraí, assinou o Decreto n. 4.468, alterando os regulamentos do Colégio de Pedro II, primeiro estabelecimento de instrução secundária do país, criado em 1837 para servir de modelo aos demais, na corte e nas províncias. Com o novo plano de estudos, no sétimo ano do curso haveria um "aperfeiçoamento nas linguas latina, franceza e ingleza", com "prelecções elementares" sobre a índole, formação e progresso de cada uma delas, alternadas com a leitura, tradução e "appreciação litteraria" dos autores clássicos. A cadeira de retórica, dedicada à "leitura e apreciação litteraria dos melhores classicos da lingua portugueza" e "exercicios de estylo" no sexto ano, passaria a abranger, no sétimo, a "Historia da litteratura em geral, e especialmente da portugueza e nacional", composição de discursos, narrações e declamação (Brasil, 1870).

Com essa alteração do programa de retórica, instituiu-se, na instrução secundária, o ensino das literaturas estrangeiras, independentemente de suas línguas, medida que provocou a publicação – três anos depois da promulgação do decreto, pelo editor francês Louis Baptiste Garnier – do Resumo de historia litteraria, primeiro compêndio brasileiro de "literatura universal"[1], de autoria do cônego Joaquim Caetano Fernandes Pinheiro (1825-1876), professor de retórica, poética e literatura nacional do Imperial Colégio de Pedro II, Comendador da Ordem de Cristo e membro dos Institutos Históricos do Brasil e da França, da Academia das Ciências de Lisboa e Madri e da Sociedade Geográfica de Nova Iorque, além "d'outras associações nacionaes e estrangeiras", conforme a folha de rosto da obra (Pinheiro, 1873).

A "literatura nacional", por sua vez, havia entrado nos programas oficiais de retórica e poética da década de cinqüenta pelas epopéias de Basílio da Gama e Santa Rita Durão, ponto de chegada das obras do mesmo gênero de Homero, Virgílio, Lucano, Tasso, Ariosto, Camões, Fenelon, Voltaire e Milton (Razzini, 2000, p. 42), antes de ser ensinada formalmente pelos "quadros da literatura nacional" – apostila do professor Paula Menezes –, conforme o plano de estudos de 1855. Em 1862, foi adotado o Curso elementar de litteratura nacional, do cônego Fernandes Pinheiro, que em 1857 havia assumido a cadeira de retórica do Pedro II, em substituição a Paula Menezes. Indicada nos programas oficiais até 1875 – e tida por Antonio Candido (2000) como obra pioneira sobre o conjunto de nossa história literária –, serviu de passaporte para a entrada do autor na Academia das Ciências de Lisboa como sócio correspondente (Razzini, 2000, p. 55).

Espécie de refundição de seu compêndio anterior, o Resumo de historia litteraria divide-se em dois volumes, servindo o primeiro, dedicado às Literaturas Estrangeiras, de preâmbulo ao segundo, que trata das Literaturas Portuguesa e Luso-Brasileira[2]. Os objetivos do livro, assim como o pioneirismo do autor na elaboração de um compêndio desse gênero, são expostos na "Prefação":

> No desempenho do nosso plano é bem possível que não tenhamos atingido o aluno; que numerosos são os erros e omissões, involuntariamente cometidos; resta-nos porém a grata consolação de havermos sido o primeiro em trilhar semelhante vereda: assim como coube-nos a honra de ter escrito, há dez anos, o primeiro Curso Elementar de Literatura que possui a língua portuguesa. (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 1)

Nos "Prolegômenos", a literatura é definida como "o conjunto das produções escritas de um país e durante uma época, ou de todos os países e em todas as épocas"[3], e a história literária como "a enumeração e rápida análise das produções literárias", acrescentando o professor: "ao princípio, a palavra literatura aplicava-se também às ciências e artes, mais tarde porém reconhece-se a necessidade de restringir-lhe a significação, limitando-se aos assuntos em que o útil pudesse se aliar ao agradável" (Pinheiro, 1872, p. 9). E qual seria a utilidade da literatura? Ou, mais precisamente, do ensino da literatura? Para Fernandes Pinheiro, a importância maior da literatura estava em registrar os grandes feitos de uma nação, despertando o sentimento de orgulho e respeito nos seus povos – em outras palavras na afirmação da nacionalidade –, o que contribuiria para a boa formação moral e patriótica do aluno:

> Feitos memoráveis, pasmosos acontecimentos, grandiosos destinos, não bastarão para prender a atenção e determinar o juízo da posteridade; preciso é que suas vitórias e façanhas sejam enobrecidas pelo imaginoso estilo de um Tito Lívio, suas desgraças e decadências comemoradas por um Tácito, pois só assim ocupará em nosso ânimo mais elevada plana do que essa multidão de povos que, indiferentes vemos desfilar no cenário da história; alternativamente vencedores e vencidos. (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 10-11)

O Cônego ainda divide a literatura em duas categorias: sagrada e profana. A primeira, ocupando-se com os assuntos religiosos, tem no Antigo e Novo Testamento, assim como nos escritos dos Santos Padres e nas legendas dos santos, seu principal registro. A Segunda, tratando dos assuntos "não compreendidos na anterior classificação", subdivide-se em "clássica", "romântica" e "realista":

> literatura clássica, do vocábulo latino "classis": é a que toma por modelo as monumentais obras legadas pela antigüidade greco-latina, procurando em imitações, mais ou menos felizes, aproximar-se a esses padrões;
>
> literatura romântica: é a que, abjurando a plástica imitação dos clássicos, buscou na inspiração cristã e nas tradições cavalheirescas da idade média o tema de suas composições. Chamou-se "romântica" por causa do "romance provençal" em que os trovadores e menestréis escreveram seus poemas e canções;
>
> literatura realista: é a que pretende pintar a natureza em sua casta nudez, e fotografar em seus inúmeros acidentes os fenômenos da vida humana. Nasceu da reação operada por Göethe contra o "idealismo vaporoso" de Schiller e seus sectários. (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 11)

A história da literatura inglesa (Livro Sexto) é contada desde suas "origens", com "a ode sobre a vitória de Athelstan, conservada por Hickey no seu Tesouro e vertida por Warton em inglês moderno", até o período vitoriano, contemporâneo do autor, sendo Thomas Carlyle o último escritor abordado[4]. O estudo das diferentes épocas se faz por gêneros, divididos estes conforme o seguinte critério: "poesia lírica"; "poesia descritiva"; "poesia dramática"; "poesia herói-cômica" e "poesia didática", o que não impede o autor de destacar também "a oratória"; "a eloqüência"; "a moral e crítica literária"; "a filosofia" e "a história". É curioso observar que no livro do cônego a necessidade do conhecimento de tal literatura se justifica pelo "progresso do seu comércio e indústria", bem como pela divulgação da sua língua "por todos os portos do globo habitado" – ou seja, pelos mesmos motivos que justificavam a criação da primeira cadeira de inglês, em 1809, e sua inclusão nos exames de preparatórios, que davam acesso às academias do Império (Oliveira, 2006):

> Pelas rápidas considerações que acabamos de fazer, intuitivo é que a língua e a literatura inglesas são de

> procedência germânica; seu estudo porém se torna de absoluta necessidade, ainda para os povos da raça latina, atento o maravilhoso progresso do seu comércio e indústria, pelo qual divulgou-se essa língua por todos os portos do globo habitado, e os nomes dos seus grandes escritores chegaram ao conhecimento de todos. (Pinheiro, 1872, p. 246)

O cônego não esconde as fontes de que se serve, citando sempre ao rodapé as obras e autores em que sua narrativa se baseia. No caso da literatura inglesa, as referências indicam sua atualização a respeito da matéria, levando-se em conta o ano da primeira publicação de sua obra (1872): a Histoire de la littérature anglaise (1863-64), de Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893), e Études de littérature ancienne et étrangère (1857), de Abel François Villemain (1790-1870). Afirma o autor: "com franqueza e lealdade citamos os mananciais onde fomos saciar a nossa sede de saber, e, como a abelha, sugamos de todas as flores o suco que mais nos aprouve." (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 1).

Dois fatos intrigantes, porém, ocorrem na sua "enumeração e rápida análise das produções literárias" inglesas. Um deles é a ausência, no capítulo dedicado às "origens", de Beowulf, poema épico pagão escrito em inglês arcaico que é geralmente tido como obra inaugural da literatura anglo-saxônica. O outro, já no "primeiro período", é o fato de Chaucer, a quem é dedicada apenas meia página, ter menos destaque do que seu contemporâneo John Gower, quando a grande maioria das histórias da literatura inglesa denominam o século XIV – período em que viveram os dois escritores – de Age of Chaucer.

No tópico dedicado à era de Isabel (século XVI) – monarca que, segundo o autor, "mereceu que seu nome fosse associado ao do século" –, "primeira época" do "Segundo Período" da literatura inglesa (p. 252-260), podemos notar o vigor das noções taineanas de "raça", "meio" e "momento histórico", utilizando-se o cônego da mesma expressão usada pelo historiador francês para definir o período – "renascimento do gênio saxônio" (Taine, 1908):

> Transplantado para climas e raças diversas recebe o paganismo de cada uma delas o cunho característico: e torna-se inglês na Inglaterra: porque o renascimento inglês é o do gênio saxônio. Recomeça então a invenção, e a manifestação desse gênio; ora, assim como uma raça latina não pode inventar senão exprimindo idéias latinas, uma raça saxônia não pode proceder senão de um modo análogo. (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 252)

No gênero "poesia lírica", são abordados Spenser e Sidney. Do primeiro, são citados o Calendário do pastor, "escrito em versos de diferentes metros" e publicado quando o autor era "já mestre em artes pela universidade de Cambridge", e A rainha das fadas – "romance em verso dedicado a Isabel, que lho remunerou com uma pensão" – obra que, segundo o cônego, pela "sua originalidade e opulência de imaginação", "só acha rival no Orlando de Ariosto". Do segundo – Sidney –, que é colocado "a par de Spenser e Shakespeare" no seu esboço biográfico, são mencionadas duas obras: Defesa da poesia e Astrophel e Stella.

Dois são os representantes da "poesia descritiva": Drayton, autor de Polyalbion, de "algumas pastorais" e de "uma crônica rimada apelidada Mortemyriados, ou Guerra dos barões", e Fletcher, que "seguiu os passos do precedente na sua Ilha purpúrea ou Ilha do homem".

Ao tratar da "poesia dramática", o autor conta a história do drama inglês, desde "a primeira peça de que se tenha conhecimento", o Milagre de Santa Catarina – "representado em Dunstable em 1119" –, passando pelas "Moralidades" – "sátiras burlescas dos costumes da época, ou grosseiros ataques contra a religião" –, pela primeira comédia "digna desse nome", Ralph Royster Doyster, escrita por Nicholas Udall ainda no reinado de Henrique VIII (1550), pela primeira tragédia, Gorboduc ou Ferrex e Porrex, "escrita em 1562 por Sackville e Morton", até o teatro elisabetano, quando é citado Marlowe, "o mais célebre dramaturgo dessa primeira época de tentativas e ensaios". Assim, o rigor cronológico não impede o autor brasileiro de realizar "flashbacks" temporais em favor da história do gênero em questão – o que também ocorre na obra de Taine (1908).

Mas é Shakespeare "o verdadeiro criador da cena inglesa", de cujas "trinta e seis peças" – escritas "de 1589 a 1614" – são citadas apenas cinco: Macbeth, Ricardo II, O Rei Lear, Hamleto e As Comadres de Windsor, que "goza dos foros de sua primeira comédia". Depois de um longo parágrafo no qual é traçada uma curiosa biografia do bardo inglês, do seu casamento "aos dezoito anos com uma mulher mais velha do que ele oito anos" à direção, confiada por Jaime I, do teatro Blackfriars – posição "que conservou até que, sentido-se velho e cansado, retirou-se para seu país natal, onde pouco depois sucumbiu aos ataques de graves enfermidades" –, Fernandes Pinheiro o coloca em pé de igualdade com alguns dos seus contemporâneos, desmitificando um pouco a sua figura:

> Mais feliz do que Dante não precisou Shakespeare criar uma língua para traduzir seus pensamentos; Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Spenser e alguns outros haviam mostrado que o idioma inglês podia exprimir desde as mais graciosas idéias até as mais sublimes concepções. A originalidade de Shakespeare está toda no seu sistema dramático, diverso do da antigüidade. (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 257)

Comentando a sua veia cômica, o professor do Imperial Colégio de Pedro II o coloca abaixo do dramaturgo francês Molière, o que nos remonta às freqüentes comparações entre os dois escritores feitas por Taine na sua Histoire de la litterature anglaise: "na espécie cômica inferior é o talento de Shakespeare, e, conquanto os críticos ingleses o queiram fazer rival de Molière, grande é a distância que os separa, cabendo toda a superioridade ao cômico francês" (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 258).

Mesmo assim, o autor termina o tópico sobre Shakespeare reconhecendo que o escritor inglês "possuiu todos os predicados do verdadeiro gênio", ressaltando sua condição de "um dos antepassados do romantismo" e traduzindo um longo parágrafo elogioso de Taine:

> Shakespeare (diz H. Taine) imagina com superabundância; derrama metáforas com profusão; a cada instante as idéias abstratas se convertem em imagens; e uma série de pinturas que se desdobra a seus olhos. Não as procura, antes por si próprias se apresentam: se condensam nele; cobrem-lhe os raciocínios, e ofuscam com seu brilho a pura luz da lógica. Não se fadiga em explicar, ou provar: quadro sobre quadro, imagem sobre imagem, copia sem usar as estranhas e esplêndidas visões que se geram em sua esclarecida fantasia. O estilo compõe-se de expressões furibundas; e parece que jamais, em língua alguma, houve homem que submetesse os vocábulos a tão cruciantes torturas. (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 259)

O último autor abordado do período em tela é Ben Jonson (p. 259-260), que "sob a proteção de Shakespeare começou a escrever para o teatro, e logrou honras de poeta laureado que o não preservaram de morrer à míngua". Tem citadas suas tragédias A queda de Sejano e Catilina, e suas comédias Volpone – "que tem algumas parecenças com o Tartufo [de Molière]" –, A mulher calada – "quadro fidelíssimo

dos costumes da alta sociedade inglesa desse tempo" –, O alquimista e Cada qual com sua índole – "que passam por obras primas" –, além da "mascarada" Os divertimentos de Cynthia.

Quando passa a tratar da "litteratura anglo-americana", aposta como apêndice da literatura inglesa, o autor muda de tom, tornando-se mais severo nas rápidas apreciações e implacável nos julgamentos. Em poesia, no princípio havia somente "tímidos imitadores" dos ingleses, cheios de defeitos lingüísticos denominados "americanismos", até que fizeram solene entrada no cenário nacional Edgar Allan Poe e Henry Wadsworth Logfellow, este "considerado como rival de Goethe". Na eloqüência, apesar das limitações do "pulpito protestante", havia os dignos representantes da "idade de ouro da palavra e da espada": George Washington e Benjamin Franklin. No Teatro, o impulso criativo e "os principios da verdadeira e legitima arte" eram obstados pelo "caráter industrial que a especulação imprimiu nas representações teatrais". Na crítica literária haveria esperanças se todos seguissem o exemplo de "Ticknor"[5]. Apenas o romance é elogiado, sobretudo nas figuras de Beecher Stowe, Washington Irving e Fenimore Cooper[6]. Escreve o cônego, logo no início do "Apêndice":

> É um país relativamente moderno o dos Estados Unidos da América do Norte: prático e material o seu gênio, esteando sua força no bom senso, e na pasmosa atividade que favorece-lhe a industrialização. Falta-lhe a imaginação porque esta, no dizer de um filósofo, 'é o produto da memória', é a evocação do passado: falta-lhe uma gloriosa história, ou sequer poéticas legendas, que inspirassem o estro de um Byron ou de um Walter Scott (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 342).

Da parte dos intelectuais do Império do Brasil, é difícil encontrar uma referência elogiosa à literatura norte-americana, mesmo entre os americanófilos declarados, como Tavares Bastos, cuja única alusão é a de um leilão de edições d'A cabana do pai Thomaz, de Beecher Stowe. Quando tentava justificar que o Brasil não era uma potência marítima, tal como a Inglaterra ou os Estados Unidos, ele evocava, nas Cartas do solitário, somente os espíritos representantes do gênio inglês: Shakespeare e Byron, que ao contrário do nosso Gonçalves Dias – o qual, em seus Timbiras (1858), fala do mar acidentalmente –, encarnavam a impetuosidade da navegação (Bastos, 1938, p. 263-275).

No entanto, não é essa a impressão que tem James Cooley Fletcher, presbiteriano graduado em Princeton que permaneceu no Brasil entre 1851 e 1865, com interrupção em 1854 e 1855. Dedicado ao estudo das ciências naturais, Fletcher, em viagem pelo Amazonas, colheu vários materiais, que enviou ao professor Agassiz, de Harvard, o qual também esteve no país posteriormente, a pedido do Imperador, para estudos ictiológicos na mesma região.

O reverendo teve um papel político e cultural importante, pois além de ter sido por várias vezes Secretário interino da Legação dos Estados Unidos, chegou a ser membro do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, granjeando assim um influente círculo de relações tanto no seio da colônia inglesa e norte-americana quanto entre a elite brasileira – a começar pelo próprio imperador D. Pedro II, que, segundo conta, chegou a lhe pedir uma edição de poemas de Longfellow, na ocasião em que organizou uma exposição de produtos norte-americanos em 1855, logo que retornou dos Estados Unidos, na Biblioteca Nacional, movido, dentre outras razões, "pela grande falta de livros didáticos" no Brasil (Fletcher & Kidder, 1941, p. 278; 283). O relato de sua experiência brasileira, escrito em parceria com Kidder – que havia publicado dois volumes de relatos em 1845 com o título de Reminiscências de viagens e permanência no Brasil, obra sobre a qual sua narrativa foi baseada –, leva o título de O Brasil e os brasileiros (1857), tendo se tornado um "best seller" nos próprios Estados Unidos, onde, em 1868, já estava em sua oitava edição (Fletcher & Kidder, 1941, p. ix).

De qualquer forma, a literatura norte-americana, nos compêndios publicados até 1951, pelo menos, quando a literatura inglesa deixou de fazer parte do currículo dos estudos secundários, pela Portaria n. 614, de 10 de maio, assinada pelo ministro Simões Filho, se manteve sempre como "apêndice". Foi mal vista pelo cônego Fernandes Pinheiro – que atribui a falta de imaginação dos norte-americanos ao seu "gênio prático e material" –; por A. Velloso Rebello, em Literaturas estrangeiras (1936) – que diz ser o "espírito do povo" norte-americano mais dado aos cálculos comerciais dos que aos "trabalhos da inteligência" –; por M.S. Hull e Machado da Silva, em English literature (1937) – que consideram seus escritores mais antigos meros tributários dos ingleses, escoceses e irlandeses – e por Manuel Bandeira, em Noções de história das literaturas (1940) –, que afirma que mesmo depois de consolidada a independência nacional, a literatura norte-americana continuou sendo tributária do "romantismo europeu" (Oliveira, 1999).

Os únicos autores a tratarem-na com simpatia foram Oscar

Przewodowski – que exalta o país de Washington Irving e Benjamin Franklin como a terra "companheira da liberdade e transmissora do progresso" em Origens da língua inglesa – sua literatura (1920) –; F.T.D.[7], em Literaturas estrangeiras (1931?) – que faz alusão aos "frutos maravilhosos" dos Estados Unidos, "quando recuperam a bússola perdida e enveredam no trilho da Verdade" – e por Afranio Peixoto, em Noções de história de literatura geral (1932) – que considera "a jovem literatura americana pródiga e pujante" (Oliveira, 1999).

Algumas considerações

Como sugerem os compêndios acima referidos, as reformas da Primeira República não conseguiram alterar o quadro do ensino de literatura inglesa já desenhado nos tempos do Império: mantiveram-se basicamente os mesmos os julgamentos críticos, o cânone, os trechos escolhidos, a periodização – segundo o modelo taineano – e, o mais importante, o conceito romântico de literatura, segundo o qual esta é a expressão do espírito ou caráter de um povo (Oliveira, 2008).

Tal conceito, que deu sentido moderno à palavra "literatura" e pareceria muito estranho a Chaucer ou a Pope, segundo Eagleton (1983, p. 20), formula-se em fins do século XVIII e se consolida no século XIX, não somente pelos poetas, romancistas e críticos do Romantismo, mas também pela institucionalização de uma nova disciplina, que nasce nos domínios da retórica e passa a constituir o principal componente curricular nos planos de educação nacional, dada a sua importância na inculcação dos princípios éticos e morais necessários à convivência social e ao reconhecimento dos estudantes como membros de uma Sociedade Civil e de uma Nação.

No caso brasileiro, a instituição do ensino de literaturas estrangeiras, e especialmente o estudo da literatura inglesa, relaciona-se com a centralização da Instrução Pública, correspondente a um processo de centralização das principais instituições do Estado, fruto de um bem sucedido projeto político do Partido Conservador, que desde 1837, ano de fundação do Colégio de Pedro II, quando Vasconcelos assumiu a liderança virtual da Regência do senador Pedro de Araújo Lima, depois Marquês de Olinda, vinha propondo medidas em tal sentido.

Embora os compêndios de inglês do período, desde a gramática de J. Castro, de 1751, buscassem motivar seus discípulos e leitores justificando seu ensino pelo caráter utilitário da língua e pela obrigatoriedade do seu conhecimento em determinados estudos superiores, havia também uma justificativa literária para seu estudo, desde a Carta Régia de 1809 (Oliveira, 1999). No "Prólogo" de sua Nova

grammatica portugueza e ingleza (1812), por exemplo, Manoel de Freitas Brazileiro fazia saber aos desavisados que o inglês deveria ser considerado uma das línguas "universaes", "como tem sido a Latina e a Franceza", pois nela se encontravam todos os gêneros de leitura, tanto os que embelezam o pensamento quanto os que dilatam as idéias, razão porque se via na obrigação de divulgar entre seus compatriotas o conhecimento de um "Dialecto" tão estranho aos ouvidos dos habitantes do Antártico (Brazileiro, 1812, p. i).

Era mais ou menos assim que o cônego Fernandes Pinheiro justificava a necessidade do conhecimento da literatura inglesa: os nomes de seus grandes escritores haviam chegado ao conhecimento de todos pelo "progresso do seu comércio e indústria", bem como pela divulgação da sua língua "por todos os portos do globo habitado" (Pinheiro, 1873, p. 246). No entanto, o ensino da língua inglesa, durante todo o século XIX, esteve dissociado, no Brasil, de sua literatura, ou pelo menos de sua história literária, uma vez que esta se encontrava incluída nos programas de disciplinas alheias – retórica, literatura geral e depois história da literatura. Não é de surpreender, portanto, que o primeiro registro da historiografia brasileira da literatura inglesa tenha sido feito num compêndio de história da literatura universal.

A literatura universal desapareceu aos poucos do currículo destinado aos estudos secundários, ressurgindo apenas no final do período, quando da expedição do Decreto n. 18.564, de 15 de janeiro de 1929, proposto pela congregação do Colégio Pedro II e homologado pelo Conselho Nacional do Ensino. Mesmo quando se propôs a inserção da "evolução literária" no programa de inglês – Decreto n.º 8.660, de 5 de abril de 1911, assinado pelo ministro Rivadávia Correia –, a literatura inglesa continuou sendo estudada como uma matéria isolada do ensino da língua, a exemplo da tese – transformada no livro Origens da língua inglesa – sua literatura (1920) – do baiano Oscar Przewodowski – que iria depois ocupar a cadeira de inglês do Colégio Pedro II –, cujo "esboço histórico" da literatura inglesa encontra-se fora dos propósitos do "melhor método" de ensinar a língua (Oliveira, 1999).

Algum tempo depois, quando passou a ter objetivos, metodologia e conteúdo pela primeira vez sistematizados, com a Portaria de 17 de março de 1936, assinada pelo ministro Gustavo Capanema, ainda durante a vigência da reforma de Francisco Campos, era estudada isoladamente, no programa de literatura geral da primeira série do "curso complementar" – válido apenas para o curso pré-jurídico –, que abrangia também, além das literaturas de vários outros países, "os irlandeses" e a literatura norte-americana. Tal regulamento justifica o grande número de compêndios escolares de história da literatura universal que passaram a ser produzidos e publicados a partir de então.

Apenas em 1943, com a Portaria Ministerial n. 148, de 15 de fevereiro, assinada pelo ministro do Estado Novo Gustavo Capanema – que pôs em execução, durante o seu mandato, uma série de regulamentos intitulados Leis Orgânicas do Ensino –, o estudo das literaturas estrangeiras passou a fazer parte das cadeiras das línguas correspondentes, sendo as "noções gerais de literatura" transferidas para o programa de português da primeira série. A nova lei, entretanto, só vigorou até 1951, quando foi emitida a Portaria n.º 614, de 10 de maio, assinada pelo ministro Simões Filho, que, simplificando os programas de várias disciplinas do curso secundário, suprimiu do programa de inglês o estudo da literatura inglesa.

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Notas

1. Comentando a concepção de tempo adotada na História da literatura antiga e moderna (1815), de Friedrich Schlegel, escreve Carpeaux (1959, p. 22): "foi o romantismo que criou a 'história literária' conforme o critério cronológico, como nós a conhecemos, e foi o romantismo que criou a noção de 'história da literatura universal'".

2. As Literaturas estão assim distribuídas: tomo I: orientais (p. 13-20); hebraica (p. 21-25); grega (p. 26-48); latina (p. 49-89); italiana (p. 90-151); francesa (p. 152-244); inglesa e anglo-americana (p. 245-315); alemã (p. 317-370); espanhola e hispano-americana (p. 371-497); tomo II: portuguesa (p. 5-292) e luso-brasileira (p. 293-476).
3. A idéia de que a literatura exprime as condições locais e o espírito nacional, sendo, portanto, dependente da raça e das tradições dos povos que a produzem – lugar-comum durante o Romantismo –, encontrou seu mais importante divulgador e sistematizador em August Wilhelm von Schlegel, especialmente em seu Curso de literatura dramática (1809-1811) (Candido, 2000, p. 319-327).
4. Divisão periodológica adotada pelo autor: a) primeiro período: sécs. XI-XV (p. 247-252); b) segundo período – primeira época: séc. XVI (p. 252-260), segunda época: séc. XVII (p. 260-270); c) terceiro período: séc. XVIII (p. 270-296); d) quarto período: séc. XIX (p. 296-311).
5. Trata-se de George Ticknor (1791-1871), professor da Universidade de Harvard e autor de uma História da literatura espanhola (1849).
6. Fernandes Pinheiro tinha opinião mais ou menos semelhante a respeito da Literatura Brasileira – rotulada pelo autor de "luso-brasileira" –, pois, para ele, até o Romantismo, nossos autores nada exprimiam de diferente dos portugueses.
7. São as iniciais do Frei Theodoro Durant, provável autor do compêndio e fundador do que viria a ser umas das maiores editoras de livros didáticos e religiosos do país (Oliveira, 1999).

PARODY AND METAFICTION IN JONATHAN COE'S THE WINSHAW LEGACY

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ABSTRACT: This paper analyzes the final division of Jonathan Coe's 1994 novel, The Winshaw Legacy, as a parody of classic detective stories, namely Agatha Christie's Ten Little Niggers. Parody, destructive comedy and reflections about the creation of the writer-protagonist's book - the biography of the Winshaw family – are discussed as means that put into relief the novel's metafictional character and its biting commentary on the economic and political milieu of contemporary England.

KEYWORDS: Parody. Metafiction. Detective novel. Jonathan Coe. The Winshaw Legacy.

The paperback cover of the Vintage International edition of Jonathan Coe's The Winshaw Legacy shows the body of a man lying partly concealed under a broad staircase, in a setting associated with the classic murder mystery: a room in a large mansion, in the English countryside, complete with family portraits hanging on dark wood-paneled walls. An excerpt from The New York Times' review of the novel, at the foot of the page – "Savagely funny...a big, raucous and exhilarating novel" – contrasts sharply with the somber setting and thwarts any expectations the reader might have of enjoying a bona fide detective story. The novel is, in fact, according to another reviewer, "a spoof of classic mystery stories and silly British comedies".

The facetious imitation of other genres and styles (spoof) that strikes reviewers as the mainstay of the novel becomes clearer at every turn of page, starting with a first-person narrator's direct address to "(his) friendly readers", in the convoluted style of the nineteen-century serial novel he uses to describe the mentally unstable Tabitha Winshaw, "the patron and sponsor of the book which you ... now hold in your hands":

> I have no wish to dwell unnecessarily on the pitiful infirmities which fate has chosen to visit upon a poor and weak-minded woman, but this matter must be explained insofar as it has a material bearing on the subsequent

> history of the Winshaw family, and it must, therefore, be put into some sort of context. I shall at least endeavour to be brief. (COE, 1996, p. 3) [1]

From the opening sentence in the novel's Prologue, this first-person narrative voice establishes the context of the action with definite authorial omniscience: "Tragedy had struck the Winshaws twice before, but never on such a terrible scale" (p. 3). The announcement that "Death visited Winshaw Towers again that night" sums up the exposition of the remote events of November 30th 1942, when the news arrived that Godfrey Winshaw's plane had been shot down. This is the origin of further developments that take the reader up to the eventful family gathering in 1961, to celebrate Mortimer Winshaw's fiftieth birthday. At this point, an impersonal third-person narrator describes the iniquities of the members of the clan – an evil collection of characters who represent the maladies of the socio-political environment, while playing the leading roles in the history of their family. They are witnesses to the second "tragedy" to strike the Winshaws, when a burglar is killed by the eldest member of the family, Lawrence, the lord of the manor.

In another abrupt stylistic change, the reader hears an entirely different voice, that of a first-person adult narrator who recollects the events of his ninth birthday, when he was prevented from watching the conclusion of a film entitled What a Carve Up!, thus becoming obsessed with "another of adulthood's ubiquitous, insoluble mysteries: a story without a proper ending" (p. 35). This is the voice of Michael Owen, the writer who has been commissioned to record the Winshaws' history and whose autobiographical reminiscences and personal exploits, especially his difficulties in completing his literary task, structure the narrative.

Coherently, the various genres and subgenres – biography, autobiography, the detective novel, besides other media (film and television) – that constitute the structural underpinning of The Winshaw Legacy meet at a common point: the need to elucidate a mystery, whether it be an unsolved crime, living in the chaos of modernity, or, for the modern writer, finding his way out of the entangled process of creation.

Part two of the novel, entitled 'An Organization of Deaths', offers an apparently simple solution: copy what has been done before. Thus the history of the Winshaw family, which Tabitha Winshaw had envisaged as "a tremendous book, an unprecedented book – part personal memoir, part social commentary, all stirred together into one

lethal and devastating brew" (p.476) – ends in a grotesque and overt parody of Agatha Christie's Ten Little Niggers, whose film versions the characters discuss openly. Parody is Jonathan Coe's solution for his problems of narrative technique.

This is actually the focus of this paper: the narrative structures that Jonathan Coe takes over from previous works, specifically the detective novel, and how he adapts those models to his needs – the criticism of both the present literary environment and of the socio-political milieu of post-war Britain. The discussion focuses particularly on the parody of the Agatha Christie classic which concludes the novel, but references to other intertextual exchanges throughout the novel will be made to evidence that The Winshaw Legacy aims at serious social commentary. This is in spite of what a minor character of radical tendencies argues to be the problem with the English novel today, that it has no tradition of political engagement: "It's all a lot of pissing about within the limits set down by bourgeois morality, as far as I can see. There's no radicalism" (p. 276).

Social criticism underlies the two narrative lines in the novel: the history of the Winshaws over a period of fifty years, from World War II to the Gulf War, and the personal story of the individual, Michael Owen, gathering material for his book and working on its composition.

Thirty years separate the two fateful family gatherings that open and close the action proper. The birthday celebration in 1961 brings into the limelight the main characters in the plot, which include the second generation, Lawrence, Tabitha, and Mortimer, and the third, Henry, Thomas, Dorothy and Mark. Aged nine and seven, the youngest Winshaws, Roddy and Hilary, are promising members of the clan. In a dispute over a coin, the boy treads on his sister's hand until the bones are crushed.

With the exception of Lawrence, long deceased, the same group is found at the reading of Mortimer's will on January 16th 1991, in an atmosphere of strange expectancy, as the omniscient narrator informs us, since at 5 o'clock the United Nations' final deadline for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait had expired.

In one way or another every member of the family has interests in the war. Thomas, the eldest, a banker and economist who enjoys "snatching these huge state-owned companies from the taxpayers' hands and carving them up among a minority of profit-hungry shareholders" (p. 321), is concerned with the profits to be made in the arms trade, in which his younger cousin Mark has commercial dealings with both sides. Henry, the turncoat member of parliament, has built

a successful career in politics by keeping his opinions secret and worming his way in. Proud of being on speaking terms with Margaret Thatcher, he is in favor of "dumping the bitch, and fast" (p. 141) when she falls from grace. He goes along with the party's decision over the war.

Hilary is an overpaid journalist renowned for her biting - but often baseless – articles on current issues. She changes her opinion with no compunction at all: her editorials about Saddam Hussein as a patriot and hero turn into vicious indictment of "the tyrant". Ruthless Dorothy has built up what used to be her husband's quiet, old-fashioned, modestly run family farm into one of the biggest agrochemical empires in the country, by closely observing the "conversion rate"; that is, "how much food you put in to an animal, compared to what you get out of it in the end, by way of meat" (p. 18).

Michael Owen declares his disgust for this family of criminals

> whose wealth and prestige were founded upon every manner of swindling, forgery, larceny, robbery, thievery, trickery, jiggery-pokery, hanky-panky, plundering, looting, sacking, misappropriation, spoliation and embezzlement. (...) Every penny of the Winshaw fortune (...) could be said to have derived, by some route or other, from the shameless exploitation of persons weaker than themselves. (p. 88-89)

His personal memoirs are interspersed with his present actions and with his reflections about the composition of his book on the Winshaws. It is the biographer writing his own story. The story of the story structures the narrative we read and has the upper hand. With a slight detour to 1982, the seven sections in part one of the novel are arranged in chronological order from August 1990 to January 1991 and have to do with Michael's personal life. Intervening sections are named after the six Winshaw heroes and heroines: Hilary, Henry, Roddy, Dorothy, Thomas and Mark, and deal with their shady activities.

The reader learns how Michael, at the age of eleven, created his first fictional character, a Victorian detective who went by the exotic name of Jason Rudd, playing a typical role in a tale entitled "The Castle Mystery". Further on in the narrative, the adult Michael finds himself engaged in a sort of game: guessing who the murderer is out of a number of characters stranded in a big old house in the country. Michael's realization that the character he impersonates, Professor

Plum, is actually the murderer foreshadows the concluding events of the novel, in the section entitled "An Organization of Deaths", and provides side commentaries on the role of the writer as either "disinterested observer" or controller of his narrative.

> It was my destiny to act the part of a shy awkward, vulnerable little man caught up in a sequence of nightmarish events over which he had absolutely no control. (...) The solution revealed itself to me: the murderer, the culprit, was none other than myself, Professor Plum.(...) It seemed wrong that by a simple process of elimination you could find yourself guilty of a crime, and yet still not know how or where you were supposed to have committed it. Surely there was no precedent for this in real life? I wondered what it would actually feel like, to be present at the unraveling of some terrible mystery and then to be suddenly confronted with the falseness of your own, complacent self-image as disinterested observer: to find, all at once, that you were thoroughly and messily bound up in the web of motives and suspicions which you had presumed to untangle with an outsider's icy detachment. Needless to say, I could not imagine the circumstances in which such a thing might ever happen to me. (p. 302-303)

In fact, it is hard to imagine that Michael Owen's appointment to write The Winshaw Legacy had arisen from a chance meeting with an attractive girl who was reading one of his books on a train, and who turned out to be the daughter of the publisher in charge of finding a suitable writer for the Winshaws' history. Further on in the narrative the reader is informed that the meeting had actually been contrived.

Eight years later, after a sterile non-productive period, Michael Owen is still struggling with his unfinished book when he receives some helpful suggestions from his publisher, who tells him his book lacks passion. Taking passion as a synonym for intensity, Michael is dumbfounded to find out that his publisher simply meant sex. Owen takes the advice to heart, but his attempt to write a sexually arousing scene involving art-dealer Roddy Winshaw and a young female artist, whom - according to current gossip - he had lured to the family mansion under false pretenses, is one of the really hilarious passages in the novel. "My knowledge of sexually explicit books and films

was small", says Michael, once again establishing the parodic character of his text. After four days and nights of writing and re-writing he was still "dithering over preliminary niceties so as to avoid getting down to the action."

> He pulled her roughly towards the bed
> That wouldn't do. I didn't want to make it sound like rape.
> He pulled her gently toward s the bed
> Too wimpish.
> He drew her towards the bed
> He sat down on the bed and drew her roughly towards him
> "Won't you sit down?" he said and pointed in the rough direction of the bed.
> He looked in the rough direction of the bed, and raised a provocative eyebrow
> A suggestive eyebrow
> He raised both of his eyebrows
> He raised his right eyebrow provocatively
> He raised his left eyebrow suggestively
> [Finally, he comes up with a compromise.]
> Raising both of his eyebrows, one provocatively, the other suggestively, he pulled her gently in the rough direction of the bed. (p. 333-4)

The characteristic comic vision of postmodernism deconstructs that which it supposedly means to emulate, as in Michael Owen's failed attempt to parody the clichés of pornographic stories. According to Lance Olsen, "the postmodern creator becomes aesthetic and metaphysical terrorist, a freeplayer in a universe of intertextuality, where no one text has any more or less authority than any other" (1990, p. 18).

On the other hand, when discussing parody, Dwight MacDonald warns against the excessive broadening of the genre that might turn into mere jocularity: "most of what passes for parody is actually so broad as to be mere burlesque". For him, "the genre expands or contracts, changing shape like a fish glimpsed under water, the water being one's own particular notion of the fish" (1960, p. xiii).

Martin Kuester (1992, p. 3-4) is more restrictive in his conceptualization. The term parody should be used in a structural sense in which humor is a possible quality of parodies but not a necessary prerequisite. To avoid the expected association between parody and humor, Kuester suggests going back to the concept of parody as it

was used by eighteenth century theorists and critics such as Samuel Johnson, and as it has been reintroduced by contemporary theorists: "a kind of writing, in which the words of an author or his thoughts are taken, and by a slight change adapted to some new purpose".

Bakhtin's theories of dialogism enhance the importance of parody in modern literary works of art, since modern societies can no longer produce monological texts that represent a coherent world-view, as was the case with the epic. One way of reacting against monological texts is to parody them. "The novel parodies other genres (precisely in their roles as genders); it exposes the conventionality of their forms and their language; it squeezes out some genres and incorporates others into its own peculiar structure reformulating and re-accentuating them" (1981, p. 5). Thus parody can be an end in itself – the literary parody as a genre, for example - but the author can make use of the parodic word in various ways to serve other, positive purposes.

Linda Hutcheon (1991, p. 32) points out that parody is repetition with critical distance, a form of imitation characterized by ironic inversion, which marks difference rather than similarity. As an acknowledged borrowing, parody involves not only formal textual imitation but also the issue of intent.

It is evident that Jonathan Coe has a definite intent in parodying a genre dismissed by canonical criticism as mass literature. He uses the formulaic characteristics of detective fiction both to structure his narrative and as a means to protest against the callousness of the socio-political environment.

Edgar Allan Poe, the precursor of what he labels "tales of ratiocination", suggests a formula for what was to become the classical detective story, which he defines in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Purloined Letter" (Stern, 1977). There are four aspects to the formula. .

1. Situation. The classic detective story begins with an unsolved crime and moves toward the elucidation of the mystery. There are two unsolved deaths (were they actually criminal?) in the history of the Winshaws. Was Tabitha right in accusing Lawrence of being a Nazi spy and of sending their brother Godfrey to his death from anti-aircraft fire in his top-secret mission over Berlin? What was the identity of the burglar killed by Lawrence?

2. Pattern of action. In Poe's definition, the detective story formula centers around the detective's investigation and solution of the crime. Jonathan Coe parodies the formula to help his narrator-protagonist – who is not a detective – to unravel the mystery, which is not the center of the narrative.

3. Characters and relationships. Four main roles are required: a) the victim; b) the criminal; c) the detective; and d) those threatened by the crime but incapable of solving it. All four elements are facetiously presented in Coe's parody

4. Setting. Poe's stories of "ratiocination" take place in isolated settings – the locale of the crime and the detective's rooms, where he pieces together the logical solution to the crime. Winshaw Towers corresponds in a way to the isolated setting of crimes.

Coe's narrative adapts, reverses or simply ignores formulas and rules in his parody. In fact, the reader is not mesmerized by the solution of the mysteries, a sideline in Michael Owen's personal story. It is only in the second part of the novel "An Organization of Deaths," a mere 69 of its 493 pages, that the long-protracted solution of the crimes, intricately enmeshed in the conclusion of the novel's narrative process, is reached with a boom and a bang. Besides tying up loose threads in the history of the Winshaws, the denouement solves Michael Owen's personal conflicts and his anguish as a writer.

An Organization of Deaths

As mentioned above, the second part of the book, "An Organization of Deaths", is an explicit parody of Agatha Christie's Ten Little Niggers, in the form of a short detective novel told in the third person. The plot is a third reunion of the Winshaws, which includes their biographer Michael Owen.

The Agatha Christie classic is itself a deviation from the traditional pattern of "the novel of enigma", pointed out by Todorov (2003): 1) Story one: the story of the crime presented to the reader as a fait accompli; 2) Story two: the search for the murderer which establishes a link between the reader and the process of solving the crime: information is relayed in a clear and direct style that allows the reader to work out a solution. The narrator – someone other than the detective himself – functions as a mere observer, someone who reports events usually without understanding their significance.

As initiated readers know, Ten Little Niggers is unique in the canon of "the Queen of Crime": deaths are announced beforehand and occur in the order and in the ways indicated by the words of a nursery rhyme. There are no detectives and the solution of the crimes is also sui generis: the murderer himself, one of the ten prospective victims isolated on a lonely island describes his reasons and his actions in detail, puts the manuscript in a bottle and throws it into the sea. The bottle is, evidently, found by the police!!! At least in this, the story is conventional: there must be a solution to the mystery, however farfetched and improbable it may be, which must be announced in a dramatic moment of revelation (Cawelti, 1977, p. 87).

Seeing that Christie's text already deviates from accepted norms, "An Organization of Deaths" can be taken as the parody of a parody, as an imitating text that twice reverses the form of the formulaic detective tale (the imitated text) while facetiously pretending to renew interest in its old message – that crime must be punished. The division into form and content is a simplification insofar as these two elements – especially in parodies –are interdependent, but, as Kuester emphasizes, a parody forces us to be aware of form as an artifice (1992, p. 7).

Detective novels are a formulaic genre, however, and by concentrating on the explicit dialogue with the form of the imitated text we inevitably refer to its message. Ideological implications are the backbone of The Winshaw Legacy and its final part, "An Organization of Deaths", is a travesty or burlesque, a derisive and exaggerated imitation of such ideas.

Poe's division will be used as a structuring principle.

Situation

Explicit dialogue with different genres and subgenres of popular literature establishes the initial situation: basically, the reunion of the Winshaws, with the presence of their biographer, for the reading of Mortimer's will.

The intrusion into Michael's quarters, in the premature dusk of a dreary day, of a mysterious stranger, whose face "would have struck terror into the heart of many a stronger man", mocks the clichés of horror stories:

> Gaunt, misshapen and unhealthy, it expressed at once a meanness of spirit, a slowness of intelligence and, perhaps most chillingly of all, an absolute untrustworthiness. (...) It was a face which gave out a simple, dreadful message: abandon hope, all you who look upon this face. Give up every thought of redemption, every prospect of escape. Expect nothing from me. (p. 424)

This apparition turns out to be no other than Mortimer Winshaw's solicitor, who had come to request Michael's presence at the reading of his client's will.

On the train to Winshaw Towers, Michael examines a spy story entitled I Was 'Celery', the memoir of a double agent whose codename

explains the meaning of Lawrence's mysterious note BISCUIT, CHEESE AND CELERY, supposedly an order for lunch, a key element in the solution of the mystery surrounding Godfrey's death – which marks the Winshaws' first reunion. The third-person narrator who is substituted for Michael Owen's narrative voice suggests that Tabitha's accusations about her brother and his wartime treachery might be true.

Michael has supposedly been summoned for the unraveling of the mystery. There are surprising revelations: we are told that the burglar killed by Lawrence during the family's second reunion was both Godfrey's co-pilot, who had miraculously survived the crash, and Michael's biological father.

References to different genres of film that deal with a similar situation, the murder of several people in an isolated old house, foreshadow future developments: the Hitchcock thriller Psycho, a comic travesty with Bob Hope, and films based on the plot of Agatha Christie's Ten Little Niggers.[2] The situation at hand is an explicit parody of the latter: "Isn't there a film where some crackpot – he turns out to be a judge – invites a lot of people to a remote house and does 'em all in: the point being that they all have guilty secrets to hide, and he sees himself as their executioner – a sort of angel of justice?" (p. 452) Thomas Winshaw's question establishes the pattern of action, and puts the seal on the parodic nature of the text.

Pattern of action

Jonathan Coe heeds the conventions of detective fiction when he pointedly provides logical explanations for everybody's presence at Winshaw Towers on the fateful night of January 16th 1991. Why should six of the wealthiest people in England – Thomas, Henry, Dorothy, and Mark, besides Roddy and Hilary – take the trouble to come to a derelict old house for the reading of the will of their respective uncle and father, a man known to have a very small personal fortune? Mortimer's will provides the answer:

> They will be propelled by the very same force which has always – and solely – driven them throughout the entire conduct of their professional careers. I refer, of course, to greed: naked, clawing, brutish greed. (p. 438)

Michael's presence is equally accounted for as the family's "luckless biographer", who should be on hand to make a complete record of an evening expected to provide "a most fitting conclusion to his eagerly awaited history" (p. 437), which takes place in appropriate surroundings.

Setting

The description of the setting overtly parodies the style of gothic fiction. At the mercy of the wind and the rain, on a very dark night, Michael walks through "black naked peat, straggling heather, and weirdly shaped rocks", until he reaches a "squat, forbidding mansion", where he is received by the "ghastly howling of dogs". Attempting to lift "the immense, rusty knocker", he found that the door "swung open of its own accord". The "huge, dingy, stone-flagged hall, lit only by four or five lamps set high in the wood-paneled walls, with badly weathered tapestries and oil paintings adding to the crepuscular impression", matches the picture on the cover of the book which opened this discussion.

By this time, in spite of the characteristics of The Winshaw Legacy as a bizarre parody of detective fiction, the inevitable expectations aroused by the genre still make the habitué reader hope for the clearing up of some obscure points in the narrative. And this is what Jonathan Coe finally does, by mercilessly juggling the roles of the victim, the criminal, the detective and those threatened by the crime, but incapable of solving it.

Characters and relationships

The victims are reduced to six, and their deaths reflect the characteristics of their fraudulent professional activities. Henry, the double-crosser and back-stabber, is the first to go, stabbed in the back. "How appropriate" is Hilary's dry comment. "Does this mean that Mrs Thatcher is somewhere in the house?" (p. 446)

Mark Winshaw, the trafficker in arms, is chopped up with an axe. His body is found in the billiard room, his severed limbs protruding hideously from the two pockets at the baulk end. The macabre message scrawled in blood on the wall is a reference to another literary text: A FAREWELL TO ARMS.

When the lights go out, Roddy inadvertently chews the eyeball of Thomas, the voyeur, taken out of a bowl containing grapes. Dorothy's body is trussed up neatly and tied by the ankles to a meat hook screwed into one of the beams, like a slaughtered calf. Hilary is crushed by a bulky parcel compounded of all the newspapers for which she had written a column over the last six years. The narrative voice comments she was "crushed by the weight of her own opinion, and knocked to the ground, as senseless as any reader who had ever been numbed

into submission by her raging torrent of overpaid words" (p. 465). Roddy Winshaw, the unscrupulous art-dealer, is found dead in his bedroom, covered from head to foot in gold paint – a scene from another film, Shirley Eaton in Goldfinger, Michael Owen informs us, carrying out his self-appointed task as inquirer, a variation of the detective's role.

At a certain point Owen becomes prime suspect, when it is pointed out that Owen is the name of the organizer of the "whole shindig" in Ten Little Niggers, Mr U.N.Owen. Back in his role as inquirer, he hears the confession of a blood-spattered weary Mortimer Winshaw, who was not dead after all, and who had been pretending to be a helpless invalid: he had tried to do mankind a small favor before he died by ridding the world of the Winshaws, "a handful of vermin".

> It runs in the family, you see. Mad as hatters, queer as coots, and nutty as fruitcakes, every one of us. Because there comes a point, you know, Michael (...) where greed and madness become practically indistinguishable.(...) And there comes another point, where the willingness to tolerate greed, and to live alongside it, and even to assist it, becomes a sort of madness too. (p. 485)

This is the necessary moment of revelation in detective fiction, which clears the motives and means of the murder(s). Michael himself is not exempt from blame, however. It was his book – reports of which Tabitha had forwarded to her brother – that had finally persuaded Mortimer to act "and suggested one or two possible ... approaches" (p. 484). Michael's role as disinterested observer is shattered and he finds that that he was "thoroughly and messily bound up in the web of motives and suspicions which you had presumed to untangle with an outsider's icy detachment", as quoted above.

Tabitha Winshaw's contradictory roles emphasize Coe's playful manipulation of the formula. She is the "old loony" who triggers the action – a parallel to "Aunt Emily, the deranged old spinster played by Esma Cannon in the film What a Carve Up!" (p. 35).[3] But she is also the sharp sleuth, placidly knitting while everybody else is running around, an ironic Miss Marple - Agatha Christie's famous detective - who enjoys the whole to-do and reminds Michael of his authorial position: "What a long face you are wearing! (...) Or perhaps you are beginning to get a few thoughts about how your book might end?" (p. 449). In fact, Tabitha is the instrument that brings about the end of "An Organization of Deaths", the story: within the history of the Winshaws, which is left unfinished. Disguised as a pilot, she flies

Michael to a crash, laughing wildly – "the endless, hideous laughter of the irredeemably insane" (p. 492). Michael's death completes the parallels with the imitated text: there are no survivors. "Tragedy had struck the Winshaws twice before, but never on such a terrible scale": the meaning of the opening sentence becomes clear when repeated in isolation, after the novel's conclusion. Death both puts an end to Michael's personal conflicts and solves his problems as a writer: just leave the story incomplete.

In detective stories the troubles of life are reduced to a single problem: a murder has been committed and must be solved. Upon its solution, troubles disappear and life runs smoothly once again. This may be the primary reason for the continuing popularity of the genre. It certainly explains the parodic use of detective fiction as a solution for Michael Owen's impasse: "The manuscript was in a serious mess. Parts of it read like a novel and parts of it read like a history, while in the closing pages it assumed a tone of hostility towards the family which was quite unnerving. I would have to decide once and for all whether to present it as a work of fact or fiction" (p. 91-92).

Fact and fiction are actually aligned in The Winshaw Legacy, which shows different levels of representation: the actor Sid James, for instance, the star of What a Carve Up!, becomes a character in an incident involving Thomas Winshaw's voyeurism. That problems of representation are also a constant concern of author Jonathan Coe is evidenced by his choice of approach, which centers on writing as a self-reflexive process. His chronicle of post-war Britain and, by extension, of the post-war world becomes a parody of historiography, biography, autobiography, and of various genres of popular literature, besides establishing intertextual relationships with other media – film and television.

The Winshaw Legacy can be said to fit Linda Hutcheon's concept of historiographic metafiction on account of its use of techniques that foreground the process of writing in the reconstruction of a historical period. And parody certainly is one such metafictional technique since, whatever its purpose, it is based on a primary text. For Hutcheon, parody is one of the major modes of formal and thematic construction of texts in the 20th century, having a hermeneutic function with both cultural and even ideological implications (1991, p. 2).

Michael Owen, the inquirer, solves the mystery involving the deaths of Godfrey Winshaw and of his co-pilot and indirectly causes the murderers to be punished. Michael Owen, the writer, leaves his book unfinished. Like his writer-protagonist, Jonathan Coe, the author of The Winshaw Legacy, successfully exposes the greed and in-

sanity of the modern world, while simultaneously turning a critical eye upon the task of the modern writer. The recurrent comments about the story's lack of a proper ending, plus its parodic character, indicate that its author is still searching for an answer to his problems of representation.

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Notes

1. COE, Jonathan. The Winshaw Legacy. New York: Vintage Books, 1996. All further references to the text will be indicated by page numbers in brackets.

2. The novel was published in the United States with different titles: And Then There Were None, The Nursery Rhyme Murders, and Ten Little Indians.
3. The film actually exists: a 1962 production directed by Pat Jackson, starring Sid James and Kenneth Connor

RUMOS DA PESQUISA EM LÍNGUA INGLESA NO BRASIL: UMA ANÁLISE A PARTIR DO CADERNO DE RESUMOS DO I CONGRESSO INTERNACIONAL DA ABRAPUI

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RESUMO: O objetivo deste estudo foi fazer um mapeamento das pesquisas da área de Língua Inglesa no Brasil, a partir caderno de resumos do I Congresso Internacional da Associação de Professores Universitários de Inglês (ABRAPUI), realizado em 2007. O trabalho buscou identificar os tópicos, metodologias, contextos e regiões de origem das pesquisas realizadas, bem como a preponderância dos mesmos. A análise dos dados foi conduzida numa perspectiva qualitativa-interpretativa e quantitativa. Primeiramente, todos os trabalhos da área de Língua Inglesa presentes no caderno de resumos do evento foram identificados e os trabalhos estrangeiros e de literatura foram eliminados. A seguir, os 276 resumos selecionados foram fichados com base em modelos propostos por Gimenez (1998) e Ortenzi et al (2002), e categorizados de acordo com os tópicos, as metodologias, os contextos de pesquisas e a região de origem. Finalmente, foi realizada uma análise quantitativa, para identificar quais tópicos, metodologias, contextos e origens eram predominantes no corpus analisado. Os resultados indicam que entre os tópicos destacam-se formação de professores, oralidade, identidade, crenças, tecnologia no ensino e gênero textual. Além disso, muitos tópicos estão inter-relacionados e ligados às linhas de pesquisa da Lingüística Aplicada no Brasil e no exterior desde os anos 70. Nos resumos analisados, houve predomínio da metodologia qualitativa, que foi empregada em 78,8% dos trabalhos que informavam a metodologia. O contexto mais pesquisado foi a sala de aula da universidade, e a maioria dos trabalhos era proveniente das regiões Sudeste e Sul do Brasil.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: pesquisa; língua inglesa; contexto brasileiro; ABRAPUI.

ABSTRACT: This study aimed at mapping research in the English language area in Brazil, based on the proceedings of the I International Conference of the Brazilian Association of University Professors of English (ABRAPUI), which happened in 2007. The study identified the topics, methodologies, contexts and origins of research, as well as their predominance. Data analysis was conducted in both a qualitative-interpretative and a quantitative way. Firstly, all the abstracts in the English language area were identified and the abstracts of studies conducted in other countries or about literature were eliminated. After that, the 276 selected abstracts were compiled following models proposed by Gimenez (1998) and Ortenzi et al (2002), and categorized according to the topics, methodologies, contexts and origins of research. Finally, a quantitative analysis was carried out in order to identify which topics, methodologies, contexts and origins were predominant in the corpus. The results indicate that among the topics some were more recurrent, such as teacher education, speaking, identity, beliefs, teaching with technology and text genre. Moreover, many of the topics were interconnected and related to the research lines in Applied Linguistics in Brazil and abroad since the 70's. The qualitative methodology was predominant in the corpus, in a total of 78,8% of the abstracts which mentioned the methodology. The most investigated context was the university classroom and the majority of the studies were carried out in the Southeast and South of Brazil.

KEYWORDS: research; English language; Brazilian context; ABRAPUI

Introdução

Segundo Gil (2005, p. 173), a caracterização e sistematização de pesquisas na área de línguas são muito importantes para dar conta das "complexidades advindas do amplo repertório de objetos com diferentes naturezas" que fazem parte da área. Entretanto, como a própria autora argumenta, não existem muitos trabalhos publicados no Brasil com tal sistematização.

Assim, o estudo aqui proposto pretende contribuir para o preenchimento dessa lacuna, apresentando um mapeamento das pesquisas na área de Língua Inglesa no Brasil, tomando como base o caderno de resumos do no I Congresso Internacional da Associação Brasileira de Professores Universitários de Inglês (ABRAPUI), realizado em Belo Horizonte – Minas Gerais (MG), dos dias 03 a 06 de junho de

2007. Mais especificamente, o estudo objetivou identificar os tópicos, as abordagens metodológicas, os contextos e as regiões de origem das pesquisas realizadas, bem como a preponderância dos mesmos.

Este artigo está dividido em cinco sessões. A segunda e a terceira sessões trazem, respectivamente, uma breve revisão da literatura de alguns estudos que tratam da pesquisa em línguas estrangeiras no Brasil, e a metodologia empregada para o desenvolvimento desta pesquisa. Na quarta sessão, os resultados da análise dos dados são discutidos à luz dos pressupostos teóricos sintetizados na revisão da literatura. Para encerrar, as considerações finais deste trabalho são apresentadas.

Revisão da Literatura

O presente estudo tem como tema central a sistematização das pesquisas na área de língua inglesa no Brasil. Conforme comentado anteriormente, não existem muitos trabalhos desta natureza publicados.

Muitos dos artigos que apresentam um mapeamento das pesquisas são estudos mais específicos, que procuram dar conta de algumas subáreas dentro da Lingüística e/ou da Lingüística Aplicada. Alguns exemplos são os artigos de Gil (2005), sobre formação de professores de línguas, e de Pagano e Vasconcelos (2003), a respeito da tradução.

Há também alguns poucos artigos que buscam fazer levantamentos mais abrangentes dentro da Lingüística Aplicada à Língua estrangeira (LE) como um todo, como o trabalho de Moita Lopes (1999), e o de Cunha (2003), a respeito da pesquisa na área de língua inglesa. Esses trabalhos são mais relevantes para a pesquisa aqui apresentada, uma vez que buscam mostrar um panorama mais amplo da pesquisa em língua inglesa no Brasil.

Em seu artigo, escrito há cerca de uma década, Moita Lopes (1999) apresenta um retrato da Lingüística Aplicada à Língua Estrangeira (LE) no Brasil entre o início dos anos 70 até o final dos anos 90. No artigo, o autor aborda vários aspectos, como os programas de pós-graduação no país, os tópicos de pesquisa mais comuns, as associações de professores da área, o projeto nacional de inglês instrumental, revistas científicas e livros de autores brasileiros, e a publicação dos Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais de LEs. O autor conclui seu artigo apontando para o que chama de 'fotografias virtuais', ou seja, questões ainda por serem desenvolvidas dentro da área de LEs no Brasil, nas quais estão englobados os tópicos, e as abordagens teóricas e metodológicas a serem desenvolvidos no futuro.

O artigo de Cunha (2003) apresenta um levantamento dos

diferentes momentos na história da pesquisa em Língua Inglesa no Brasil desde os anos 70 até a atualidade. A autora discorre sobre questões epistemológicas da pesquisa, em um artigo cotejado por fatos sociopolíticos marcantes ocorridos no país que, de alguma maneira, tiveram relação com a pesquisa. Cada uma das décadas de pesquisa em língua inglesa no Brasil é tratada, e os temas são ilustrados com pesquisas desenvolvidas no programa de pós-graduação da Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP), sob orientação da professora e pesquisadora Maria Antonieta Alba Celani. Conforme a autora, nos anos 70 a maioria dos trabalhos apresentava relatos de experiência, estudos cognitivistas e de estrutura da língua, além de prescrições de procedimentos metodológicos. Já nos anos 80, os estudos enfocavam mais o processo de ensino-aprendizagem. Na década de 90, os trabalhos passaram a abordar também o uso da tecnologia e a política de ensino de LEs. Com a chegada do novo milênio, os trabalhos analisados pela autora revelaram principalmente um foco na formação de professores e na interação.

Os apontamentos de Moita Lopes (1999) e Cunha (2003) quanto à pesquisa em língua inglesa e LE em geral no Brasil serão retomados na discussão dos dados, em comparação com os resultados obtidos no presente estudo.

Metodologia

Os dados para esta pesquisa são provenientes do Caderno de Resumos do I Congresso Internacional da ABRAPUI, realizado em junho de 2007, na Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, em Belo Horizonte, MG.

A análise dos dados foi conduzida numa perspectiva qualitativa, interpretativa e quantitativa. Primeiramente, todos os trabalhos da área de Língua Inglesa presentes no caderno de resumos do evento foram identificados e os trabalhos estrangeiros e de literatura foram eliminados. A seguir, os 276 resumos selecionados foram fichados com base em modelos propostos por Gimenez (1998) e Ortenzi et al (2002), e categorizados de acordo com os tópicos, metodologias, contextos de pesquisas e região de origem.

Para que fosse possível categorizar os trabalhos, foi necessário utilizar palavras e expressões recorrentes contidas nos resumos para identificar os tópicos, as metodologias e os contextos de pesquisa. No caso das origens, foi apenas verificada a instituição de filiação indicada pelo/s(a/s) autor/s(a/s) dos resumos.

Finalmente, foi realizada uma análise quantitativa, para identificar quais tópicos, metodologias, contextos e origens eram predominantes

no corpus analisado.

Resultados e discussão

Como foi mencionado anteriormente, foram selecionados para esta pesquisa apenas os trabalhos de Língua no contexto brasileiro, uma vez que o objetivo do estudo foi fazer um mapeamento das pesquisas na área de Língua Inglesa no Brasil. Portanto, os trabalhos de Literatura e os estrangeiros não foram analisados. Porém, pela grandiosidade do I Congresso Internacional da ABRAPUI é importante demonstrar em números a totalidade de trabalhos presentes no caderno de resumos do evento. O caderno de resumos do I Congresso Internacional da ABRAPUI como um todo contém 526 trabalhos, sendo 246 de Literatura e 280 de Língua. Os resumos analisados totalizam 276 trabalhos, que transformados em porcentagem significam 53% dos trabalhos voltados para a Língua Inglesa no contexto brasileiro.

Para uma visão mais abrangente dos dados analisados, pode-se fazer uma síntese das categorias do evento, que foram: Palestras e Mesas-redondas, com 18 trabalhos e 6%; Simpósios, com 84 trabalhos e 30%; Comunicações Individuais, com 161 trabalhos e 58%; e Pôsteres, com 13 trabalhos e 5%, totalizando desse modo 276 trabalhos.

Nas próximas subseções, serão apresentados os resultados divididos por categorias: tópicos, metodologias, contextos e origens de pesquisas. Dentro de cada subseção, os resultados estão também detalhados conforme o tipo de trabalho apresentado no evento: Palestras e Mesas-redondas, Simpósios, Comunicações Individuais e Pôsteres.

Os tópicos

Nos tópicos levantados a partir da análise dos resumos das Palestras e Mesas-redondas, teve -se como predominantes em um total de 18 resumos categorizados para a análise os tópicos: tecnologia no ensino e gênero textual, com 16,7% cada. Os tópicos identidade, interação e colaboração, currículo de Letras e da educação básica possuem 11,1% cada. Os demais tópicos, educação superior em Letras, teoria e prática, estudo de corpus, crenças, autonomia e formação de professores tiveram o mesmo percentual de 5,6% cada, com menor expressividade.

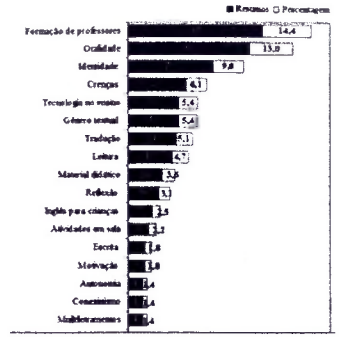
Nos Simpósios, os tópicos predominantes nos 84 resumos categorizados para análise foram: formação de professores, com 13,1% dos trabalhos apresentados; tradução, com 11,9%; oralidade, com 9,5%; crenças, com 8,3%; atividades em sala, com 7,1%; tecnologia no ensino com 6,0%. Com o mesmo percentual de 4,8%, apareceram os tópicos leitura, reflexão e conexionismo, seguidos dos tópicos com menos expressividade; multiletramentos, inglês para crianças,

multimodalidade, contexto e identidade, que possuem 3,6% cada. Os tópicos lingüística de corpus, experiências, desafios e emoção apresentaram cada um 2,4%, enquanto lingüística cognitiva, processamento lingüístico, escrita, gramática, teoria da expectativa, aprendizagem on-line obtiveram 1,2% cada.

Nos tópicos encontrados nos 161 resumos categorizados das Comunicações Individuais, destacaram-se como predominantes: formação de professores, com 17,4%; oralidade, com 16,1%; identidade 10,6%; gênero textual, com 7,5% e leitura, com 5,6%. Em seguida, os tópicos recursos didáticos e crenças tiveram o mesmo percentual de 4,3%, e depois, com 3,7% dos trabalhos, tecnologia no ensino. Com uma representatividade um pouco menor, apareceram os tópicos reflexão e motivação, com 3,1% cada. Os demais tópicos tiveram expressividade inferior aos anteriores: inglês para crianças, pragmática e escrita tiveram 2,5% cada. Os tópicos autonomia e tradução perfizeram 1,9% cada; gramática, semântica, interacionismo, inglês para jovens e adultos, aquisição da linguagem e elaboração do material didático apresentaram o mesmo percentual de 1,2%, cada. Ainda, letramento digital, análise lexicográfica, pedagogia crítica no ensino-aprendizagem, ensino de inglês e literatura nas escolas, planejamento de aulas, educação à distância, música, tolerância sexual em sala de aula, semântica e vocabulário compareceram com 0,6% cada um.

Nos 13 resumos analisados dos Pôsteres, identidade surgiu como tópico predominante, com 23,1%. Os tópicos crenças e oralidade possuem o mesmo percentual, de 15,4% cada, e foram mais representativos em quantidade. Os demais tópicos com menor quantidade de trabalhos foram anglicismos, lingüística e cultura, tecnologia no ensino, multimodalidade e vocabulário, tradução e material didático, com 7,7%, cada um.

No total das categorias de apresentação do èvento, os vinte tópicos mais prestigiados nos 276 resumos, foram por ordem decrescente: formação de professores, com 14,4%; oralidade, 13,0%; identidade, com 9,0%; crenças, com 6,1%; tecnologia no ensino e gênero textual, com 5,4% cada tópico; tradução, com 5,1%; leitura, com 4,7%; material didático, com 3,6%, reflexão 3,2%, com 2,9%, e inglês para crianças, com 2,5%, atividades em sala, com 2,2%, escrita e motivação, com 1,8% cada. Os tópicos autonomia, conexionismo, multiletramentos, multimodalidade, pragmática e interacionismo possuem o mesmo percentual de 1,4%. Esses resultados estão resumidos no Gráfico 01[1].



Uma vez que formação de professores surgiu na análise geral como o tópico de pesquisa mais investigado nos resumos analisados, pode-se afirmar que os resultados da presente pesquisa corroboram o estudo de Cunha (2003), que apresenta igualmente a formação de professores como o tópico mais estudado da pesquisa em língua inglesa no Brasil na atualidade.

Nota-se também uma semelhança entre os tópicos de pesquisa mais comuns encontrados neste estudo e aqueles relacionados por Moita Lopes (1999). Em seu artigo, o autor elencou os tópicos mais prestigiados na área de LEs nos últimos 30 anos, dentre eles estão: a) ensino/aprendizagem de LE, b) leitura, c) formação do professor de línguas, d) avaliação e elaboração de material didático, e) produção escrita, f) compreensão oral, g) análise do discurso/ pragmática em LE, h) construção da identidade em sala de aula, i) ensino de LE por computador.

Ademais, quando o autor lançou os tópicos que seriam mais investigados no futuro, ele apontava: a formação reflexiva de professores de LE através da pesquisa, a identidade social do aluno de LE, o discurso/interação, as novas tecnologias e o ensino de LE presencial e à distância, e o ensino crítico de LE. Percebeu-se que algumas questões antecipadas por Moita Lopes (1999) na investigação em sala de aula foram identificados nos achados da presente pesquisa, embora não de forma predominante. Em relação à formação reflexiva do professor de LE, um bom número de trabalhos analisados neste corpus surgiu com essa discussão, mas nesta pesquisa todos foram reunidos na categoria formação de professores.

Verificou-se ainda que a maioria dos temas está relacionada às linhas de pesquisas da Lingüística Aplicada no Brasil e no exterior desde os anos 70 (MOITA LOPES, 1999; PAIVA et al, no prelo). De tal modo, muitos dos tópicos estão inter-relacionados, não sendo possível

separá-los, uma vez que os próprios autores fizeram seus trabalhos dialogando com outras disciplinas dentro da Lingüística Aplicada, como apontava Moita Lopes (1999). Assim, poderia ser dito que os tópicos levantados aqui têm influência de décadas de pesquisas na área de LEs no Brasil.

As abordagens metodológicas

Para fazer o levantamento das abordagens metodológicas, levou-se em consideração principalmente algumas distinções estabelecidas por Silva e Menezes (2001) e Chizzotti (2003), com relação às diferenças entre as metodologias qualitativa e quantitativa.

Para Silva e Menezes (2001), a pesquisa qualitativa leva em consideração a relação indissociável existente entre o sujeito e o mundo. Assim, a realidade é interpretada de acordo com o observador e não pode ser expressa em números. Chizzotti (2003) acrescenta que a metodologia qualitativa pode também ser designada através das teorias que a fundamentam, como: fenomenológica, construtivista, crítica, etnometodológica, interpretacionista, feminista e pós-modernista.

A metodologia quantitativa, por sua, vez postula que "tudo é quantificável" (SILVA e MENEZES, p. 20), portanto os dados são expressos em números. Sendo derivada das ciências naturais, e partindo de uma hipótese-guia por um caminho indutivo para estabelecer as leis, a pesquisa quantitativa vale-se da generalização do fenômeno através da utilização de freqüências estatísticas (Cf. CHIZZOTTI, 2003).

Nos 18 resumos analisados das Palestras e Mesas-redondas, foram precisadas as metodologias em 50% dos trabalhos apresentados no evento, no entanto, os outros 50% dos trabalhos não mencionaram informações que indicassem a metodologia no corpo do resumo. A metodologia qualitativa foi predominante nos resumos das Palestras e Mesas-Redondas, seguida de relato de experiência, também com 44,4% e por último, a metodologia quantitativa, que foi empregada em 11,1% dos trabalhos apresentados. Para fins de análise, relato de experiência foi usado como categoria devido ao grande número de trabalhos que surgiram na análise, embora se saiba que não se trata de uma metodologia de pesquisa.

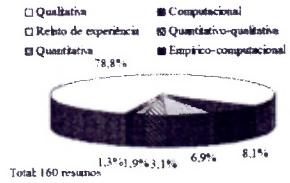
Nos 84 resumos dos Simpósios, verificou-se a presença das metodologias em 66,7% dos trabalhos e em 33,3% não houve menção no resumo de qual foi a metodologia utilizada. A predominância foi novamente da metodologia qualitativa, empregada em 78,6% dos trabalhos analisados. A seguir, a metodologia computacional esteve

presente com 8,9% dos trabalhos, o estudo empírico-computacional com 3,6%, pesquisa quantitativa com 3,6% e relato de experiência 3,6%. As metodologias de cunho quantitativo/qualitativa e computacional/qualitativa tiveram 1,8% de incidência nos trabalhos analisados.

Nas Comunicações Individuais não houve uma diferença muito grande na porcentagem de trabalhos que apresentaram as metodologias nos resumos, daqueles que não mencionaram esta informação. Das metodologias encontradas, tem-se 52,8% do total de 161 trabalhos e das não encontradas 47,2% dos trabalhos. Já entre os 85 resumos que fizeram referência à metodologia empregada, pôde-se destacar como preponderante a metodologia qualitativa, que representa 85,9% dos trabalhos que foram inscritos nesta seção do evento da ABRAPUI. A metodologia computacional representou 5,9%; qualitativo-quantitativa 4,7%; relato de experiência 2,4% e computacional-qualitativa 1,2%.

Nos 13 resumos da categoria Pôsteres, notou-se que 76,9% dos trabalhos apontaram as metodologias nos resumos e 23,1% não continham tal informação. A metodologia qualitativa teve 60% de aplicação, seguida de 30% de relato de experiência e 10% de metodologia computacional.

Em uma análise geral dos resumos, observou-se uma diferença pequena entre os trabalhos que apresentaram nos respectivos resumos as metodologias e os que não apresentaram essa informação no corpo do resumo. Assim, 58,0% de todos os 276 trabalhos descreveram as metodologias e os outros 42,0 % não as especificaram. Entre as metodologias encontradas em 160 resumos, a predominância foi da qualitativa, com 78,8% dos trabalhos, validando a hipótese levantada por Moita Lopes (1999) de que na área de LEs a pesquisa qualitativa de cunho interpretativista estaria em foco no futuro. Posteriormente, surgiram a metodologia computacional, com 8,1%, e o relato de experiência, com 6,9% dos trabalhos. A metodologia quantitativo-qualitativa representou 3,1% dos trabalhos, a metodologia quantitativa 1,9% e empírico-computacional 1,3%. Esses valores estão reunidos no Gráfico 2.



Os contextos de pesquisa

Com relação aos resumos das Comunicações Individuais, observou-se uma diversidade maior de contextos, talvez pela grande quantidade de resumos enviados para esta categoria do evento. Dos 161 contextos apurados, 25 trabalhos estiveram relacionados com a escola de educação infantil, com 5ª a 8ª séries e Ensino Médio (de escolas públicas e particulares). Outros 57 trabalhos tiveram a universidade como foco de pesquisa, onde os cursos de graduação, pós-graduação e extensão da universidade foram os mais recorrentes. No contexto universidade, foram encontrados também outros 09 trabalhos nos quais não foi possível identificar em que contexto mais específico a pesquisa foi desenvolvida. Ainda nesta análise, 06 trabalhos foram categorizados como curso de idiomas, contexto que não apareceu em Palestras e Mesas-Redondas, e Simpósios. Os estudos on-line também estiveram presentes na análise de contextos de Comunicações Individuais, com 10 participações ao todo, sendo que 01 deles era aprendizado à distância e alguns dos demais mencionaram o uso da internet na aula de inglês. Optou-se assim por inseri-los na categoria on-line sem contexto específico, já que os referidos trabalhos não trouxeram informações mais detalhadas no corpo do resumo. Por fim, 63 trabalhos não apontaram o contexto no corpo do resumo, sendo que a porcentagem para os trabalhos sem contexto foi de 39, 1 %.

Durante a verificação de contextos de Pôsteres, o item mais recorrente, assim como nos Simpósios e Comunicações Individuais, foi o contexto da universidade, com 03 trabalhos e 23% do total categorizado. Na análise dos Pôsteres percebeu-se um interesse pontual de pesquisa pela escola pública e estudo on-line, com 01 trabalho, ou 7,7% cada um. Ainda nesta apreciação surgiu um contexto diferente, que foi designado como estudo em biblioteca, não mencionando, porém, se o estudo foi em biblioteca de escola pública, particular ou biblioteca municipal, assim, esse item foi categorizado como 'outros contextos'. Finalizando a análise dos Pôsteres constatou-se que 07 resumos não citaram qual foi o contexto investigado, totalizando 53,8% de trabalhos.

Sintetizando a análise dos contextos verificou-se que grande parte dos resumos não mencionou de forma específica onde foram realizadas as pesquisas. Numérica e percentualmente falando, de 276 trabalhos analisados, 118 e respectivamente 43% não trouxeram tal informação no corpo do resumo enviado para o evento. Na apreciação geral dos contextos de pesquisa, houve um grande número de trabalhos com vários contextos, sendo a sala de aula da universidade o item mais pesquisado, com 91 trabalhos apresentados, do total de 276 resumos.

Os resultados gerais dos contextos de pesquisa estão demonstrados em apenas uma tabela (Tabela 1), porém de forma detalhada, para que seja possível uma visualização mais clara e objetiva dos contextos de pesquisa.

CONTEXTOS				RESUMOS	%
Presencial	Escola Básica	Educação Infantil		01	
		Ensino Fundamental – 4ª		01	
		Ensino Fundamental – 5ª a 8ª		19	
		Ensino Médio		07	
		Estudo de Ensino Fundamental e Ensino Médio		01	
		Escola pública		09	
		Escola particular		01	
		Total Educação Básica		39	14
	Universidade	Graduação	Curso de Letras	07	
			Curso de Letras-Inglês	21	
			Curso de	20	
			Curso de graduação sem contexto específico	05	
		Pós-Graduação	Especialização, Mestrado e Doutorado	06	
		Universidade sem contexto específico		16	
		Extensão		16	
		Total Universidade		91	33
	Outros contextos	Curso de idiomas		06	
		Biblioteca		01	
		Total de outros contextos		07	2
Total presencial				137	49
Não presencial	On-line	Universidade	Universidade sem contexto específico	06	
	On-line		Sem contexto on-line específico	15	
Total não presencial				21	8
Não especificado				118	43
Total				276	100

As origens

A região que se destacou no evento com maior quantidade de trabalhos em relação às Paletras e Mesas-redondas foi a região Sudeste, que do total de 18 trabalhos contou com 10 participações, sobressaindo-se neste caso a Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, com 3 trabalhos. A região Sul apareceu em segundo lugar no evento

com 4 trabalhos, tendo como principal representante a Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, que apresentou 2 trabalhos. Quanto às regiões Centro-Oeste, Nordeste e Norte, a incidência de trabalhos foi de apenas 4 do total de 18, sendo que a Universidade Federal de Goiás, a Universidade Presidente Antônio Carlos, a Universidade Estadual do Ceará, e a Universidade do Pará também foram as representantes destas regiões.

Nos Simpósios novamente a região Sudeste, com 53 trabalhos apresentados, aparece em primeiro plano, com a Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais como principal representante. A Universidade de São Paulo também teve uma participação significativa, com 9 trabalhos. Em segundo lugar ficou a região Sul, com 23 trabalhos presentes no evento, tendo como principal representante a Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, com 12 trabalhos, seguida pela Universidade Católica de Pelótas, com 4 tabalhos. Nas demais regiões, as representações foram as seguintes: Universidade Federal da Paraíba (região Nordeste), com 2 trabalhos, Universidade Federal de Goiás (região Centro-Oeste), também com 2 trabalhos, e Universidade Federal do Acre (região Norte), com apenas 1 trabalho.

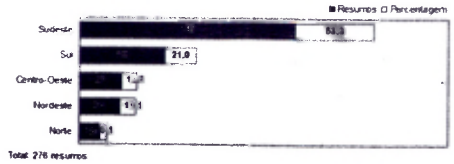
Comunicações Individuais, que foi a categoria com um maior volume de resumos analisados, trouxe a Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais com 19 trabalhos e mais uma vez fez com que a região Sudeste, que participou com 74 trabalhos, se mantivesse como a região que mais contribuiu com quantidade de trabalhos no congresso. Novamente, a Universidade de São Paulo ficou em segundo lugar na região Sudeste, com 7 trabalhos. A região Sul apresentou-se como a segunda que mais enviou trabalhos dentro de Comunicações Individuais, com um total de 31 trabalhos. A Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina manteve-se em evidência mais uma vez, com 7 trabalhos apresentados. Considerando que em Comunicações Individuais houve maior incidência de resumos, as regiões que em Mesas-redondas, Palestras e Simpósios não obtiveram uma quantidade expressiva de trabalhos, passaram a ter uma participação maior no evento. Um exemplo é a Universidade Federal de Goiás (Centro-Oeste), que de 2 trabalhos apresentados em Simpósios, passou a 10 de um total de 25 apresentados pela região Centro-Oeste em Comunicações Individuais. Com as regiões Nordeste e Norte também não foi diferente, pois houve uma quantidade mais expressiva, sendo 11 trabalhos apresentados da região Norte e como principal representante a Universidade Federal do Pará, com 3 trabalhos. Em relação ao Nordeste, foram identificados 20 trabalhos, a Universidade Federal do Sudoeste da Bahia foi a principal representante.

Como última forma de apresentação apareceram os Pôsteres, que totalizaram apenas 13 trabalhos. Manteve-se em primeiro lugar a Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, com 5 trabalhos de um total de 9 trabalhos apresentados pela região Sudeste, seguida pela região Nordeste, com 2 trabalhos e a região Norte, com apenas 1. As regiões Sul e Centro-Oeste não apresentaram trabalhos na forma de Pôsteres.

Como resultado de toda a análise dos trabalhos apresentados no evento, observou-se que a predominância de resumos foi da região Sudeste do país e que a Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais teve o maior número de trabalhos aprentados no evento, com 147 resumos do total de 276. Isso provavelmente se deve ao fato de que esta foi a universidade que sediou o evento. Em segundo lugar, a região Sul ficou em evidência, com um total de 58 trabalhos, trazendo a Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina como universidade que mais apresentou trabalhos da região. As regiões que sucederam com um número menor de trabalhos no evento foram as regiões Centro-Oeste, Nordeste e Norte. A região Centro-Oeste teve 29 trabalhos apresentados, com destaque para a Universidade Federal de Goiás; a Universidade Federal do Sudoeste da Bahia liderou a região Nordeste com 28 resumos. Já a região Norte teve apenas 14 trabalhos no evento todo, sendo a maioria da Universidade Federal do Pará.

A Tabela 2 apresenta as três universidades que mais se destacaram quanto ao número de trabalhos apresentados no evento da ABRAPUI, e as respectivas regiões do Brasil. O Gráfico 3 traz um resumo dos dados analisados, divididos apenas de acordo com as regiões país.

INSTITUIÇÕES	RESUMOS	MACRO REGIÕES
Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais	47	Sudeste
Universidade de São Paulo	18	Sudeste
Universidade Estadual Paulista	7	Sudeste
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina	21	Sul
Universidade Federal de Pelotas	8	Sul
Universidade Estadual de Maringá	5	Sul
Universidade Federal de Goiás	13	Centro-Oeste
União das Escolas Superiores de Rondonópolis Faculdades Integradas de Rondonópolis	4	Centro-Oeste
Universidade de Brasília	2	Centro-Oeste
Universidade Federal do Sudoeste da Bahia	6	Nordeste
Universidade Federal do Ceará	4	Nordeste
Faculdade Integrada da Grande Fortaleza	3	Nordeste
Universidade Federal do Pará	3	Norte
Universidade Federal do Acre	3	Norte
Universidade Federal de Roraima	1	Norte



Em relação às origens dos trabalhos, observou-se ainda que, embora a pesquisa em língua inglesa no Brasil esteja bastante ampla e diversificada, ainda carece de maior interação. O grande número de trabalhos organizados em Simpósios (30% dos trabalhos) sugere que já existe um diálogo de pesquisadores de diferentes universidades em torno de pesquisas semelhantes. No entanto, o expressivo número de Comunicações Individuais (58% dos resumos) mostra que ainda há muito que ser feito para congregar pesquisadores de diferentes universidades com trabalhos em comum[2].

Considerações finais

O estudo apresentado fez uma análise de 276 resumos na área de Língua Inglesa no Brasil, provenientes do caderno de resumos do I Congresso internacional da ABRAPUI, que ocorreu de 03 a 06 de Junho de 2007, na Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais. O objetivo foi fazer um mapeamento dos tópicos, metodologias, contextos e origens das pesquisas presentes nos trabalhos enviados para o evento, bem como das suas predominâncias.

Durante a análise dos tópicos, constatou-se que alguns tiveram maior predominância no corpus analisado, são eles em ordem decrescente: formação de professores, oralidade, identidade, crenças, tecnologia no ensino, gênero textual, tradução, leitura, material didático, reflexão, inglês para crianças, atividades em sala, escrita e motivação, autonomia, conexionismo, multiletramentos, multimodalidade, pragmática e interacionismo. Assim, percebe-se uma semelhança entre esses tópicos de pesquisa e aqueles relacionados por Moita Lopes (1999) e Cunha (2003) e também que a maioria dos temas está relacionada às linhas de pesquisas da Lingüística Aplicada no Brasil e no exterior desde os anos 70 (MOITA LOPES, 1999; PAIVA et al, no prelo).

Com relação às abordagens metodológicas presentes nos resumos analisados, notou-se a preponderância da metodologia qualitativa. Alem disso, constatou-se que um grande número de trabalhos não explicitava a metodologia nos resumos. Isso pode ter ocorrido por dois motivos: primeiramente, muitos trabalhos foram questionamentos

teóricos e/ou pedagógicos, sem investigação empírica, em segundo lugar, nas normas do evento não houve a exigência de menção à metodologia de pesquisa no corpo do resumo.

O I Congresso Internacional da ABRAPUI apresentou um grande número de trabalhos com diversos contextos de pesquisa, sendo o item mais pesquisado a sala de aula da universidade, com 91 trabalhos apresentados, do total de 276 resumos. Dentro do contexto universidade, o Curso de Letras foi o mais recorrente. Esse resultado tem relação com a afirmativa de Moita Lopes (1999) de que o foco na sala de aula é considerado importante para a área das LEs. A escola básica foi um contexto bastante investigado na categoria Simpósios e Comunicações Individuais, com 13 % do total. Na análise dos Pôsteres, encontrou-se um contexto diferente que foi uma pesquisa realizada em biblioteca. Na análise das Comunicações Individuais verificou-se que alguns estudos foram realizados em cursos de idiomas. Também foi possível identificar o interesse de pesquisa no contexto on-line com aprendizado à distância por algumas universidades. Entretanto, muitos trabalhos não mencionaram o contexto específico no corpo do resumo, exatamente 118 trabalhos, que equivalem a 42% do total. Notou-se aqui uma semelhança em termos percentuais com a falta de informação de metodologia no corpo do resumo (42%). Na categoria Pôsteres, a porcentagem de trabalhos sem contexto específico foi predominante. Alguns resumos sugeriram sala de aula, mas não citaram o tipo de sala de aula em que foi desenvolvida a pesquisa. Como a inclusão de contextos de pesquisa nos resumos enviados para o evento não foi uma exigência no ato da inscrição, supõe-se que esse tenha sido o motivo pelo qual tantos resumos não mencionaram tal informação.

No tocante às origens das pesquisas, foi possível perceber que destacou-se a região Sudeste do país com maior número de trabalhos, 147 ao todo. Pode-se dizer que talvez isso se deva ao fato de que o evento tenha sido realizado no estado de Minas Gerais, mais especificamente na Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, que teve o maior número de trabalhos apresentados no evento como um todo. Em segundo lugar, apareceu a região Sul, com um total de 58 trabalhos no evento, tendo-se em destaque a Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina como a universidade que mais apresentou trabalhos no congresso. As regiões que sucederam, com um número menor trabalhos apresentados no evento, foram, em ordem descrescente, as regiões Centro-Oeste, com a Universidade Federal de Goiás, Nordeste, com a Universidade Federal do Sudoeste da Bahia, e Norte, com predominância da Universidade Federal do Pará.

Expostos os resultados dessa pesquisa, cabe reafirmar a importância desse tipo de mapeamento na área de Língua Inglesa no Brasil, por caracterizar-se como instrumento importante no auxílio de próximos estudos com a mesma sistematização, garantindo a possibilidade de comparar os avanços e retrocessos ao longo dos anos e, principalmente, as mudanças ocorridas durante esse processo de aprimoramento.

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Notas

1. Para corresponder às normas da revista em relação à limitação de páginas, optou-se por demonstrar graficamente apenas os tópicos e origens de pesquisas mais predominantes no caderno de resumos do I Congresso Internacional da ABRAPUI. Além disso, os contextos de pesquisa presentes em todas as formas de apresentação também estão demonstrados em apenas uma tabela.
2. Cabe ressaltar que, em geral, não houve critério de titulação mínima para submissão de trabalhos ao evento em nenhuma das categorias. Apenas alunos de graduação estavam restritos a apresentação trabalhos em forma de Pôsteres.

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A BABYLONIAN JERUSALEM: WILLIAM COBB'S A SPRING OF SOULS

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> Today a great disease is that feeling of terrible loneliness, the feeling of being unwanted, having forgotten what human joy is, what the human feeling is of being wanted or loved. I think this is found in very well-to-do families also .We may not have people hungry for a plate of rice or for a piece of bread in New York City, but there is a tremendous hunger and a tremendous feeling of unwantedness everywhere. And that is really a very great poverty. Mother Theresa

Ancient myths, as modern ones, in the words of René Wellek and Austin Warren, were stories "telling of the origins and destinies, the explanations a society offers its young of why the world is and why we do as we do, its pedagogic images of the nature and destiny of man (in Kerr, 87). A myth is a large, controlling image that gives philosophical meaning to the facts of ordinary life; that is, which has organizing value for experience." According to Schorer, the imagery of myth "activates ideologies and influences behavior, and rational belief is the intellectual formalization of that imagery. Thus myth is fundamental, the dramatic representation of our deepest intellectual life and even in modern life it is still the essential substructure of all human activity" (in Kerr, 86). Tindall states that myth "may unite man with tradition and society, and in literature, while uniting the conscious mind with the primitive or unconscious, myth may express the inner by the outer, the present by the past" (in Kerr, 87). Myth, Philip Wheelwright says, has "a cognitive function as it is not in the first instance a fiction imposed on one's already given world, but a way of apprehending that world" (Kerr, 87).

Mysticism, on the other hand, is understood in different ways, depending on each one's beliefs and experiences. A simple definition of mysticism is given in The Newberry House Dictionary of American English, which says that it is "the practice of placing oneself in direct relationship with the spiritual." From this view, a mystic is then one "who through meditation communicates directly with the spiritual." In A Dictionary of Philosophy, mysticism is claimed to be a "direct or unmediated experience of the divine, in which the human soul mo-

mentarily approaches union with God." According to The American Heritage College Dictionary, mysticism is a "vague, groundless speculation." This broad definition of the term provides to mysticism connotations that are generally associated to it, of something that is not anchored on any basis, either philosophical or scientific, but that which is more related with fancy and imagination. A second definition in The American Heritage Dictionary says that mysticism "is the experience of mystical communion," which implies that a group of people could actually have such a mystical experience. A third definition which says that mysticism is "an immediate consciousness of the transcendent or the ultimate reality or God," suggests human's need to unite his earthly experience with another sphere which provides him answers to his questions about existence. A fourth definition relates mysticism to belief, that is, to one's own convictions, knowledge, and truths, thus involving behavior and moral judgment. Mysticism is then "a belief in the existence of essential realities beyond perceptual or intellectual apprehension that are accessible by subjective experience."

William Cobb's myth and mysticism are to be read and responded to by an individual. The author's perception of the world is contained in the words, which unveil society's hidden and undesirable realities. Yet, Cobb's sensibility enables him to depict the underworld, the unpleasant realities of the human behavior, though shocking and disagreeable, in an almost angelic way. "Visionary, comic, and sometimes all too real," as Lee Smith remarks, Cobb's novel is a call for awareness as it reveals the problematic and ugly margins of society. A Spring of Souls, Pat Conroy comments, "seems dangerous, apocalyptic, and hot to the touch. Cobb writes about the most terrifying and problematic margins of the South today, yet he does it with a magician's artistry."

The complexity of Cobb's subject matter, which deals with human beings' behavior, is reflected in the structure of his narrative with its loosen fragmented chapters. His style is episodic, as life is, with a chronology that is constantly interrupted, throughout the narrative, to give place to the introduction of new characters and new episodes that are, nevertheless, interrelated. The loosen style is then put together by the association of the characters with the thematic structure which provides unity to the narrative as the author unveils the Southerners' idiosyncrasies. Cobb's characters are grotesque. They wish for a life that surpasses their survival necessities, but their wish-fulfillment dream does not transcend the needs of basic subsistence, since they are too much rooted in the material world and do

not understand the meaning of life and existence. In spite of being grotesque, his characters reveal a fragility and strength quintessentially human. In this way, Sherwood Anderson's definition of the grotesque is appropriate to Cobb's characters as he says that the grotesques are not horrible. Some are amusing and some are almost beautiful. They are human beings who suffer, cry, laugh, fall, stand up, and crawl, crippled as one may be, their crooked paths of life.

The realistic basis for William Cobb's mythic county is the American Dream. A dream of building a Jerusalem in the new land, of being the chosen people, of achieving happiness, freedom, wealth, progress, success, and why not perfection, since it is implied in the culture that the Americans are the best, is the theme revisited in A Spring of Souls. Cobb's myth is represented in the South, a site where elements of dream and reality are intertwined in a suggestive panoramic view of the demonic and the apocalyptic. Kerr reminds that "the myth of the South illustrates its potency: "upon a foundation of a cult (white supremacy) it builds a world so intensely that what seemed to free the spirit from the fetters of things becomes a new fetter which is all the stronger since it is not a mere physical force but a spiritual one" (Kerr, 95). William Cobb's myth may be originated in the South. It may also be directed towards the Southerners in a challenging yet subtle call for awareness, shocking yet almost tender, when irony is discreetly used. As a Southerner himself, the author speaks from within, with the knowledge that is natural to him. In this way his criticism is mild and his voice recalls verisimilitude. Notwithstanding, Cobb's myth transcends the frontiers of the South as the American Dream belongs to all Americans. It even transposes the boundaries of the country, as a dream is a human characteristic, as the themes developed in the narrative are universal, and as these themes reflect the nature of men. Cobb's myth springs, in this way, from the soil prepared from Eliot, Joyce, Faulkner, among other writers, even from writers such as Milton, who dealt with the mythological path when he wrote in Book I of Paradise Lost about "Man's First Disobedience," which brought suffering and distrust into the world.

In applying myth to his work, William Cobb looks upon life, as Thomas Mann suggests, "with an ironic and superior gaze, for the mythical knowledge resides in the gazer and not in that at which he gazes," and the origin of mythical values, he adds, "lies in the unconscious" (Kerr, 89). To supplement Mann's statement, Hans Meyerhoff offers two reasons why myths are chosen as literary symbols: one is "to suggest, within a secular setting, a timeless perspective of looking

upon the human situation"; and the other "to convey a sense of continuity and identification with mankind in general" (Kerr, 89). In this perspective, myth lies as the foundation of life, and as a consequence of this proximity between myth and life, that is, of the identification of myth with life that the relationship between fact and fiction, between history and myth is brought together. According to Hayden White, "every history has its myth; and if there are different fictional modes based on different identifiable mythical archetypes, so too there are different historiographical modes within different fictional matrices" (127). Cobb's myth is related to the historical moment of building a city on a promised land. He revisits the American History on view of the American Dream and re-creates it. Roger Cole's aim is to make Piper, a town in Wembly County, Alabama, the most prosperous and important city in the United States. He even wants its independence from the rest of the country. He does anything to promote Wembly County. To him, who acts as the owner of the city, of everyone, of everything, "Wembly County is heaven" (Cobb, 194). Because every person is under him, he imposes his desires on everyone and commands obedience from all. Cole has no limits and he represents the maniac who sees himself as God. Even the Pastor of the city is under this Probate Judge who has no degree in Law but defies everybody with his ambition and power. His domain and control of the people are constantly revealed by his authoritarian behavior as, for example, when he argues with Grable, the Reverend, about the ceremonial procedures he wants to take place in relation to the "beautiful and holy image of the Virgin Mary that has appeared on the side of one of his buildings," and that "Newton Grable had the temerity to chastise Roger for putting up the old church pews." (Cobb, 193) Since Grable's words represent a threat to Cole's plans or simply a rebuke to his wishes and decisions, he becomes angry and reassures himself as the owner of the city. The passage below illustrates the conversation between the two men:

> "We must not have false idols before us," Grable said.
> "False?" Coles said. "False? Where the hell did it come from, then?
> ""It may have come from God to test us," Grable said. Or on the other hand, it may be a sign of the Rapture to come. Jesus is coming in 2000. To take us all to heaven. But we must not worship this image."
> "Wembly County is heaven," Coles said.
> "Heaven on Earth."

> Cole's face was pink. "You'll worship the image if I tell you to," he told the stubborn man. "Is that clear?"
> (Cobb, 194)

Coles controls everything. Another instance of his power is when his mother dies and he wants the mortician, Alvis Earl Butterworth, to embalm her in his house. It does not matter the moral implications this demand has on Butterworth who tries to convince him that what he wants is not natural and that there are laws, which have to be followed. As a man with an unscrupulous personality, Coles sees no limits to fulfill his desires. Even in death he wants to play the God figure and dispose of life and death as he pleases. Nothing can interfere with his dream and since his mother is part of it, her death at that time cannot be accepted. Nothing is a barrier to his wishes. As a man who observes no laws but considers himself the law, Coles has no morals and no respect for the others. Nothing can refrain him or stop him from doing what he wants. The following passage, through its tragic-comic tone, presents the comic-tragic figure of a man who has no limits:

> I will not allow her to be passed away. I won't, "Coles says.
> "Sometimes there's not much we can do about it, Roger."
>
> I want you to embalm her Alvis. Right here. I want her up there in her bed. I want__
> ""I can't do that here, Roger, I__
> "I'm not asking you. I'm telling you.
>
> I want her in bed. Propped up. Watching television. I want you to...do what you have to do, fix her so she's, you know, so she won't...
>
> "Roger, " Alvis says, "let me go up and take a look at her. Are you sure she's dead?
> ""Don't use that word, goddamit!" Roger says.
> "What are you asking me to do, Roger" Alvis asks.
> "How long...I mean... how long...
> "No more'n a week, Roger," Alvis says. Using the standard, you know, procedures. But I can't do that. There are laws__"
> I'm the law here," Roger says, and I want her up there in that bed propped up just as long as you can make her last.

> And I want that to be a long time. Do you understand me? You are good. You know what you're doing. What about those Egyptians? How did they do it? Surely you can, too. I'll pay you quadruple. And I order you to do it, Alvis Earl. That's that."

As Butterworth argues with Roger about the process the body goes through, the Probate Judge interrupts the mortician and concludes:

> "Goddamit," Roger interrupts, "Don't tell me all that crap! Just do it! You said using standard procedures. Well, use superior standard procedures. Consult somebody, but don't tell a soul why you're doing it, you hear? Do some research. I want her preserved, Alvis. I want her right up there in that room propped up in that bed! (Cobb, 158-59)

In the passage above, the word "want" is repeated nine times. The passive voice at the beginning of the passage "to be passed away" suggests that he is the one who decides about actions. He is the arbiter of all things, including death. He does not even allow death to happen naturally as a thing that belongs to God. This mystery of life he also wishes to control, as the verb "allow" in the negative suggests. The verbs "understand" and "hear" indicate command and imposition without any possibility of arguments. Coles ignores all laws, which interfere with his wishes, including God's. He explicitly says he is the "law" in Wembly County, and, as such, he regulates all and everything is to be observed and executed, as he "wants."

A mystical atmosphere surrounds William Cobb's mythical Jerusalem. Myth and mysticism are intertwined in the narrative and reflected in the Southerners' idiosyncrasies. The author's characters represent life in its essence, with its anxieties, hope, despair, love, ugliness, and beauty. Piper has a spring of souls that is metaphorically represented by the spirits who fly around the city and sit on the trees or by the people who are the spirits in their fleshes. Both of them, the people and the spirits, in their bodies or ethereal appearance, inhabit the same site. Incongruously as it seems to be, they are all thirsty for understanding. In this way, mysticism belongs to the realm of reality when the two spheres, the earthly and the spiritual, are mingled in a natural and inseparable manner.

The opening of the novel introduces characters from the two realms. Byron Bailey, a twenty-four year old lieutenant who belongs to the Wembly County Militia and who wants to exterminate the black people,

is the first character to be introduced in the novel. He gets a ride on a school bus full of black children, with the intention of blowing up the bus. Yet, the switch of his explosives does not work at that time. He is also present in the last chapter when he finally achieves his objectives of destruction. As a maniac himself, he seems to be a big boy with a fixed idea:

> Byron Bailey believes in America and the superiority of the white race. Prior to joining the Militia, his feelings had been disjointed and vague, a simple simmering hatred for all things foreign. The Militia gave him a framework for his beliefs. The white race is superior and the American white race is superior to all other white races. (Cobb, 3-4)

Byron is a frustrated man whose dream of enlisting himself in the Marines does not fulfill. He sees the local Militia as his salvation. Bailey is, as the other inhabitants of Piper, a product of lack of harmony and love in the family. His father is "a preacher half the time and a mean drunk the other half" (Cobb, 5) and his mother "walked around the house naked in front of him until he was well into his teens, and even then she didn't stop altogether" (Cobb, 5). Together with Bailey and other inhabitants of Piper, the little white girl, the ghost who appears to the people in Piper, is also present in this opening chapter. She is naturally a part of the environment, an inhabitant of Piper with her white dress that floats as she waves her little hands to the people who see her. Even Bailey is able to see her smiling at him. However, Bailey believes "the little girl is a ghost that does not exist. The little girl is a trick, a joke played on him by" the people on the bus. The indeterminacy of the text starts early in the narrative as these two realms are placed side by side in an entangled manner. The little girl is a member of that community, one whose right for living is claimed constantly as she hovers over the city. Chapter One starts then after this Prologue, giving a panoramic distanced view of the city. This distance suggests, simultaneously, the idea of perfection and imperfection, of imagination and reality, since the sight cannot capture the defects and the reality of things seen and unseen. The description is made possible by the metaphors and similes the author employs to give the idea of this blurred vision, which captures the site of Piper:

> Viewed from on high, from behind the white puffy sum-

> mer clouds, it is like a small town dreamed or imagined, shimmering comfortably in the sun. An emerald green valley tucked between rolling wooded nobs. A toy hamlet with one straight wide Main Street and meandering secondary streets with schools and churches and lawns and houses, many new or under construction. A child's block village with toy cars and tiny ant-like people, narrow asphalt gray roads curving away from it like arteries and veins from a heart. (Cobb, 9)

In this way, appearance and reality are fused in the picture of Piper. A real imaginary or an imaginary real city is the locale for William Cobb's novel. The boundaries between fiction and reality disappear as the author depicts life in its essence, with its beauty and ugliness due to humans' anxieties, ideals, truths, fears, hopes, flaws, and ambition. Similarly to this make-belief presentation of the city, the spiritual sphere is presented. Since the city is viewed from the heights, the description of the ethereal site is made more palpable and real than that of the city itself, even though a part of that visionary city:

> Behind the high clouds hundreds of pink cherubs hover over the town and the surrounding county. They dance like plump bumblebees. They quarrel and sing. Naked babies. Little angels. Hundreds, no thousands of them. An invisible mass of transposed flesh and wispy souls. They observe all and miss nothing. Like the blue speck that becomes a car, moving inexorably toward Piper, an old station wagon just inside the county line on one of those narrow roads. (Cobb, 9)

The two realms are put together in these two paragraphs. Since the clouds are elements of both spheres, the boundaries between them vanish. The angels are little babies' souls that quarrel and sing. The verb to quarrel suggests the idea of reality, as it is characteristic of human beings to quarrel and disagree. It also foreshadows the claim for life, which is subtly and mysteriously veiled in the narrative and unveiled as it develops and reaches its climax, with the appearance of the grown up white ghost in the character of Willie Clyde. Besides, the author also artistically links this passage to the next section, which introduces Brenda Boykin, as she drives her station wagon towards Piper. The little angels, the hovering children's souls observe

Brenda as she drives with her son, Jimmy, to Piper. In this way, William Cobb anticipates and emphasizes Brenda's relationship with the city and its members, with the little white girl's ghost, and with the Abortion Clinic, that these together with churches, houses, public places, mayor house, Rotary Club, the Wembly Militia, and so forth, also constitute sites in Piper. After twenty years, Brenda, a teacher, goes back to her native city. The return to Piper leads her to revive moments in her past life, some of which are not very pleasant. Among her remembrances, she has a dark memory of an abortion that took place twenty years earlier. She cannot avoid thinking of Wayne McClain, the aborted child's father, and feels a "premonition" that he is still in Piper. In fact, McClain works at Piper Christian Academy, where he is the football coach. McClain is under Roger Coles who is the chairman of the board of trust of the academy. Brenda knows about the headmistress position at the academy through her brother Lamar, who still lives in Piper with his wife and daughter, Darlene. As Brenda has the premonition that Wayne still lives there, as she feels it, she also feels her mother's presence and "sees her long-dead mother's face in the configuration of the hills" (Cobb, 15). The idea of premonition is linked with her feelings of the aborted child, that though a fetus, she is sure it was "a little blond-haired girl" Cobb, 15), with the idea of her communication with her mother. William Cobb blends together elements of the two different spheres. As Brenda's memories are shown in the screen of her mind, the narrator reminds the readers of the presence of ghosts. They are part of Piper, since:

> There are ghosts everywhere, movements and flutters behind the thick screen of leaves. The little blond girl flits from limb to limb in trees, watching their progress down the road. Brenda sees her long-dead mother's face in the configuration of the hills in front of them. Her mother is here, too. Brenda can hear her voice, clearly, and she says, "Like an old song, Brenda. We'll sing it together." (Cobb, 15)

Brenda is then a character that metaphorically unites the two worlds, the earthly and the heavenly. Her present life, as all the other characters', is a consequence of past and present thinking, desires, and attitudes. The Great Architect designed an Eden world but provided men with free will. In this way, men are the arbiters of their own lives. They are life co-designers. Their drawings are copies of their own minds and actions, and as such, ugliness or beauty, suc-

cess or failure, construction or destruction, order or chaos will be revealed in their life-pictures as their sole responsibility. A Spring of Souls illustrates that past attitudes are like ghosts in one's life. In spite of being Brenda and Coles the main characters in terms of literary theory, as they hold the novel's thematic structure together, Cobb's narrative seems to suggest that, as far as literature reflects real life in its microcosmic vision, all characters in A Spring of Souls are equally important. There are no heroes or heroines in the novel. Each stands, well or not, for itself and has its participation in society. Each is an individual who is totally responsible for his own actions. Yet, each and all, despite misunderstandings, are together in this big world, where their microcosms are united with the macrocosm in a manner that transcends the personal, the individual, when each is also responsible for the other, for his fellow citizen.

Hence, William Cobb's A Spring of Souls is an indictment of the American Dream. According to Steinbeck, in Paradox and Dream, the Americans have long forgotten the original meaning of their dream. They have distanced themselves from the genuine aims of it. However, as Cobb's message in the novel seems to be, Steinbeck's final idea in his essay is that of hope, by the simple fact that there is a dream. William Cobb, likewise, presents the dream as a myth that has lost its meaning. It has been distorted, abused, and corrupted. The Christian religion has been debased as in Eliot's The Waste Land. People live a falsehood and try to convince themselves of their righteousness. The people from Piper, as the rats in the fairy tale, follow their inebriating inner sounds without realizing where the music is leading them. They have lost the real meaning of family relations when love, care, and affection should be the dictates to strengthen those ties. There is lack of communication and attachment between parents and children. Each looks at a speck of sawdust in the other's eye but pays no attention to the plank in its own eye (Luke 7: 41). They are blind to love and spiritual life. Moral values have been forgotten in the midst of a society too busy in the pursuit of material progress. These misunderstandings about values are the reasons of a chaotic society since it is not anchored on any solid foundation but drifts rootless and aimlessly on false and distorted objectives, which constitute false values. Nevertheless, the dream still exists and depends on people's awareness, on their own behavior and responsibility to recover its meaning. The author's concern implies that, despite the chaotic world, there is hope. Brenda Boykin represents one who becomes aware of her own mistakes and desires for a change. She repents her past attitudes and suffers for the abortion of the little

girl. She feels she has failed the little girl and this conscious feeling is what redeems her. Talking to Mabel, her friend and owner of the Abortion Clinic, she expresses her anxieties concerning her responsibility in the deed:

> Brenda swallows. A mist of tears stings her eyes. She does not speak for a long time. "Jimmy may die," she finally says, "my son. And I've got this other child, and she is real, not in this world inhabited by me and you and Roger Coles and Wayne McClain, but in a narrow private world, in here." And she touches her chest, over her heart. "She's my secret child, Mabel. And she's like those children that you read those terrible stories about, children chained to beds in attics or starved in closets, and I'm the only one who knows she exists. I know her. I know the shape of her nose and the color of her hair and her eyes. And I failed her miserably." (Cobb, 171)

Furthermore, Brenda's suffering matures and humanizes her. When her son is injured in the football game she becomes more aware of her commitments to life. The feeling of attachment to one she loves intensifies and she understands the human impotence towards death. The meaning of having failed her first unborn child comes to the surface of her conscious mind as she faces the possible loss of her son. There is torment in her words as she compares her little girl's ghost to those children who are abused by their parents and kept "chained to beds in attics or starved in closets." Brenda is also able to love her niece and support her in her needs. When Darlene's father spanks her, Brenda looks after the girl and takes her to live in her house. Brenda's suffering and compassion to others strengthen her. Her memories are intertwined with present realities, which enable her to recover her own self. Brenda's thoughts illustrate her consciousness and expanded capacity for loving things graspable and unseen:

> She thinks of Jimmy's fat baby legs kicking. She thinks of his legs grown long and strong and now locked still and motionless. As she watches Darlene walk away she begins to cry. The tears blind her eyes, shimmering silver-white in the sunlight. She stands very still as she cries. She stands there, by herself, for a long time. She is crying for herself. And she cries for Darlene and Jimmy and

her mother. And for all the dead and unborn. (Cobb, 246)

Wayne McClain and his son Keith are also examples of people who share love for each other and struggle for a good relationship. In spite of all misunderstanding between them and the family disharmony, there is a latent bound between father and son. Keith sublimates this lack of understanding by his necessity to be different, to shave his hair, to have tattoos and to wear jewelry studs on his body. That is the way he gets to call his father's attention as the father addicts himself to drinking. Yet, Keith has also a positive escape, the music in which he finds himself in peace. His father, on the other hand, shares this likeness for Keith's music and often listens, in secret, to the son's selection of classic music. Symbolically speaking, this moment of sharing emotions and love, though separately, approaches them.

Brenda, Wayne and their children represent, thus, hope for the American myth. In the end of the novel, Wayne and Keith, as they get closer to one another because of love and affection, are not hurt when the explosion happens, though present at the public site. Brenda is able to leave Piper in the company of her son, her niece, and Cody, the documentary maker, an outsider, whose only interest in Piper is to produce a good hit for his Postwar Productions. As their ancestors, their journey is toward the west and "they drive into the sun," (Cobb, 298) as the narrator's final words to A Spring of Souls express.

Each character in Piper lives its own truth. Each is a grotesque that feels the dissatisfaction of an empty life. Parents complain about their children and the children complain about their parents. They are all trapped and confused. They all miss affection and love but are not able to express themselves about this discomfort they cannot understand. Since the children are raised without their parents' emotional support, who themselves are emotionally unstable, they look for answers on the material things society offers. Since they have not found their identities yet, they cling together and participate in satanic rituals, use drugs and practice sex for the sake of doing it. The disruption in family ties affects the individuals turning them into weird creatures as sublimation for lack of love and understanding. They belong to the same group of children who feel unwanted as the aborted children do. Analogously, they have also been aborted while their parents are involved with politics, religion, pleasure, and so forth. Parents and children have misunderstood the meaning of life. Each family in Piper has a story but all the stories have some resemblance. They all lack moral values and as a consequence there

is disorder, disharmony, and dissatisfaction. Otis Hunnicutt, for example, is marginalized in that society. In spite of having a white skin and light hair, he is black. However, he has a great potential as a football player and the Christian Academy can win the championship if he is allowed to be in the team. Wayne, the coach, wants him to play and asks Coles, the Probate Judge, permission for the boy to be admitted to the Academy. They decide that the boy should be then considered an Indian since blacks were not allowed in the Academy. Nevertheless, the prejudice is latent and Otis feels marginalized and excluded from society. As the narrative develops, Otis is attracted to a beautiful white girl called Willie Clyde, who leads him into crime. Willie Clyde, the little white girl's ghost incorporated, is also a society's exclude. She wants Otis to kill Mabel, the owner of the Women's Health Center, the Abortion Clinic. Both Otis and Clyde live on the margins of society. Hatred is a feeling that blossoms inside them, and as a consequence, revenge flourishes. Exclusion turns them into potential criminals. They have nothing to lose since they are losses themselves that no one pays attention to. Socially speaking, the girl does not exist. She is a wandering spirit that does not represent any danger to society. She represents the misdoings and misbehavior, which nobody sees. Otis, on the other hand, is a presence who seems to present no threat because of his inferior condition. He is not a white citizen and as such he deserves no respect and place in society. He is a plaything that can be used and discarded as one pleases. He has no rights. Nevertheless, the latent human condition, which exists in Willie Clyde and Otis, claims for their places but they already are easy baits for criminal thinking and doings.

In this chaotic Southern city of the state of Alabama, the characters are looking for miracles, for an answer for their unhappiness and sufferings. Coles' Babylonian Jerusalem is a complete chaos. Coles sees the image of the Virgin Mary on one of the windows of a building of his, as a profitable way to attract more people to Piper, which means economic and political growth to the city, with new houses built, more business opened, new schools founded and all the profits that would result from these things. Coles wastes no time to spread the news in the country's newspapers:

> "Retire to Wembly County, Alabama, where God has put his stamp!"
> "Buy your own little piece of Heaven."
> (Cobb, 233)

Nevertheless, Coles' behavior recalls fanaticism. His dream is far from representing the ideal of the American dream. His code of behavior has no place for freedom, for justice, and for equal rights. He has no ethics, no respect for others, and his objectives are solely material. Coles symbolizes the vices of greed, pride, and vanity. His dream of having the best city in America collapses in April, ironically on Easter Sunday. Instead of resurrection and renewal, Easter in Piper symbolizes degradation and despair because Christianity has been debased. Coles, in his ambition to construct the best city in America, motivates destruction. Bailey, the lunatic who wants to cleanse the world from inferior races, destroys. Both Byron Bailey and Roger Coles, the god-pretenders, though having different objectives, finally spread destruction and are destroyed, when Bailey activates the switch of the explosives he has under his clothes as he puts his arms around Coles who is ready to deliver his Easter speech.

Thus, in this mystical Southerner city in Alabama, they are looking for a miracle to free them from disorder and distress, and suffering. Like in Milton's Paradise Lost, Cobb presents a fallen city. Their problems are not only symptomatic but also chronic. Their physical and emotional defects are mirrors of their spiritual losses. However, the author's comprehensive list of names, from A to Z, suggests that these attitudes do not belong only to the people from Piper, neither only to Southerners, nor to Americans. It is global. His list starts with Almer, Alex, A. J., Alberta and ends with Zino Franscescotti, a foreigner who plays Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor. The name suggests that the figure is cosmopolitan and international. Besides, in the alphabetic list of his characters' names, there are no names which start with the letters I, Q, U, and Y, which might suggest that you and I are included in the list as well, with whys and questions. The world is chaotic because it has lost its essential meaning. There is a latent need for taking responsibilities and commitments. William Cobb is trying to awaken people into seeing reality. He is calling the readers to awareness. He is calling him, her, you and me to a change of attitude since life goes beyond this earthly plane. He is calling us to responsibility for things seen and unseen. William Cobb's mysticism enables him to revisit and criticize the American Dream and situate it in the boundaries between destruction and re-construction, between fantasy and reality, between men's physical and psychological necessities and their yearning for a better life, one that merely transcends subsistence.

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THE ECOLOGICAL UNCONSCIOUS IN MULTI-ETHNIC LITERATURE OF THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT: This essay examines what I call 'the ecological unconscious' in select works by Mexican American, Native American, African American and Anglo-American writers. The specific objective is to problematize (the role of) nature as setting of the characters' agency and as a character moving and acting on the basis of a specific ethnic cosmology. The analysis focuses on how multi-ethnic writers of the United States interrelate chronos, topos and ethos to demonstrate that the violence against nature is deeply rooted within a materialist "coloniality of power" that destroys life on earth. The ecological unconscious that vibrates within and between the text(ure)'s said and un-said re-creates the continuous trauma of this double violence as imaginary response to individual and collective suffering, pain, and loss. In examining this unconscious-as-stance, the argument points to the aesthetic relation between literature and nature as a consciousness-raising antidote to the killing machine of technology and market fluxes, forces, and practices.

KEYWORDS: ecological unconscious, coloniality of power, violence, multi-ethnic literature of the United States

This essay examines what I call 'the ecological unconscious' in select works by multi-ethnic writers of the United States. The specific objective is to problematize (the role of) nature as setting of the characters' agency and as a character moving and acting on the basis of a specific ethnic cosmology. The analysis focuses on how multi-ethnic writers of the United States interrelate chronos, topos and ethos to demonstrate that the violence against nature is deeply rooted within a materialist "coloniality of power" that destroys life on earth. The ecological unconscious that vibrates within and between the text(ure)'s said and un-said re-creates the continuous trauma of this double violence as imaginary response to individual and collective suffering, pain, and loss. In examining this unconscious-as-stance, the argument points to the aesthetic relation between literature and nature as a consciousness-raising antidote to the killing machine of technology and market fluxes, forces, and practices.

Those attentive to public figures' remarks and attitudes might have

noticed that words and phrases related to earth/nature are on the rise. Whereas activists, such as members of Greenpeace, among others, appear on special lists as "terrorists" and "trouble makers," some of those who draw up these lists green their hypocrite statements with the biota. In other words the term 'eco' imbues political agendas (at least in terms of theoretical quotas), characterizes certain types and forms of tourist/freetime activities, serves as emblems for cars, and adorns advertisement slogans. Global environmental challenges, such as pollution, global warming, hurricanes, and desertification, among others, require urgent actions, but, most importantly, a change of our view of and relation to nature. The issue, then, seems to be whether we are willing to substitute sustainable cohabitation for dominion of nature, which continues to be the foundation of capitalist development. Furthermore, I contend that critical earth-talk should establish a global space of linked local places: an epistemic network made of different strings so as to undermine its cooptation by imperialist neocolonial/neoliberal forces and practices. Eco-talk, then, should make audible the local echoes of its global effects and vice versa. Following Sartre's "reveler c'est changer" maxim, eco-talk should problematize nature-related issues as a multi-axial, interconnected, and performative crossroads of power relations within a historical process that allows combined understanding of local uniqueness and global interlinkages. As such a politics of location, it should be rooted in a specific cultural episteme, that is, the order of things and knowledge that provides tribes/groups/communities/societies with the founding categories, the classificatory schemes of sameness and difference, the mythopoetic processes of original naming, the language, and the variety of discourses through which the aspects of everyday life are made available in an ordered and meaningful way. Generalizations about earth/nature, on the other hand, betray the real lives of the biota, including human beings, and can thus work in the interest of imperialist neocolonial and neoliberal forces, forms and practices. In the following sections, I want to establish such an analytical eco-crossroads where African American, Native American, Mexican American, and Anglo-American epistemes come to together on behalf of the planet. Let me first situate my theoretical approach to the topic.

Drawing from and elaborating on Amy Kaplan's seminal study on U.S. culture, I argue that what links anarchy to empire in the making of the United States is (inter)cultural in-betweenness characterizing the multi-ethnic (im)migrant experience: the tension-as-anxiety characteristic of an identitarian longing for place and its borderline existence, the mediatory diasporic moment between being (location) and becoming (dislocation/relocation). From the desecration of the Dream to the consecration of multiculturalism, according to Ralph Ellison (1995: 125) Americans have "misconceive[d] [their] cultural identity" "by pushing significant details of [their] experience into the underground of unwritten history" and "by ignoring such matters as the sharing of bloodlines and cultural traditions by groups of widely differing ethnic origins, and by overlooking the blending and metamorphosis of cultural forms."

Against this errant in-betweenness, which is based on a historical process of various forms and practices of geographic and cultural dispossession and dislocation, ranging from epistemic violence to outright genocide, the discursive mimicry of multi-ethnic writers constitutes a conscious agency of intervention. Derek Walcott (1993: 55) has defined mimicry as "an act of imagination," a "design." In their mimicry of the dominant discourse, these writers re-articulate and re-design images into alter-images and visions into re-visions. In the process, they master the ideology of form by de-forming it, creating "in, while giving name to, [their] own i-mage" in an effort to unwrite and rewrite "the word wounded by the dislocation and imbalance of the world/i-mage equation" (Philip, 1996: 21). In other words, this mimicry transforms (inter)cultural in-betweenness as unconscious liminal state and experience into a transcultural home within language — a home characterized by relations in which cultural differences are not sublated as they flow together into new forms. I have called this discursive mimicry a transwriting — a writing that crosses cultural contact zones, striving to go beyond, to transform an intercultural limbo into a meaningful place or state where the tension of cultural contact sparks the possibility of identity reconstruction through both being and becoming (Walter, 31-32). The resultant self manifests itself as a meandering essence. This transwriting is characterized by a reentering of time through the experience of space and vice versa — space and time as lived and revised signifying practices — in order to produce meaning and construct identity: a present made significant by the past through memory encoded and decoded by (un)conscious remembrance. This emphasis on the link between space, time, memory, and language is not a differential sign of postcolonial literature. But the insistence on this link as inhabited, always meaningfully constructed place, state, and experience and thus as materialized history, is a sign for the ineffaceable difference of the postcolonial subject. Having introduced my theoretical framework, let me now move to my analysis of creative works. I will begin with

Toni Morrison's Tar Baby and Paradise.

In Tar Baby, Valerian and Margaret Street, the white North American owners of a winter house on a fictitious island in the Caribbean, Isle des Chevaliers, pair in contrary complementarity with their black Philadelphia servants, Sydney and Ondine; the latter view themselves in opposition to Thérèse and Gideon, natives who work in the garden of the Street mansion, and Son, a Caliban-type of intruder whom they call a "stinking ignorant swamp nigger" (85); and Son's rootedness in the black rural folk culture spirals into and against Jadine's cosmopolitan ambivalence toward blackness, her ethnoracial in-betweenness as a black model in a market whose game she plays according to the rules laid out by the white power structure. This multiple use of the 'double' constitutes an identitarian crossroads where questions of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sex, culture and nature meet within a historical process and shaped by a complex network of power relations. As is typical of her writing, Morrison, parodying colonial plantation life in the postcolonial 1980s, mines clear-cut divisions between the pairs and their roles. Furthermore, and unique in her eight novels, nature, although being destroyed by neoliberal capitalism (especially by one of its most important aspects, namely tourism), feels, thinks and rebels. In Tar Baby, Morrison uses magical realism to voice her most ferocious criticism against ecological destruction caused by neocolonial imperialist and capitalist forces and practices.

In addition to the existence of mythomagical maroon horsemen ? blind fugitive slaves who have been roaming the island's hills and rain forest since their escape in the past and interact in specific ways with those living in the present ? the magical worldview unfolding in the narrative resides in a cosmology and cosmogony based on the connection between all forms of being. That is, existence gains its meaningful sense not through individual objectives and agency but rather through the linkage with all other living forces surrounding the individual. To express this dynamic relationship between human beings and nonhuman forces of the universe, Morrison anthropomorphizes nature. Nature becomes a speaking, feeling and acting entity through the mediation of human thought and sensation. It is important to repeat that this mediation is based on the belief that communication and the senses are not exclusive human attributes, but also apply to the nonhuman world.[1] Under the impact of neocolonial imperialism — rich white tycoons and their vacation homes — the island's flora and fauna express their feelings and thoughts while reacting against the destructive forces:

> ... clouds and fish were convinced that the world was over, that the sea-green green of the sea and the sky-blue sky of the sky were no longer permanent. Wild parrots ... agreed and raised havoc as they flew away to look for yet another refuge. ... The clouds gathered together, stood still and watched the river scuttle around the forest floor, crash headlong into the haunches of hills with no notion of where it was going. ... The clouds looked at each other, then broke apart in confusion. ... When it was over, and houses instead grew in the hills, those trees that had been spared dreamed of their comrades. ... Then the rain changed and was no longer equal (7-8).

Morrison denounces the barbaric forces and practices that destroy nature under the banner of progress and civilization. By delineating elements/entities of nature as subjects who act and/or react instead of victimized objects, giving them voices, thoughts and gestures, she dislocates the power of creation from human beings (thinking and acting as if they were gods) to those natural elements and forces that constitute the true and only basis for survival of all living things on earth.

In addition to denouncing the schizophrenic flows and forces of glocal capital as sources of destruction, nature problematizes the mental colonization, the fragmentation and alienation of those who produce and enact capital's disjunctive fluxes: all the characters together constitute a network of power relations creating the sociocultural, politico-economic infrastructure within which the continuation of capital's schizo-flows is guaranteed. In other words, nature reveals human beings within their hierarchical racist/sexist prison-house of social relations as effects of capital.

Jadine, oscillating between her routes of success in the white world (desire) and her roots in black culture (rejection/abjection), is the prototype of assimilationist mimicry, that is, the internalization of the dominant epistemic system and its values built on the technological subjugation of nature and the inherent normalization of human beings' natural funkiness. Jadine's reification , her fetishistic pleasure in a fur coat, for example, is critically commented upon by "emperor butterflies": "They were clinging to the windows of another bedroom trying to see for themselves what the angel trumpets had described to them: the hides of ninety baby seals stitched together .... The butterflies didn't believe it and went to see for themselves" (74). Furthermore, the "swamp women", the lovers of the blind maroon

horsemen, marvel at Jadine's reluctance to accept their embrace:

> The young trees sighed and swayed. The women looked down from the rafters of the trees and stopped murmuring. They were delighted when first they saw her, thinking a runaway child had been restored to them. But upon looking closer they saw differently. The girl was fighting to get away from them. The women hanging from the trees were quiet now, but arrogant ? mindful as they were of their value, their exceptional femaleness; knowing as they did that the first world of the world had been built with their sacred properties; that they alone could hold together the stones of pyramids and the rushes of Moses's crib; knowing their steady consistency, their pace of glaciers, their permanent embrace, they wondered at the girl's desperate struggle down below to be free, to be something other than they were (157).

Desperately trying to get rid of the magic women's marks "the black stuff [that] was like mucilage" (157), Jadine rejects a crucial aspect of her ethnic legacy, namely the role of woman as nurturing bedrock of the black community. In accord with the tree women's wonderment, Morrison's delineation of Jadine raises the question why new practices and experiences should necessarily exclude traditional meanings and values; that is, why her pursuit of money in the white world should be based on a rejection of her black roots. The author's attempt at transforming the racial politics of difference-as-separation into diversity-as-relation (difference as "prized but unprivileged"; Morrison, 1998, 12) on the level of discourse problematizes Jadine's incapacity/unwillingness to link the two worlds.

Morrison's magical realist "transwriting" maps an ongoing "coloniality of power" based on the politics of inclusion and exclusion that determines intersubjective relations in the U.S.-Caribbean borderlands. She redraws this map by implanting a transculturated African belief system as caesural hyphen into linear, rational Western discourse, history and culture. Through anthropomorphic images of nature and living spirits, Morrison depicts an ethos and worldview based on the dynamic relationship between man and his surroundings, a reality in which both the ontology of reality and the phenomenology of perception are key elements. In her critical map, the cosmos is an animate organism characterized by a dynamic coexistence of human and nonhuman forms and spheres: spirits, animals,

plants and landscape, among others, are agents sharing their rhythms and dimensions with human beings. Morrison's rootedness in African spirituality resides in her use of spirit as a vital force and cosmic, creative energy connecting the visible with the invisible realms of existence.[2] This nonhierarchical worldview as living cultural diaspora memory revises Western epistemes that usually disregard such a performative relation between the human and nonhuman worlds as 'primitive' or 'tribal' superstitions belonging to the past. In regarding life, the world and reality as a continuum, this worldview constitutes an inclusive cultural alter-vision of creative agency instead of materialist consumerism and is based on collectivity rather than egocentrism. Against the background of this performative relation between diverse worlds, spheres, places, spaces and times, I argue, "home" in Morrison's work is more than a double-writing that links the local place (United States) with the global and universal space of mankind. It is a transwriting where elements from different cultures and epistemes meet, creating a transcultural crossroads imbued with love and fuelled by the utopia of survival in a world-as-home where cultural differences meet in non-hierarchical, "unprivileged" ways, forms and practices. Let me quote from Paradise (213) to convey Morrison's transcultural vision of home:

> ... can't you even imagine what it must feel like to have a true home? I don't mean heaven. I mean a real earthly home. Not some fortress you bought and built up and have to keep everybody locked in or out. A real home. Not some place you went to and invaded and slaughtered people to get. Not some place you claimed, snatched because you got the guns. Not some place you stole from the people living there, but your own home, where if you go back past your great-great-grandparents, past theirs, and theirs, past the whole of Western history, past the beginning of organized knowledge, past pyramids and poison bows, on back to when rain was new,, before plants forgot they could sing and birds thought they were fish, back when God said Good! Good! — there, right there where you know your own people were born and lived and died. Imagine that ... place.

In Morrison's critical and creative works, home figures as a concrete utopia in Ernst Bloch's sense, that is, a yearning for a yet-to-come emotional cross-cultural relationship whose essence is shot

through not with racism, sexism, or any other hierarchical order, but with a collective willingness to accept, respect, and nurture difference as relational diversity.3 Women, as the ending of Paradise connotes, play a specific role as trailblazers in the creation of this world-as-home:

> In ocean hush a woman black as firewood is singing. Next to her is a younger woman whose head rests on the singing woman's lap. Ruined fingers troll the tea brown hair. All the colors of seashells—wheat, roses, pearl—fuse in the younger woman's face. Her emerald eyes adore the black face framed in cerulean blue. Around them on the beach, sea trash gleams. Discarded bottle caps sparkle near a broken sandal. ... There is nothing to beat this solace which is what Piedade's song is about, although the words evoke memories neither one has ever had: ... the unambivalent bliss of going home to be at home—the ease of coming back to love begun. ... Piedade looks to see what has come. Another ship ... heading to port, crew and passengers, lost and saved, atremble, for they have been disconsolate for some time. Now they will rest before shouldering the endless work they were created to do down here in Paradise (318).

If, as Nada Elia (51) has recently stated, "Africana women novelists are mediators ... functioning liminally," then Morrison, located on the interlocking hyphen between African-American, is a transcultural mediator of the tension-laden bonds that hold the two in relationship.[4]

In Orlando Romero's Nambé-Year One and Rudolfo Anaya's Bless Me, Ultima, "landscape changes man, and the man becomes his landscape" (Anaya 1977, 46). Both Romero and Anaya, Chicano writers of what Francisco Lomelí (1984, 111) calls the "Renaissance of Chicano Letters," use la tierra of rural northern New Mexico to heal their protagonists' identity crises. Situated between two radically different cultural epistemes ?an Anglo world based on scientific rational thinking and individuality and an autochthonous one based on collectivity and interrelationship between cosmic spheres ? Mateo returns to Nambé and, initiated through the ancianos's storytelling, begins to become one with nature: " I am the incarnation of ... that hybrid solar-maize plant blood. There is Indian in us, of ancient forgotten peoples. ... The Moor, the Jew, the Arab, Spanish and Indian blood

force us to live by the law of nature and its mystical powers in the valleys of the Sangre de Cristos, not by the law made in the minds of men (Romero 1976, 12/19). Mateo's consubstantiality with the maize plant, that is with the creative power of nature is the most powerful image in the novel that expresses the fluid, dynamic relationship between man and nature: "From the maize plant we have secured the nourishment of our physical spirit by eating and drinking it in countless forms"(Romero 1976, 17). Deeply embedded in indigenous cosmology and cosmogony, Mateo cultivates maize the way his ancestors did, "with a horse" and "by hand" so as not to disturb "our bones." Furthermore, Mateo regards the cultivation of maize, whose "substance fortifies the body against the evil spirits of sickness" (Romero 1976, 17), as an integral part of the eternal life-death cycle in which "death is not dying, but coming back again to nourishing living things" (Romero 1976, 15).This idea is very similar to the ancient Mayas' worship of the maize plant and their equation of a maize plant's developmental stages with those of a human being as delineated in the Popol Vuh. Mateo's consubstantiality with the maize plant, then, rather than being a discursive dissolution of the borders separating man and nature, is earth/nature as it articulates itself through the human mind and culture. Thus, one source of language lies in the human reception of and response to earth-sounds.

It is the capacity to receive these sounds that Ultima, a curandera in touch with the biota and nonhuman worlds, teaches the adolescent narrator in Anaya's Bless Me, Ultima. Feeling marginalized in the Anglo-dominated world, an outcast ostracized because of his looks, customs and language, Antonio is guided back into an earth-related episteme and learns to be an integral active part of the "magical beauty of the wide, free earth." Anaya, in weaving oral storytelling into circles within circles couched in pantheistic views of divinity and a cyclical perception of time and space, uses the four basic elements of earth, water, air, and fire to establish a dynamic relation between different spheres; that is, according to Ultima, "the great cycle that binds us all": "the sweet water of the moon which falls as rain ... gather[ing] into rivers and flow[ing] to fill the seas. ... And the same salt waters of the oceans are drawn by the sun to the heavens, and in turn become again the waters of the moon. ... The waters are one" (Anaya 1983, 113). Antonio is initiated into understanding that "the greater immortality is in the freedom of man, and that freedom is best nourished by the noble expanse of land and air and pure, white sky. I dreaded to think of a time when I could not walk upon the llano and feel like the eagle that floats on its skies: free, immortal, limit-

less" (Anaya 1983, 217-20). Here, man's freedom and well-being, like in the American Dream, is linked to an open space without borders. Unlike the American dream, however, the narrator's dream-vision is couched in Mexican American history; a history that goes back well before the arrival of the first Anglo settlers to a time when what is now known as the Southwest was part of Nueva España and settled by sheepherders, vaqueros and horsemen: "the first cowboys in a wild and desolate land which they took from the Indians. Then the railroad came. The barbed wire came." The westward move of the frontier, as is well known, resulted in the incorporation of present-day states of California, New Mexico, Nevada, and parts of Colorado, Arizona, and Utah, which Mexico ceded to the United States as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848. In the years to follow, as historian Rodolfo Acuña (1981, 1-120) documents, a systematic ethnic cleansing occurred until most of the Mexican farmers, who had lived throughout the Southwest for generations, were chased away. In Anaya's novel, the narrator summarizes as follows: "The people were uprooted. They looked around one day and found themselves closed in. The freedom of land and sky they had known was gone. Those people could not live without freedom and so they packed up and moved west. They became migrants" (Anaya 1983, 119). Yet for migrants, as much of Chicano fiction illustrates, freedom is a word vanishing at the horizon of labor experience.

In Linda Hogan's Solar Storms, the protagonist, Angela, moves from cultural alienation to tribal consciousness. That is to say, she learns that besides Euro-American history and episteme, there is a tribal-specific Native American consciousness that emphasizes connections rather than divisions between spiritual and material realms. In her novels, Hogan strives to break down the culture/nature dichotomy and heal the alienation between the human and nonhuman worlds. Echoing Chief Joseph's memorable statements made in early May 1877, at the last council between the Nez Perce Indians and representatives of the United States government before the outbreak of the Nez Perce War — "The earth and myself are of one mind. The measure of the land and the measure of our bodies are the same" (54) — Hogan has stated that "[w]e are all the same world inside different skins, and with different intelligences" (1998, xiv). Thus, for Hogan there is no difference between the genocide of Native American peoples and the ongoing destruction of nature: "what happens to people and what happens to the land is the same thing" (Hogan, 1995, 89). The explicit sense of this deep link between matter and mind, land and body, expressed by Chief Joseph and Linda Hogan, is that

mind is not the special province of human beings. The specific landscape from which a tribe emerges determines their ethos and worldview, providing tribal societies with the founding cultural categories and symbols, the classificatory schemes of sameness and difference, the mythopoetic processes of original naming and informing the language to articulate the underlying order of things and knowledge through which they interpret reality. Therefore, removal from this landscape initiates a split not only from many aspects of a tribal way of life but also from the self as part of the tribe. This explains that the ongoing experience of invasion, genocide, dispossession, colonization, relocation and ethnocide ? the darker, bloody side of the American Dream ? has disrupted the notion of home/identity within tribal cultures. This is also why so many characters in Native American fiction,[5] do not feel at home both in their tribal culture, whose language they do not speak, and in the world of white culture where they occupy the outer margin, hovering as the invisible shadow over the colonizer's guilt-ridden memory. Thus, as Louis Owens (1992, 5) argued, "[t]he recovering or rearticulation of an identity, a process dependent upon a rediscovered sense of place as well as community ... is at the center of American Indian fiction." Angela's move from cultural betweenness to tribal wholeness constitutes a healing process through written storytelling based on tribal memory and imbued with orality, what Paul Gunn Allen (1992, 61) has described as "[t]he two forms basic to American Indian literature," namely "the ceremony and the myth."[6]

Angela's statement in Solar Storms summarizes the identity quest as a journey in search of wholeness: "I wanted an unbroken line between me and the past. I wanted not to be fragments and pieces left behind by fur traders, soldiers, priests, and schools" (Hogan 1997, 77) After an odyssey through a series of foster homes, she decides to return to her place of birth, envisioning herself as water flowing back to its source. Set in the 1970s in the Great Lakes region, where scattered members of Cree, Anishinabe, and various other tribes fight against the construction of dams and reservoirs threatening to flood their homelands, the novel describes Angela's "falling into a lake" (Hogan 1997, 26), the fertile waters of her great-grandmother's storytelling. Surrounded by water, Angela gradually begins to live "inside water. There was no separation between us. I knew in a moment what water was. It was what had been snow. It had passed through old forests, now gone. It was the sweetness of milk and corn and it had journeyed through human lives. It was blood spilled on the ground. Some of it was the blood of my ancestors. ... In that moment I

understood I was part of the same equation as birds and rain" (Hogan 1997, 78-79). Stories, the power of words, trigger Angela's thoughts and dreams, which link her to the world of plants and animals in that specific place. This falling into tribal culture/nature, where "everything merged and united" (Hogan 1997, 177), where "the old ones" can be heard "in the songs of wolves" (Hogan 1997, 176) — an act of interior consciousness by means of which life and identity are called into being within a "sacred hoop" — enables Angela to envision an alternative reality without borders: "Maybe the roots of dreaming are in the soil of dailiness, or in the heart, or in another place without words, but when they come together and grow, they are like the seeds of hydrogen and the seeds of oxygen that together create ocean, lake, and ice. In this way, the plants and I joined each other" (Hogan 1997, 171). By joining forces with several other generations of women represented by Agnes, Dora-Rouge, and Bush, by assuming responsibility for her younger half-sister, and by relocating her self in landscape through water tropes, Angela enters and actively shapes tribal history and culture. Angela's reconstruction of identity and her subsequent communal agency, aided by a speaking nature unleashing floodwaters against the roads of the intruders, align the energy of tribal people with the energy of nature through the power of words against the interference of white people living in disharmony with the earth.

Solar Storms, then, is a ceremonial representation of an integrated vision of reality set against sociocultural definitions of the self and the universe that are based on divisions and lead to the destruction of life on earth. The objective of Hogan's creative writing is to mend the broken covenant between the human and nonhuman worlds, to decolonize mental space, deconstruct artificial borders and thereby transform our sense of what it means to live, to be, to inhabit the earth.

In Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony, Tayo moves from tribal segregation (his war experience as a soldier in the U.S. Armed Forces) through liminal alienation (in between Anglo and tribal society/culture) to tribal reaggregation. Nature is a key element in Tayo's identity quest. The mountains of the Keres (Pueblo) people, the landscape/place from which they came into the world, serves as the stage of Tayo's tribal rebirth. At the same time, however, it is a character who determines his thinking and actions; that is, Tayo's other, which he has to recognize as a fundamental part of himself. Tayo's dynamic relationship with nature is best exemplified in the following passage: "His face was in the pine needles where he could smell all the tree, from roots deep in the damp earth to the moonlight blue branches ...

The odors wrapped around him in a thin clear layer that sucked away the substance of his muscle and bone; his body became insubstantial ..." (Silko 1986,195). As setting and character, nature is the exterior/interior alterity of Tayo's re-emerging tribal identity; that is, alterity and identity constitute one whole entity. It is characterized by a confluence of diverse elements and spheres, as is illustrated in the following passage:

> The cloudy yellow sandstone of Enchanted Mesa was still smoky blue before dawn, and only a faint hint of yellow light touched the highest point of the mesa. All things seemed to converge there: roads and wagon trails, canyons with springs, cliff paintings and shrines ... deep caves along the valley the Spaniards followed to their attack on Acoma. Yet at that moment in the sunrise, it was all so beautiful, everything from all directions, evenly, perfectly, balancing day with night, summer months with winter. The valley was enclosing this totality, like the mind holding all thoughts together in a single moment. The strength came from here, from this feeling (Silko 1986, 237).

In a series of essays called Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit, Silko stresses the link between landscape and human beings emerging from and being a part of Mother Earth: "[l]andscape ... has similarities with dreams. Both have the power to seize terrifying feelings and deep instincts and translate them into images ? visual, aural, tactile ? and into the concrete, where human beings may more readily confront and channel the terrifying instincts or powerful emotions into rituals and narratives that reassure the individual while reaffirming cherished values of the group" (Silko 1997, 38). Thus, an individual's exterior journey through space/place is linked to his/her interior journey through this topos; this multidimensional journey, in which the spiritual, ritual and material are interwoven, is part of an ongoing process of creation in which human beings share responsibility with other creatures. Once the covenant of this "sacred hoop" is broken, "when people forget, when people misbehave" (Silko 1986, 46), havoc sets in (symbolized in the novel through a drought).

In Silko's works, the evil doers and their misbehavior constitute a system that feeds on nature: individuals, a society, a nation, a world, a cultural episteme built on the domination and destruction of our natural resources. In Ceremony, she denounces white America as a

nation "built on stolen land"; a nation whose subjects are "devoured" by "the lies" (Silko 1986, 191) of the military-industrial complex, producing "destruction on a scale only they could have dreamed" (Silko 1986, 246).

In similar fashion, Stamp Paid in Morrison's Beloved muses over another (unresolved) side of this destruction, namely racism. Seen as jungle which blacks did not bring with them from Africa, but which white society "planted in them ... it grew. It spread. ... until it invaded the whites who had made it. Touched them everyone. Changed and altered them. Made them bloody, silly, worse than even they wanted to be, so scared were they of the jungle they had made. The screaming baboon lived under their own white skin" (Morrison 1989, 244).

In the 1970s, Gary Snyder in his poem "It Pleases" delineates "a large bird "Sailing easy/Far above the dome/Of the capitol ... And the center,/The center of power is nothing! ... The world does what it pleases" (Snyder 1974, 44).[7] Here as in other poems of Turtle Island, Snyder sets nature's power against man-made power inviting us to soar away from destruction into creation. Whereas Melville's Bartleby voiced "I prefer not to" and acted suicidal, Snyder, in Thoreauvian fashion of civil disobedience, asks us to deconstruct our rational, linear, technology and production-based episteme ?"what do we know" (Snyder 1974, 33) ? and follow 'the call of the wild', that is, cohabit with nature: "This living flowing land/is all there is, forever/We are it/it sings through us ?/We could live on this Earth/without clothes or tools! (Snyder 1974, 41).

Here is a poet's voice advising us to change our way of thinking and relating to each other. Instead of seeking earth power as tourists on weekends or during vacation in National Parks, going on fishing trips to alleviate post-war traumas or other wounds, as in Hemingway's "Big Two-Hearted River" or on mountain trips as fire-lookouts, as in Kerouac's Desolation Angels, we should become earth citizens protecting and preserving our Mother who has given birth to and continues to nourish us. By unmasking the invader's progress-oriented civilization as imperialist savagery based on the control and exploitation of nature, multi-ethnic writers of the United States denounce the nation's internal borders as contradictions, as fractured and fractal spaces of ongoing violence. In the process of revealing the "domestic" side of what Amy Kaplan has recently termed the "anarchy of empire," they demonstrate the persistent imperialist logic which has informed, inflected and shaped domestic social relations and cultural productions in the United States. In their works, nature is composed of elements and entities that feel, think, speak and act ? that is, it

moves from being a victimized object to an active/creative other in the constitution of the self. It constitutes the self through its dialogical alterity. Thus, the brutalization of the other(s) is always also a brutalization of the self: a violence that destroys life and the planet. In this sense, the ecological unconscious which imbues their works alerts us to, in Snyder's words: "get power within/grow strong on less/ ... in the service/of the wilderness/of life/of death/of the Mother's breasts!" (Snyder 1974, 77).

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Notes

1. I disagree with Justine Tally (1999, p.13-14), who describes these passages in Morrison's writing as "psychic realism". This term privileges human perception to the detriment of ontological reality. I also disagree with Epstein (1992) and Daily (1992) who assign these passages to the genre of the fantastic.
2. Here I am drawing on Mbiti's analysis of spirituality in traditional African thought: "The invisible world is symbolized or manifested by those visible and concrete phenomena and objects of nature. The invisible world presses hard upon the visible world. The physical and spiritual are but two dimensions of one and the same universe" (57). This means that the construction of the self is based on both material and spiritual nature. In Yoruban thought this vital force and energy is called Ashe.
3. For Morrison's thoughts on home, see her essay "Home" (1998). For an in-depth analysis of Morrison's novels, see Walter (2003, 201-264). On the issue of cultural difference and diversity, see Walter (2005).
4. On 'transculturation', see Walter (2003, 351-367).
5. Abel and Set in N. Scott Momaday's House Made of Dawn (1968) and The Ancient Child (1989); Tayo and Indigo in Leslie Marmon

Silko's Ceremony (1977) and Gardens in the Dunes (1999); Ephanie in Paula Gunn Allen's The Woman Who Owned the Shadows (1983); the nameless narrator and Jim Loney in James Welch's Winter in the Blood (1974) and The Death of Jim Loney (1979); Fleur's daughter Lulu in Louise Erdrich's Tracks (1988); and Willie Begay in Anna Lee Walters's Ghost Singer (1988), to name just a few ailing characters of Native American novels.

6. "The ceremony is the ritual enactment of a specialized perception of a cosmic relationship, while the myth is a prose record of that relationship" (1992, 61).

7. The sequence of the verse lines have been changed by the author of this essay.

FROM THE ODYSSEY TO THE PENELOPIAD: THE CHORUS LINE AS THE VOICE OF ALTERITY, VIOLENCE AND REDEMPTION

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ABSTRACT: The patriarchal nature of Greek mythology, concretized in the Odyssey, among other instances, in the episode of the twelve maids hanged by order of Odysseus, has instigated Margaret Atwood to rewrite the story of Penelope and of her twelve maids, based on other mythic sources. By giving the telling of the story to Penelope and to her maids from their birth up to Odysseus' return, and therefore as first-person narrators, in order to bring out unrevealed aspects in the Homeric texts, Atwood does so from an unusual point of view: the maids form a Chorus that sings, chants, and dances while it tells its true story. This account reveals their alterity as synonymous with an objectal condition and lack of identity, which left them exposed to all types of violence, thus leading to their condemnation and execution. Nevertheless, through the device of different poetic genres and styles, the Chorus reconstructs not only its story but simultaneously creates its own language – polyphonic, parodical, accusatory – thereby also deconstructing the image of the Homeric hero. The maids' redemption occurs not only as they take Odysseus to a trial in the twenty-first century, but especially through their assuring him that he will be eternally followed by the Furies. It is the account of this route from alterity to violence and redemption which this work will focus on.

KEYWORDS: Margaret Atwood; Alterity; Violence

RESUMO: A natureza patriarcal da mitologia grega concretizada na Odisséia, entre outros, no episódio das doze escravas enforcadas a mando de Odisseu, instigou Margaret Atwood a reescrever a história de Penélope e de suas escravas, baseando-se em outras versões míticas. Dando voz a Penélope e às escravas para recontar suas histórias a partir de seu nascimento até a volta de Odisseu, e portanto como narradoras autodiegéticas, a fim de resgatar aspectos não revelados nos textos homéricos, Atwood o faz de um ângulo inusitado: as escravas formam um Coro, que canta, declama e dança enquanto relata sua verdadeira história. Um relato que expõe sua alteridade como sinônimo de condição objetal e de identidade em falta, condição essa que as deixava expostas a todo tipo de violência, levando assim à

sua condenação e conseqüente execução. Entretanto, através do recurso de diferentes gêneros poéticos e estilos, o Coro reconstroi não apenas sua história, mas cria simultaneamente sua própria linguagem – polifônica, paródica, acusadora – desconstruindo assim também a imagem do herói homérico. A redenção das escravas se dá ao levarem Odisseu não só a um julgamento no século XXI, mas principalmente por lhe assegurarem que será eternamente perseguido pelas Fúrias. É o relato desse percurso da alteridade à violência e à redenção que será objeto de análise deste trabalho.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Margaret Atwood; Alteridade; Violência

If feminist criticism, as one of the current trends in literary criticism, has taken on the role of "questioning patriarchal academic practice"[1] (Zolin, 2005, p.181), Margaret Atwood's The Penelopiad (2005) projects this questioning in two distinct, but complementary ways. The first is when, in her critical-intertextual dialogue with The Odyssey, she disputes the "place and the authority of the male position" (Butler, 2003, p.7-8), so apparent in the patriarchal nature of Greek mythology and concretized in the Homeric epic, among others, in the episode of the twelve maids hanged by order of Odysseus, which prompts her to rewrite the story of Penelope and of her maids based on other mythical accounts. In this rewriting, by giving voice to the queen and her maids in order to bring out unrevealed aspects of the Homeric texts, Atwood does so from an unusual point of view: on the one hand, Penelope tells her own story after almost three thousand years in Hades and, therefore, from a twenty-first century perspective – observant, ironic and subtly feminist – in a dialogue with the Homeric perspective. On the other hand, the maids form a Chorus that dances, chants and sings while it also tells its true story: an account that reveals their alterity as synonymous with their objectal condition and lack of identity, a condition that left them exposed to all sorts of violence, thus leading to their condemnation by Odysseus as he returns to Ithaca – he considers they have been unfaithful to him, as their lord – and their subsequent execution by Telemachus. As Atwood comments in the Introduction,

> I've chosen to give the teling of the story to Penelope and to the twelve hanged maids. The maids form a chanting and singing chorus which focuses on two questions that must pose themselves after any close reading of The Odyssey: what led to the hanging of the maids, and what was Penelope really up to? The story as told in The Odyssey doesn't hold water; there are too many inconsistencies. I've always been haunted by the hanged maids; and, in The Penelopiad, so is Penelope herself. (Atwood, 2005, p. xv)[2]

Thus, it would have been sufficient for Atwood, as she wrote The Penelopiad, to have given voice to Penelope, as a mythical, epic, but simultaneously post-modern figure, to retell her story, reflecting on, amongst other subjects, her alterity as woman – daughter and wife of kings – in order to demystify the Homeric image of "wily Odysseus". Nevertheless, Atwood makes this demystification even more powerful as she intertwines Penelope's narrative with the voice of her maids who, in a parodic counterpoint, besides deconstructing the images of Odysseus, Telemachus and of the patriarchal system that prevailed in Homeric times, also make the very figure of Penelope become more ambiguous and complex, as they cast doubt on her real intentions: no longer is she the idealized figure of The Iliad and The Odyssey, but it now emerges that she was eventually to blame for their deaths, so as to preserve before others her image as a virtuous queen.

This instigating subject, in its turn, becomes even more foregrounded by way of the narrative form in which it is written, which takes us to Atwood's second questioning about the place and authority of the male position. The author's narrative form deconstructs and subverts not only the epic genre, by enlarging it and adapting it to her own times – post-modernity, with its cultural and social conventions – as she turns a little-known story into the subject of an epic poem: the narrative of a woman, despite the fact that she is a queen, told not in terms of the deeds of warriors and heroes, but as an account of Penelope's life from her birth up to Odysseus' return, twenty years after their marriage; and, concomitantly, as Atwood intertwines the episodes of the queen's narrative with those of her maids, who also tell us their stories and comment on them – anonymous, plebeian and therefore despicable – we are told of the vile acts committed against them from their childhood up to their hanging and their subsequent relentless persecution of Odysseus (Renaux, 2008, p.8).

The narrative simultaneously subverts the expressive medium of epic poetry, characterized by the use of the dactylic hexameter as the most convenient metric structure. Besides prose in the chapters narrated by Penelope, Atwood also introduces other literary forms and poetic compositions in the chapters which are sung, chanted or narrated by the Chorus: not only rhymes, songs, tunes, idylls, ballads,

sea shanties, but even an elegy in prose, a drama in verse, an Anthropology lecture and the trial of Odysseus videotaped by the maids. The use of these different literary forms, as will be seen, will characterize and enrich the maids' speech, as victims and spokeswomen of alterity, as they demand vengeance and continue to follow Odysseus throughout the centuries. In this way, these forms deconstruct the epic style as they fragment it into a series of minor genres of ancient times and also of our own times, making it hybrid, while at the same time characterizing a feminine voice which counterposes itself to the patriarchal voice of the Homeric epic.

In order to trace the course of this feminine Odyssey concealed by the Homeric one and to detail the way in which Atwood's double questioning becomes apparent in the text, we shall make use of some basic operational concepts of feminist literary criticism, such as:

> – Patriarchy: a family organization originating with ancient people, in which every social institution was concentrated in the figure of a chief, the patriarch, whose authority was preponderant and uncontested (Zolin, 2005, p.183).
> – Woman-as-subject: marked by non-subordination to the paradigms established by patriarchy, by way of her power of decision, dominance and imposition, whereas the woman-as-object is defined by submission, by resignation and by lack of voice (Zolin,2005, p.183).
> – Gender: relation between the cultural attributes referring to each one of the sexes and to the biological dimension of human beings and, therefore, as a category that implies sexual and cultural difference (Zolin, 2005, p.182)
> – Alterity: a concept which refers "to the other engaged in a political, cultural, religious and linguistic context" (Bonnici, 2007, p.19). Still within this concept, the dialectic of identity – conceived as a nucleus and of alterity as an "exteriority" orbiting around it – when brought to the world of power relations in patriarchal society, caused the nucleus to be attributed to man, "master of reason, law, religion and owner of riches", and the periphery to woman, deprived of these attributes. From this context, an alterity was attributed to woman as synonymous with an objectal condition and lack of identity, and not as an authentic, intersubjective alterity (Waddington, apud Zolin, 2005, p. 183).

The text of The Penelopiad, after the Epigraph and the Introduction, is divided into twenty-nine chapters, eighteen of which are narrated by Penelope, while, intermingled with these, the other eleven are presented by the Chorus of the maids. However, even if our objective is to foreground the function of the Chorus Line of the maids as spokeswomen for their alterity, the violence committed against them, and their redemption, this analysis cannot be detached from Penelope's account, for the chorus acts as its complement and parodic counterpoint, as mentioned above.

Thus, in Chapter I, "A Low Art ", Penelope, as an inhabitant of the Elysian Fields, abode of the blessed in Hades, starts her story as an autodiegetic narrator foregrounding the figure of Odysseus: his lies, his cunning, his trickiness, his unscrupulousness, while she pretended not to see anything, for she wanted "happy endings" in those days. However, now, after three thousand years, she realizes that it is her turn "to do a little storymaking", even if tale-telling is "a low art", in order to defend herself from the jokes and "scandalous gossip" about her that traveled the world (P, p.4).

This dark side of Odysseus becomes intensified with the introduction of the Chorus, in Chapter II, in which the maids present themselves, in counterpoint, in a song that burlesques their very hanging, for it is "A Rope-Jumping Rhyme", while they simultaneously blame Odysseus for their deaths. This accusation will become a Leitmotif in this work:

> we are the maids
> we danced in air
> the ones you killed
> our bare feet twitched
> the ones you failed [I]
> it was not fair [II]
>
> while he enjoyed himself
> with every goddesss, queen, and bitch
> from there to here
> you scratched your itch [III] (P, p.5).

Subsequently they emphasize the power of the binary oppositions sex/ power and master/ slave, as they state "you had the spear/ you had the word/ at your command", the spear as a phallic symbol and the word as symbolic of male privilege, thus confirming the power of King Odysseus as sex and power over the slaves. And, as they remember what happened after the slaughter of Penelope's suitors by Odysseus –

we scrubbed the blood
from stairs, from doors,
of our dead
we knelt in water
paramours from floors, from chairs [VI]
while you stared [VII]
at our bare feet

– they continue their song, complaining:
it was not fair
it gave you pleasure
you licked our fear [VIII]
ou raised your hand
you watched us fall [IX] (P, p.6).

At this point it becomes apparent again how Odysseus punished the supposedly unloyal maids because they had slept with the suitors and thus had no right to live, for, as objects belonging to Odysseus, their master and king, they had no permission to have sex with other men.

Their song ends with the repetition of "we danced on air/ the ones you failed/ the ones you killed" from the preceding stanzas, emphasizing the fact that they felt they had been cheated by Odysseus, implied by the word "fail", for they were sentenced to death by him and then hanged, the image of "dancing on air" grotesquely ironizing their own death.

These first two chapters already establish Penelope's narrative – as "low art" in relation to Homer's high art – as well as the maids's song, without the dimension and amplitude of an epic poem (the very title already suggesting a children's song) – as being in parodic counterpoint to The Odyssey. Furthermore, the maids' song, despite being written in ten tercets, has no punctuation, thereby showing how they are not giving any value to the formality of male writing, while the rhyme scheme is sometimes perfect, sometimes imperfect or even nonexistent. The fact that, being slaves, they use common language confirms on the one hand their social status – illiterate and without culture in order to better express themselves – while on the other it again burlesques the formality of epic style. Even more, this accusatory song anticipates their hanging – as will be narrated by Penelope in "Odysseus and Telemachus Snuff the Maids" – and also their final accusation, in "The Trial of Odysseus, as videotaped by the Maids".

In contrast to Chapter III – "My Childhood"– in which Penelope

describes how she descends from King Icarius of Sparta and a Naiad, thereby acknowledging her noble ancestry[3], in the following chapter the slaves present the underside of the social structure of their times. As the very title already reveals, "Kiddie Mourn, A Lament by the Maids", they sing:

> We too were children. We too were born to the wrong parents. Poor parents, slave parents, peasant parents, and serf parents: parents who sold us, parents from whom we were stolen. These parents were not gods, they were not demi-gods, they were not nymphs or naiads. We were set to work in the palace, as children; we drudged from dawn to dusk, as children. If we wept no one dried our tears. (...) We were told we were lazy. We were told we were dirty. (...) If our owners or the sons of our owners or a visiting nobleman or the sons of a visiting nobleman wanted to sleep with us, we could not refuse. (...) All this happened to us when we were children. (...) We ground the flour for lavish wedding feasts, then we ate the leftovers; we would never have a wedding feast of our own, no rich gift would be exchanged for us; our bodies had little value. But we wanted to sing and dance too, we wanted to be happy too. (P, p.13-14)

The Lament, as an expression of grief at misfortune, especially at the loss of someone or something, also includes among its topics the contrast between the past and the present, complaints about the cruelty of fortune and the purposelessness of life (Preminger & Brogan, 1993, p.675). For this reason, the Lament of the maids contrasts not only their childhood with that of a woman who belongs to the upper class, like Penelope, but also everything else implied by their status: sold by their very parents to the masters, or stolen by them, submitted to slave work since they were very young and thus also to the pair sex/power, their bodies, as objects of exchange, had no value, thus anticipating the cruel act committed against them by Odysseus. Nevertheless, they also wanted to sing, dance and be happy, even if their "happiness" depended on the "kindness" of the masters to whom they were subject. It is only after their death, however, that they sing and dance by way of the Chorus Line. By exposing their alterity as girls/ women-as-objects, whose only insubordination consisted in their "secret sneer", in meeting "boys behind the pigpens", in spitting "onto the serving platters" (P, p.14) and thus contrasting the official and

the hidden life of the palace, the maids' Lament also reveals the deconstruction, in prose, of the Lament as a formal expression in verse or song – such as Achilles' lament over the death of Patroclus in The Iliad – thereby confirming an "écriture féminine"(Cixous, 2001, p.254) which brings their voice to the foreground, a voice which had been suppressed by the Homeric one.

The next intervention of the Chorus, in Chapter VIII, is again preceded by three other chapters narrated by Penelope: in the first, among other subjects, she discusses her cousin Helen of Troy[4], the woman who achieved fame for acts mainly of a sexual nature, for Helen "was nothing if not infamous", and "was never punished, not one bit" (P, p.20-22), whereas Penelope herself incarnates the type of woman devoted to her husband, waiting for his return, while she took care of his properties and of their son. She thereby stresses the contrast but also the similarity between the two types of women who, even as queens, continued to be women-as-objects, even if on a different level than that of the slaves.

In the next chapter, Penelope comments on how her marriage was

> arranged. That's the way things were done then; (...) Under the old rules only important people had marriages, because only important people had inheritances. All the rest was just copulation of various kinds – rapes or seductions, love affairs or one-night stands, with gods who said they were shepherds or shepherds who said they were gods (P, p.23).

She not only confirms the fact that the raping of maids by their masters was part of the class system and of the male dominance current in those times, for they were oppressed by being slaves and women, but she also clearly describes the notion of the "bride-as-dowry" to show how women, as objects of exchange, consolidate and define the social bond among men (Rubin apud Butler, 2003, p.222). This notion also becomes apparent in the account that Penelope gives of this "settlement", camouflaged by a contest:

> At the court of King Icarius, my father, they still retained the ancient custom of having contests to see who should marry a nobly born woman who was – so to speak – on the block. The man who won the contest got the woman and the wedding and was then expected to stay at the bride's father's palace and contribute his share of male offspring.

> He obtained wealth through the marriage (...). (P, p.25-6)

This arrangement is confirmed in the next chapter, when she is "handed over to Odysseus, like a package of meat (...) in a wrapping of gold" (P, p.39), while during the wedding feast the unsuccessful suitors behaved "as if they'd failed to win an auction for a horse"(P, p.41), thus corroborating once more her value as "bride-as-dowry".

When the Chorus Line returns, singing "a popular tune" – "If I Was a Princess" – the first strophe, performed by one of the maids –

> If I was a princess, with silver and gold,
> Oh, if a young hero came a-marrying me,
> And loved by a hero, I'd never grow old:
> I'd always be beautiful, happy, and free!

already shows that this wish is also a utopia, for Penelope, despite being a princess, "with silver and gold" (like Helen) and "loved" by Odysseus, is only happy for a short while, as he leaves for Troy when Telemachus is a year old and, as queen and woman, she is always watched over. In counterpoint to the dream, the slaves' life of drudgery is described by another maid in the next strophe, in which their submission, servility and need are foregrounded:

> I fetch and I carry, I hear and obey, I
> smile and I nod with a tear in my eye,
> It's Yes sir and No ma'am the whole bleeding day;
> I make the soft beds in which others do lie.

The third maid already pleads for the end of this ordeal:

> Oh gods and oh prophets, please alter my life,
> But no hero comes to me, early or late –
> And let a young hero take me for his wife!
> Hard work is my destiny, death is my fate!

– thus foretelling their end and their subsequent invocation to the Furies, for the gods have not heard them.

The first and last strophes, in their turn, are followed by a refrain in which the Chorus comforts and advises:

> Then sail, my fine lady, on the billowing wave –
> And maybe you'll sink in your little blue boat –

The water below is as dark as the grave,
It's hope, and hope only, that keeps us afloat (P, p.51-2)

This contains the foreboding that, in the same way that only hope for a better life keeps their little blue boat afloat, it is this same hope that will make them return, as avengers, in order to lead them to their redemption.

If a "song" refers to any poetic composition that is suitable for singing, the fact that here we are dealing with "a popular tune" already presents a contrast with the song in its literary sense, characterized by adherence to refined, precise patterns (Moisés, 1999, p.68). Therefore, although this song is composed of five quatrains and written in couplets, the fact that it is performed with "a Fiddle, an Accordion, and a Penny Whistle" already confirms a mixture of classical and popular musical instruments, which further emphasizes the mixture of different literary genres in this work, thus foregrounding once again a feminine voice that deconstructs the Homeric epic style. The fact that "the Maids all curtsy" at the end, while one of them passes the hat, thanking the audience, further shows that it is a public performance.

The next presentation of the Chorus Line, in "The Birth of Telemachus, An Idyll", is again preceded by Penelope's narrative: her sea voyage to Ithaca, her arrival at the royal palace, where everybody wanted to see her – a "visible proof that Odysseus had succeeded in his mission, and had brought back a noble bride and the valuable gifts that came with her"(P, p.56), thus confirming her value as "bride-as-dowry". However, in spite of Odysseus' attentiveness, she does "a lot of secluded weeping in those early days" (P, p.57). On the other hand, Eurycleia, Odysseus' former nurse, does not let her do anything for her husband, for her role was to fatten herself up so she can give him "a nice big son"(P, p.63), confirming that, if a woman's body "symbolizes the processes of reproduction, while her job of taking care of the children binds her per se to her home and to nature"(Bonnici, 2007, p.66), the role attributed to Penelope was only that of procreation, for even her duty of taking care of Telemachus after his birth is taken away from her by Eurycleia, whose "delight in him was boundless" (P, p.64).

It is precisely the birth of Telemachus that gives the Chorus Line another opportunity to express itself, this time through "an Idyll". However, if the idyll is "a poem which describes some episode or scene in rural life", or "a description of any scene of tranquil happiness", this "idyll" – its seven strophes of different lengths confirming that it

is not a "definite poetic genre" (Cuddon, 1992, p.442) – actually contrasts the pregnancy, birth and childhood of this prince with that of the maids, thereby transforming the "idyll" in relation to Telemachus into a nightmare in relation to them. For Telemachus

Nine months (he) sailed the wine-red seas of his mother's blood
Out of the cave of dreaded Night, of sleep,
Of troubling dreams he sailed
In his frail dark boat, the boat of himself,
Through the dangerous ocean of his vast mother he sailed
(...)

while the maids, already anticipating their end at the hands of the prince, emphasize, by way of a parallelism of contrast with Penelope's pregnancy as queen, the pregnancy of their slave mothers, who were incapable of deliberating over their bodies:

(...) the twelve who were later to die by his hand
At his father's relentless command
Sailed as well, in the dark frail boats of ourselves
Through the turbulent seas of our swollen and sore-footed mothers
Who were not royal queens, but a motley and piebald collection,
Bought, traded, captured, kidnapped from serfs and strangers.

And, as they comment on their birth, their alterity as slaves is further highlighted:

After the nine-month voyage we came to shore,
Beached at the same time as he was, (...)
Helpless as he was helpless, but ten times more helpless as well
For his birth was longed-for and feasted, as our births were not.

As they continue to describe their objectification

His mother presented a princeling. Our various mothers
Spawned merely, lambed, farrowed, littered,

> (...) hatched out their clutch. We were animal young, to be disposed of at will,
> Sold, drowned in the well, traded, used, discarded when bloomless.
> He was fathered; we simply appeared, (...)

they stress yet again their marginalized state – because they had no recognized father – and the power of male force and patriarchism. Even so, their lives

> (...) were twisted in his life; we also were children
> When he was a child,
> We were his pets and his toythings, mock sisters, his tiny companions.
> We grew as he grew, laughed also, ran as he ran,(...)
> He saw us as rightfully his, for whatever purpose
> He chose, to tend him and feed him, to wash him, amuse him,
> Rock him to sleep in the dangerous boats of ourselves.

Little did they imagine that this same boy with whom they had played and whom they had served would be their future executioner, thus making the prince's villainous act even more perverse, as the next strophe emphasizes:

> We did not know as we played with him there in the sand
> On the beach of our rocky goat-island, close by the harbor,
> That he was foredoomed to swell to our cold-eyed teenaged killer.

Rhetorically and ironically, they ask:

> If we had known that, would we have drowned him back then?
> (...) Would we have had it in us?

They end the song by telling the audience:

> Ask the Three Sisters, spinning their blood-red mazes,(...)
> Only they know how events might then have been altered.
> Only they know our hearts.
> From us you will get no answer. (P, p.65-69)

This recalls Odysseus' revelation to Penelope, that "he who could master the hearts of men and learn their secrets was well on the way to mastering the Fates and controlling the thread of his own destiny" (P, p.58). This comment makes it clear that Odysseus did not know the hearts of the maids he would sentence to death and, consequently, that he would not be able to control the thread of his own destiny after death, for the maids will pursue him forever, as is confirmed in the Chorus' last performance.

The Chorus thus gradually weaves its own story, in which it is shown that the violence inflicted on the maids had already started in the maternal womb, while their objectification as Telemachus' playthings and pets merely confirms the way their future victimization by their master's son was already rooted in their childhood.

Penelope's narrative thus proceeds, this time concentrating on the episode which set off the War of Troy: Helen's "selfishness and her deranged lust" (P, p.76), slighting Menelaus' and Agamemnon's "family honour". Enraged, they demanded "the return of both Helen and the plunder", thus showing that Helen, too, was a "bride-as-dowry", an object of exchange, consolidating the social bond among men. This is specifically formalized in the oath that Odysseus swore with Helen's other suitors: "to defend the rights of Menelaus" (P, p.78), "if any other man tried to take her away from the winner" (P, p.36).

In the next chapter, "Waiting", Penelope comments on the news she received about the War of Troy, as "minstrels sang songs about the notable heroes" while she "waited only for news of Odysseus"(P, p.81). She tells us how, after the fall of Troy, she does not receive any more news, only rumours telling of Odysseus' and his men's adventures during the following ten years, while the minstrels "always sang the noblest versions" in her presence, for "only a strong divine power" could keep Odysseus from "rushing back as quickly as possible" into her "loving" arms (P, p.84).

Penelope then comments on how she ran "the vast estates of Odysseus all by myself. In no way had I been prepared for such a task, during my early life at Sparta. I was a princess, after all, and work was what other people did" (P, p.85), thus demonstrating again how current class distinction, social stratification and patriarchism were in those times. Even so, Penelope learns how to make inventories and plan the palace menus and wardrobes, besides telling the spinners and weavers what to make. She acquires a "reputation as a smart bargainer". Her policy "was to build up the estates of Odysseus" (P, p.88), and thus, when he returned, she would reveal to him how well she had done "at what was usually considered a man's business"

(P, p.89), thereby displaying a shrewdness which would be useful to her as she uses the pretext of the shroud to keep away future suitors.

She also reveals how the male slaves "were not supposed to sleep with the female ones, not without permission" (P, p.87), thus anticipating Odysseus' justification – as king and master – for sentencing the maids to death. On the other hand, as these slaves "sometimes fell in love and became jealous, just like their betters" (P, p.87-8), Penelope was obliged to sell them, only keeping and rearing herself "a pretty child" that eventually would be born from these couplings, "teaching it to be a refined and pleasant servant"(P, p.88), thereby revealing the love she felt for the twelve hanged maids and the blow she felt when she heard of their execution.

In the meantime, "new rumours" (P, p.91) kept arriving about Odysseus: some consolidating his heroic, adventurous image, while others showed the real dimension of his aventures. For this reason, when the Chorus Line returns with the song "The Wily Sea Captain, A Sea Shanty", the maids, in "sailor costumes" representing the men who followed Odysseus in his return from Troy, present the parodic deconstruction of Odysseus' adventures and, consequently, of his Homeric image, in counterpoint to the minstrels' songs of praise. As the first of the fifteen rhymed quatrains already reveals –

> Oh wily Odysseus he set out from Troy,
> For he was Athene's own shiny-eyed boy,
> With his boat full of loot and his heart full of joy,
> With his lies and his tricks and his thieving! (P, p.93)

– we have a gradual unmasking of Odysseus' image: great when he sails from Troy, with his loot in his boat and in his heart, for he relied on the help of a goddess. However, this same "wily Odysseus", as the minstrels described him, is presented by the maids/sailors as a liar, a trickster and a thief.

The following quatrains consecutively narrate – always in a parodic tone – Odysseus' adventures in Lotus, in the land of the Cyclops, Poseidon's resulting curse "dogging his heels as he sails to and fro" (P, p.94), the vile Laestrygonians, the island of Circe, his stop at the Isle of the Dead, the Sirens'attraction, the Whirlpool Charybdis and Scylla, the perishing of his sailors in a storm while he was on the isle of the goddess Calypso, his escape "after seven long years of kissing and woo" (P, p.97), and his arrival at the isle of Nausicaa, ending with the comment:

> Then he told his adventures and laid to his store
> For no one can tell what the Fates have in store,
> A hundred disasters and sufferings galore,
> Not Odysseus, that master disguiser! (P, p.98)

These quatrains are further intertwined with the refrains

> Here's a health to our captain, so gallant and free,

> Or rolled in the arms of some nymph of the sea,
> Whether stuck on a rock or asleep 'neath a tree,
> Which is where we would all like to be, man!

> So a health to our Captain wherever he may roam,

> And he's in no hurry to ever get home –
> Tossed here and tossed there on the wide ocean's foam,
> Odysseus, that crafty old codger!
> So a health to our Captain, where'er he may be,
> For he's not down in Hades, unlike all of we –
> Whether walking the earth or adrift on the sea,
> And we leave you not any the wiser! (P, p.94-98).

However, if the threefold repetition "a health to our captain" already burlesques the high regard his sailors had for him, deconstructs his heroic figure as he is presented as a "crafty old codger", and prefigures the pursuit the maids will carry on, as Odysseus continues to roam on earth and on the sea, these refrains are still complemented by epithets. Constituting another parallelism of similarity, as the maids call him "Odysseus, the saltiest seaman!", "Odysseus, that epical he-man!", "Odysseus, the artfullest dodger!", "Odysseus, that master disguiser!", while he himself brags to the Cyclops that he is "Odysseus, the prince of deceiving!", these adjective phrases also contribute to the parodic deconstruction of his Homeric image.

The next presentation of the Chorus is once more preceded by three chapters narrated by Penelope. In the first, "The Suitors Stuff Their Faces", the queen describes her meeting, in the Elysian Fields, with Antinous – the first of the Suitors killed by Odysseus' bow – who reveals to her the suitors' real motive in wanting to marry her: her wealth and her kingdom. This ambition confirms their abusive and hypocritical behaviour in Odysseus'palace, butchering the animals to eat, ordering the maids about, pretending to admire Penelope's

beauty, competence and intelligence. The maids, however, as the queen's spies, told her what the suitors said while they "were forced to help serve the meat and drink" (P, p.105), to help her think how to detain them, and for this reason Penelope will, later on, also feel blame for the maids' deaths.

In "The Shroud", Penelope describes how the suitors' pressure on her increased, while her son accuses her of being responsible for the dilapidation of his inheritance. Crafty as Odysseus, she then thinks of a scheme to deceive the suitors: to weave a shroud for her father-in-law Laertes before choosing a new husband. In this manner, for more than three years, Penelope would undo the weaving at night, with her twelve maids – the same she had bought or acquired when they were small children, who had played with Telemachus and who had been carefully trained "in everything they would need to know around the palace". Penelope continues, saying how "they were pleasant girls, full of energy; they were a little loud and giggly sometimes, as all maids are in youth (...). They had lovely voices, all of them, and they had been taught well how to use them" (P, p.113-14) – a description that explains their performance in the Chorus, singing, dancing and chanting. Furthermore, in the same way that they help Penelope to deconstruct – "to pick away at" – her weaving (P, p.114), a task that made them become "sisters" to the queen in order to cheat the suitors, they perform, through the Chorus, the deconstruction of Odysseus – simultaneously their revenge and redemption before the Hellenic and our contemporary world.

However, Penelope continues, one of the maids accidentally betrays the secret of her "interminable weaving", for the queen had asked them to "hang around the suitors and spy on them", and consequently, "several of the girls were unfortunately raped, others were seduced", for "it was not unusual for the guests in a large household or palace to sleep with the maids", again characterizing the pair sex/power and the maids' objectal condition, and anticipating the cause of their condemnation by Odysseus, for, if the servants were "used in this way without the permission of the master of the house", "such an act amounted to thievery" (P, p.115-116).

In "Bad Dreams", in its turn, Penelope shows her concern with Telemachus, who "wanted to assert his authority as the son of Odysseus and take over the reins" (P, p.121) by standing up to the suitors. Consequently, they intended to kill him when he returned from his voyage in search of news of his father. Penelope has "bad dreams" about Odysseus and his adventures, but, in the end, she "managed a comforting dream", as her sister Ifitma reveals to her

that "Telemachus would return safely". However, as she questions her about Odysseus, her sister "refused to answer, and slipped away", which makes Penelope comment that all the gods "tease. (...) Not the fat and bones of animals, but our suffering, is what they love to savour" (P, p.124), emphasizing that, in the same way that slaves are the objects of their masters, mortals are the playthings of the gods, in a parallelism of similarity which seems to annul the distance between the social positions of master and slave.

In contrast to Penelope's "bad dreams", in the following appearance of the Chorus Line in "Dreamboats, A Ballad", the maids long for sleep in order to be able to dream and thus forget their objectal condition in relation to their masters and, again in contrast to Odysseus' adventures, to forget their own misfortunes. In the first two quatrains, they sing:

> Sleep is the only rest we get;
> We are not chased around the hall
> It's then we are at peace:
> And tumbled in the dirt
> We do not have to mop the floor
> By every dimwit nobleman
> And wipe away the grease.[I]
> Who wants a slice of skirt. [II]

The next quatrains take up the theme of "If I Was a Princess" again, presenting their longing for unending liberty, beauty and love:

> And when we sleep we like to dream:
> In dreams we all are beautiful
> We dream we are at sea,
> In glossy crimson dresses;
> We sail the waves in golden boats,
> We sleep with every man we love,
> So happy, clean and free. [III]
> We shower them with kisses. [IV]

> They fill our days with feasting,
> We take them in our golden boats
> We fill their nights with song,
> And drift the whole year long. [V]

However, if Penelope returns to her reality after bad dreams, the maids' reality is much worse, for it means the return to their alterity as women-as-objects, victims of their masters' male dominance:

> But then the morning wakes us up:
> And hoist our skirts at their command
> Once more we toil and slave,
> For every prick and knave. [VII]

As the text confirms, skirts – a superficial example of difference between the feminine and the masculine worlds, intended to keep women in a state of permanent sexual accessibility (Guillaumin, 2000, p.101) – thus also become symbolic of class differences and of patriarchy, which legitimize and perpetuate "male power and aggression"(Bonnici, 2007, p.198). Furthermore, the contrast revealed by the maids between their unattainable dreams and the reality they face when they wake up is emphasized even more by the fact that it is presented in the form of a ballad – an ancient popular poetic composition, especially of a romantic character, composed in short stanzas and followed or not by music; or any naïve sentimental song – thus again deconstructing, on a formal level, the expressive medium of epic poetry in order to bring out more clearly the alterity of the feminine voice hidden by the Homeric narrative.

The next presentation of the chorus is again preceded by three chapters. In "News of Helen" Penelope describes how Telemachus defies her "parental authority by saying he didn't need anyone's permission to take a boat", further claiming that "his father would have been proud of him for showing some backbone and getting out from under the thumbs of the women, who as usual were being overemotional and showing no reasonableness and judgement" (P, p.127-8). He thus already reveals his male prejudice and anticipates his promptness in carrying-out of Odysseus' orders to "snuff the maids" (P, p.157).

In "Yelp of Joy", Penelope comments on Odysseus' return, after twenty years, disguised as a beggar, in order to evaluate the situation in the palace: the suitors dilapidating his estate, conspiring to murder Telemachus, intending to "grab" his wife and forcing the maids to provide "sexual services", thereby justifying their slaughter. The queen also reveals her shrewdness as she pretends not to have recognized Odysseus, in order to preserve his true identity from the suitors; and, if the songs said that she did not "notice a thing" (P, p.140), she now proclaims "the plain truth" (P, p.139): she knew that the

beggar was Odysseus, thereby again deconstructing The Odyssey.

In "Slanderous Gossip" Penelope argues that the rumours about her are "completely untrue" (P, p.143): about her "sexual conduct" with Amphinomus, about her having slept with all of the suitors, about her not having punished the "twelve impudent maids", for she herself "must have been indulging in the same kind of sluttery" (P, p.144-5), as well as the more serious accusation that Odysseus had not revealed himself to her because he "mistrusted" her. As she explains, it was actually because he was afraid she would "cry tears of joy and thus give him away". For this same reason he also had her "locked in the women's quarters with the rest of the women when he was slaughtering the suitors", for he knew her well – her "tender heart" – (P, p.145), thus displaying his power over his wife by his capacity to "master the hearts of men and learn their secrets" (P, p.58), a capacity that he did not use, deeming it unnecessary, to penetrate the maids' hearts. Therefore, when the Chorus Line returns presenting "The Perils of Penelope, A Drama", in which the maids reveal Penelope's other side, the doubt remains as to who to believe: the queen, or the maids.

In the Prologue, Melantho of the Pretty Cheeks confirms the slanderous gossip about Penelope, as she recites:

> Word has it that Penelope the Prissy
> By turns did have the fortune to upend her,
> Was – when it came to sex – no shrinking sissy!
> By which promiscuous acts the goat-god Pan
> Some said with Amphinomus she was sleeping.
> Was then conceived, or so the fable ran.
> Masking her lust with gales of moans and weeping;
> The truth, dear auditors, is seldom certain –
> Others, that each and every brisk contender
> But let us take a peek behind the curtain! (P, p.147-8)

If in Greek tragedy the Prologue designated an introductory scene in which a speaker announced the theme of the play before the entrance of the chorus, one realizes that in the Prologue above the maids present "another story" (P, p.147), as the dialogue the audience will hear "behind the curtain" reveals: a Penelope in connivance with Eurycleia, in which the old nurse warns her of Odysseus' return and Penelope, after urging Amphinomus to run away "down the hidden stairs!", asks her: "Which of the maids is in on my affairs?"(P, p.149). And, with Eurycleia's revelation –

Only the twelve, my lady, who assisted,
They drew the drapes, and then they held the light.
Know that the suitors you have not resisted,
They're privy to your every lawless thrill –
They smuggled lovers in and out all night; They must be
silenced, or the beans they'll spill!

– we have Penelope's most incriminating speech, in which she asks

Oh, then, dear Nurse, it's really up to you
Point out those maids as feckless and disloyal,
To save me, and Odysseus' honour too!
Snatched by the suitors as unlawful spoil,
Because he sucked at your now-ancient bust,
Polluted, shameless, and not fit to be
You are the only one of us he'll trust.
The doting slaves of such a Lord as he!

thus making her an accomplice in the maids' hanging, so that she herself "in fame a model wife shall rest" (P, p.151). After this dialogue, the Chorus Line, in tap-dance shoes, recites variations on the same theme in three rhymed quatrains –

Blame it on the maids!
Hang them high and don't ask why –
Those naughty little jades!
Blame it on the maids!

– and curtsy at the end. These parodic quatrains thus foreground Penelope's request to Eurycleia to accuse the maids of disloyalty to Odysseus: naughty little jades, sluts, poxy little scuts, the toys of rogues and slaves.

In this way, the expressive medium of this chapter, "a drama" – in the sense of a play characterized by seriousness or solemnity – is also subverted by Atwood, for, even if the dialogue between Penelope and Eurycleia is marked by seriousness, the fact that the play is presented by slaves, in "common" language, ending with a tap-dance, already eliminates the solemnity of the action presented. In its turn, the tap-dance, as a popular stage dance characterized by the rapid tapping of the toes and heels, grotesquely foreshadows the maids' dance as they are being hanged, and also retrieves, in counterpoint, the "rope-jumping rhyme", when they recite "we danced in air/our

bare feet twitched/it was not fair" demonstrating once more the intimate relation established between content and narrative form.

The two chapters which precede the next presentation by the Chorus reveal other features of feminine alterity and of male dominance. In "Helen Takes a Bath", Penelope remembers her dialogue with Helen, on her way to take her bath, "followed by her customary horde of male spirits, all of them twittering with anticipation" (P, p.153), a scene which retrieves, on the one hand, the idea of a woman who takes off her clothes to attract men by her beauty and, by contrast, the realization that slaves do not bathe and thus were considered dirty: "dirt was our concern, dirt was our business, dirt was our specialty, dirt was our fault", as the maids sing from "Kiddie Mourn, A Lament by the Maids" onwards.

In "Odysseus and Telamachus Snuff the Maids", Penelope recounts what Eurycleia has told her about "the mayhem" that happened while she was sleeping: Odysseus had all the women locked into the women's quarter, watched the suitors fail to string his famous bow and, after getting hold of the bow himself, strung it and shot an arrow through the twelve axes. He then shot Antinous in the throat, threw off his disguise, and made "mincemeat" of every last one of the suitors. Afterwards, he orders Eurycleia to point out the maids who had been "disloyal", who are then forced to haul the dead bodies out into the courtyard, wash the floor and clean the furniture. He then orders Telemachus to "chop the maids into pieces with his sword" but Telemachus, "wanting to assert himself to his father, and to show that he knew better (...) hanged them all in a row from a ship's hawser"(P, p.159), in this way retrieving the Homeric episode.

However, in the sequence of the dialogue between Penelope and Eurycleia, the latter reveals to the queen which were the twelve maids who were hanged: "The impertinent ones. The ones who'd been rude. The ones who used to thumb their noses at me. Melantho of the Pretty Cheeks and her cronies – that lot. They were notorious whores". Penelope's moving comment that the hanged slaves were "the ones who'd been raped (...). The youngest. The most beautiful", and that she considered it her own fault for not having revealed the scheme of the maids' eavesdropping to the old nurse, makes the latter answer defensively that "it wouldn't have done for King Odysseus to allow such impertinent girls to continue to serve in the palace. He could never have trusted them" (P, p.159-60). Her answer clearly indicates that she is dominated by the patriarchal view of her own time while Penelope's prior remark shows once more the underside of the official story narrated in The Odyssey, a side which will be complemented

by "An Anthropology Lecture", which the Chorus Line will now present.

The very title deconstructs the official notion of "Lecture", because it is presented by illiterate slaves, thus conferring on "lecture" the meaning of an informal talk or address before an audience by someone who knows the subject well – in this case, Anthropology. In this lecture, the twelve maids, always answering the audience's questions, speak about what the number twelve "suggests to the educated mind":

> For we were not simply maids. We were not mere slaves and drudges. Oh no! surely we had a higher function than that! Could it be that we were not the twelve maids, but the twelve maidens? The twelve moon-maidens, companions to Artemis, virginal but deadly goddess of the moon? Could it be that we were ritual sacrifices, devoted priestesses doing our part, first by indulging in orgiastic fertility-rite behavior with the Suitors, then purifying ourselves by washing ourselves in the blood of the slain male victims (...) and renewing our virginity, as Artemis renewed hers by bathing in a spring dyed in the blood of Actaeon? (P, p.163-4).

This alternative leads them to conclude that their violation and hanging represent "the overthrow of a matrilineal moon-cult by an incoming group of usurping patriarchal father-god-worshipping barbarians. The chief of them, notably Odysseus, would then claim kingship by marrying the High Priestess of our cult, namely Penelope" (P, p.165-6). Thus, the maids not only confirm their worth by suggesting that they incarnate the twelve moon virgins, raising their violation and hanging to a religious, mythical, cultural dimension ignored by the Homeric narrative, but in simultaneous counterposition they point to Odysseus as a patriarchal usurper, destroyer of "a matrilineal moon-cult", thereby diminishing once more his heroic dimension. They further answer a man's question, denying "that this theory is merely unfounded feminist claptrap", for facts like rape and murder "certainly took place all around the Mediterranean Sea, as excavations at prehistoric sites have demonstrated over and over" (P, p.166), again confirming the credibility of the information given during their presentation.

As a conclusion to the episode of the maids' hanging, Penelope presents, in "Heart of Flint", what happens after Eurycleia's report: it shows her shrewdness as she pretends not to believe that Odysseus

is really Odysseus when she sees him, and, besides, she argues that she needs time "in order to fully disguise my true feelings about the unfortunate hanging of my twelve young maids". For this reason, she is scolded by Telemachus for "not giving a warmer welcome to his father": he calls her "flinty-hearted" (P, p.169). When she finally pretends to recognize him, after Odysseus has passed "the bedroom test" (P, p.171), they tell each other their adventures. But, as she says, both lie. Then Odysseus leaves again, in order "to purify himself" – to avoid the vengeance of the Suitors' ghosts and of their relatives – and to pacify Poseidon, "still furious with him for blinding his son the Cyclops". A "likely story", as Penelope concludes, "but all of his stories were likely" (P, p.174). However, he forgot to purify himself from ordering the slaying of the maids, and therefore he does not avoid their vengeance, which will occur in "The Trial of Odysseus, as Videotaped by the Maids".

The title of the chapter in itself already transports us to the twenty-first-century, as it presents the trial of a Homeric hero videotaped by the slaves, a fact that will be once more confirmed by the judge during the trial. The trial starts with Odysseus' Attorney for the Defence, in a lofty speech, justifying to the judge why his client had murdered a hundred and twenty young men who were devouring his food, harassing his wife and planning to murder Telemachus, for Odysseus had only one opportunity for "self-defence". However, the solemnity of the trial is broken just when the judge is "inclined to agree", for, immediately after the attorney thanks him, the judge asks, in astonishment "What's that commotion in the back?" and cries out "Order! Ladies, stop making a spectacle of yourselves! Adjust your clothing! Take those ropes off your necks! Sit down!". He thus shows his concern with order in the room and with the attire of the maids, who disturb the solemnity of the trial. These "ladies", in their turn, accuse the judge and demand "You've forgotten about us! What about our case? You can't let him off! He hanged us in cold blood! Twelve of us! Twelve young girls! For nothing!" (P, p.177). Even if the maids' intervention, still with the ropes around their necks and with their disheveled clothes, transform the scene into a burlesque, their accusation that they have been ignored by justice remains, for they were killed without having been found guilty.

The Attorney for the Defence, however, answers the judge's question as to what he could have to say in favor of his client, by stating that Odysseus "was acting within his rights (...). These were his slaves", "they'd had sex without permission (...) with my client's enemies" (P, p.178), again characterizing the authority of the male po-

sition and the concept of woman/ slave as peripheral in relation to patriarchy, as much on Odysseus' part as on his own. However, the judge – parodically linking the epic past with the present – consults The Odyssey as "the main authority of the subject", and, specifically, Book 22, and realizes that not only did the Suitors rape them and that "nobody stopped them from doing so", but also that "the maids are described as having been hauled around by the suitors for their foul and/or disgusting purposes" while Odysseus "knew all that", and asks the attorney "Is that correct?". The latter refrains from answering in order to protect his "client", claiming that he was not there, as "all of this took place some three or four thousand years before my time" (P, p.179-180), thereby demonstrating once more the one-sidedness and prejudice of the male position in relation to the maids.

Penelope, however, summoned as a witness, reinforces the maids' accusation as she confirms that they had been raped, adding:

> I knew them well, Your Honour. I was fond of them. I'd brought some of them up, you could say. They were like the daughters I never had. (Starts to weep.) I felt so sorry for them! But most maids got raped, sooner or later; a deplorable but common feature of palace life. It wasn't the fact of their being raped that told against them, in the mind of Odysseus. It's that they were raped without permission (P, p.181).

This is Penelope's most important speech on behalf of the slaves, in which it is not only the bond of affection that tied the queen to the maids that becomes apparent, but also the fact that their rape, such a "common feature" of palace life under the patriarchal system,.only indicted them because they had not received the "permission of their master", a bitter irony which typifies once more their objectal condition.

The fact that the judge ends the trial by siding with the Attorney for the Defence, arguing that "your client's times were not our times. Standards of behavior were different then. It would be unfortunate if this regrettable but minor incident were allowed to stand as a blot on an otherwise exceedingly distinguished career" (P, p.182), reinforces the notion that, for a powerful man, such a "minor" incident as this one – the execution of twelve maids – would not blot his career.

Nevertheless, the maids demand justice and revenge, by invoking the presence of the Furies – twelve Erinyes, with "hair made of serpents, the heads of dogs, and the wings of bats", imploring them to

"inflict punishment and exact vengeance on our behalf! Be our defenders, we who had none in life!". As punishment, they beg them to

> smell out Odysseus wherever he goes! From one place to antoher, from one life to another, whatever disguise he puts on, whatever shape he may take, hunt him down! Dog his footsteps, on earth or in Hades, wherever he may take refuge, in songs and in plays, in tomes and in theses, in marginal notes and in appendices! Appear to him in our forms, our ruined forms, the forms of our pitiable corpses! Let him never be at rest! (P, p.183)

At this climactic moment of the trial, in which the Erinyes turn towards Odysseus with flashing red eyes and the Attorney for the Defence calls on Pallas Athene, Odysseus' protectress, "to defend property rights and the right of a man to be the master in his own house, and to spirit my client away in a cloud!" – in a clear reference to the rights of a man in the patriarchal system – parody again prevails: like a deus ex machina, the sudden appearance of Pallas Athene "kidnaps" Odysseus in a cloud, while the Erynies are barking and hissing from the ceiling. As the judge's baffled answer further confirms –

> What's going on? Order! Order! This is a twenty-first-century court of justice! You there, get down from the ceiling! Stop that barking and hissing! Madam, cover up your chest and put down your spear! What's this cloud doing in here? Where are the police? Where's the defendant? Where has everyone gone? (P, p.184)

– the expressive medium of epic poetry is also once more subverted.

The next presentation of the Chorus Line, "We're Walking Behind You, A Love Song", is preceded by Penelope's last narrative, this time about "Home Life in Hades" and about the rules to follow for he who wishes to be reborn and have "another try at life"(P, p.186): to drink from the Waters of Forgetfulness so that our past lives are wiped from our memories. As an example, she mentions Helen, who always returns and fills Penelope in "on the changes in fashion" and on "how many men she's ruined. Empires have fallen because of her, she's fond of saying"(P, p.187), thereby perpetuating in our time the image of the beautiful, frivolous woman, of the woman-as-object, always using the latest devices of fashion. Penelope, in her turn, does not want to drink from this water. As she comments, "Even with my limited

access I can see that the world is just as dangerous as it was in my day, except that the misery and suffering are on a much wider scale. As for human nature, it's as tawdry as ever" (P, p.188), thus confirming once more, the capacity for judgement of a person who has meditated for centuries on her fate and on the fate of humanity.

However, Odysseus continues to return to the world of the living, for, when Penelope feels that she can "forgive him for everything he put me through and accept him with all of his faults", "off he goes again, making a beeline for the River Lethe to be born again". As she realizes, nonetheless,

> he does mean it. He really does. He wants to be with me. He weeps when he says it. But then some force tears us apart. It's the maids. He sees them in the distance, heading our way. They make him nervous. They make him restless. They cause him pain. They make him want to be anywhere and anyone else. (P, p.189).

For this reason, Odysseus continues to be reborn, either as a French general, a Mongolian invader, a tycoon in America, or a headhunter in Borneo. As the queen adds, "he's been a film star, an inventor, an advertising man. It's always ended badly, with a suicide or an accident or a death in battle or an assassination, and then he's back here again"(P, p.189-90), corroborating, through these vicissitudes, the way vengeance is being carried out and simultaneously the redemption of the maids, which finally takes place, as they pursue him for all eternity. In "We're Walking Behind You, A Love song" (P, p.152-3), they conclude Odysseus' deconstruction:

> You hoo! Mr Nameless! Mr Master of Illusion! (...)We're here too, the ones without names. (...) The ones with the shame stuck onto us by others. (...) The chore girls, the bright-cheeked girls (...) the young bloodscrubbers. Remember us? Of course you do! We brought the water for you to wash your hands, we bathed your feet, (...) we ground your corn, we turned down your cosy bed. You roped us in, you left us dangling like clothes on a line. (...) How virtuous you felt, how righteous, how purified, now that you'd got rid of the plump young dirty dirt-girls inside your head! You should have buried us properly. (...) You should have prayed for our forgiveness. Now you can't get rid of us, wherever you go: in your life or your afterlife or any of your other lives (P, p. 192).

Taking up all their grievances and accusations again, the maids still remind him that they "can see through all his disguises: the paths of day, the paths of darkness, whichever paths you take – we're right behind you (...). We'll never leave you" (P, p.192-3), thus ending their "Love song" to their master and owner: a song that foregrounds once more the parodic subversion of the expressive medium, for while the song as a literary composition is distributed in a series of stanzas with a regular number of verses, this song, like the song of popular origin, is written in prose and dedicated by the maids to their unloved master; and while the classical song should contain a vibrant feeling, in which love, passion or even hatred and vengeance manifest themselves but in which one feels the poet's soul throbbing (Moisés, 1999, p. 70), this song – in which the maids' souls throb, externalizing their hatred and vengeance in relation to Odysseus – caustically inverts the theme of "love" announced in the title.

Furthermore, in the same way that the song as a literary composition culminates in a shorter strophe, which corresponds to the envoi of the ballad, through which the poet dedicates the poem to his beloved or condenses the subject matter of the stanzas, the maids' "Love Song" also ends with a "farewell" – an envoi – a shorter final stanza, culminating with a verse which serves as refrain to the other strophes. Atwood, by giving voice to the maids for the last time, thus makes them send their "farewell" to Odysseus, in three rhymed quintets and a couplet:

> we had no voice
> we took the blame
> we had no name
> it was not fair
> we had no choice
> but now we' re here
> we had one face
> we' re all here too
> one face the same[I]
> the same as you [II]
>
> and now we follow
> you, we find you
> too wit too woo
> now, we call
> too woo [IV] (P, p.195-6)
> to you to you
> too wit too woo [III]

The first stanza returns to the fact that they had no voice, name or choice because of their objectal condition and lack of identity; the second recalls the blame unjustly cast on them because of this same condition, as well as realizing that now all of them were together in Hades, like Odysseus himself, a fact which emphasizes the abolition of cultural and social barriers which separate them from their king and hangman; the third confirms that they follow Odysseus while they call him by imitating the hooting of owls – a bird that symbolizes death, darkness and prophecy, as well as lack of nobility (Vries, 1974, p.353-4), as is the slaves' case. Simultaneously, in the same way that the envoi gradually ends with the hooting of owls, and as the last stage directions mention that "the Maids sprout feathers, and fly away as owls"(P, p.196), it is emphasized that, because they are in Hades, all of them are shadows and therefore have no voice, confirming what Penelope had already stated in "A Low Art" (P, p.4):

> The difficulty is that I have no mouth through which I can speak. I can't make myself understood, not in your world, the world of bodies, of tongues and fingers (...). Those of you who may catch the odd whisper, the odd squeak, so easily mistake my words for breezes rustling the dry reeds, or bats at twilight, for bad dreams.

Retrieved by Atwood, the maids' "odd whispers", which The Odyssey has not made known, are revealed through the hooting of the owls, leading the reader to re-evaluate not only this "minor" and obscure episode of the Homeric epic – as it was Atwood's main objective: to give the telling of the tale to Penelope and to the twelve hanged maids, in order to contest and parodically deconstruct the authority of the prevailing male position and patriarchal system. These "lost whispers" also make the reader realize that Atwood's narrative form also subverts the conventions and the expressive medium of the epic genre, thus reinforcing the impact of the feminine voices which are counterposed to the patriarchal voice of the Odyssey: as they express their indignation and protest against all of the paradigms established by male dominance, which categorized them as women-as-objects – submissive, uncomplaining and without a voice – the Chorus of Maids thus becomes the voice not only of their alterity and of the violence done to them, but, simultaneously and consequently, of their own redemption.

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Notes

1. The translation of texts originally in Portuguese is my own.
2. All other references to this work will be presented as P, followed by the page number of the quotation.
3. Even so, her father ordered her to be thrown into the sea, as he was told by an oracle that she would weave his shroud and he feared the prophecy might become true, thereby reasserting his power as father and king. Her mother, in spite of being beautiful, "was chilly at heart" and often forgot about her. These facts made Penelope learn early the virtues of self-sufficiency, which would be so useful to her later on, when she would still develop her own identity.
4. As Penelope comments on the fact that Helen is the daughter of Zeus, who assumed the shape of a swan to seduce her mother, "the gods couldn't seem to keep their hands or paws or beaks off mortal women, they were always raping someone or other" (P, p.20).

DYNAMICS OF POWER IN THE HANGMAN'S GAME (2007) BY KAREN KING-ARIBISALA

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ABSTRACT: Guyanese King-Aribisala's The Hangman's Game is analyzed from the point of view of power dynamics within the context of Post-colonial Studies. Research work aims at investigating the weakness of the colonizer and the resistance of the slaves in the 1823 Demerara revolt as rewritten in current novel. Concepts by Bhabha, Harris, Appiah, Memmi and Ashcroft are employed to investigate the tensions and the conflictive relationships between the two parties. Results show that the monolithic colonial strategy is imploded by the disclosure of ambivalence of colonial power and by the mimicry and sly civility of the othered subject.

KEYWORDS: Guyana; King-Aribisala; ambivalence; strategies; resistance; post-colonial novel

Wedded to Freedom

There has been no dearth of novels on slavery and its aftermath from the start of academic Cultural Studies and Postcolonial Theory and Literatures in the 1960s with regard to the three continents involved in the traffic. Reflections on past events and present day conditions involving Black peoples and excluded people triggered in-depth historical and fictional representations of conditions reproduced in the present and feared to perpetuate themselves still further. The discussions that ensue fill in the gaps and silences of the past, counterpoints the hegemonic narrative and, more important still, reinterprets historical events. "He who seeks to approach his own past must conduct himself like a man digging. Above all, he must not be afraid to return again and again to the same matter; to scatter it as one scatters earth, to turn it over as one turns over soil. For the 'matter itself' is no more than the layers which yield their long-sought secrets only to the most meticulous investigation" (BENJAMIN, 1978, p. 25).

Slave rebellions and uprisings in the New World were as common as the practice of running away from the white masters and forming Black communities of slaves (quilombo in Brazil; cimarrón in Spanish America). From the 1440s to 1888 when Brazil finally abolished slavery, the freedom movement, albeit dangerous and seriously pun-

ished, was a burdensome leitmotif on the minds of European settlers and invaders (Thomas, 1997; Garraway, 2005). Needless to say, a few Europeans did not accept slavery as a matter of course. "[Samuel Johnson] had always been very zealous against slavery in every form. [...] Upon one occasion, when in company with some very grave men at Oxford, his toast was, 'Here's to the next insurrection of the negroes in the West Indies.' His violent prejudice against our West Indian and American settlers appeared whenever there was an opportunity" (Boswell, 1980, p. 876). Nevertheless, narratives of uprisings by slaves have been a frequent theme in recent South American and especially Caribbean literature. Rebellions have been remembered and highlighted throughout the last fifty years of post-colonial reflection (Carneiro, 1966; Freitas, 1978; Karasch, 2000; Santos Gomes, 2005; James, 2007; Viotti da Costa, 1998).

Emphasis has also been given in literature to an expected parallel neo-colonization milieu after the political independence of many ex-colonies. Colonial bourgeoisie elite, trained by the former European masters, has during the 1960s and 1970s empowered themselves in their now independent countries and started a type of dictatorial regime, thriving on corruption and violence, in which the people were (are) practically considered "slaves". Many countries in Africa have experienced or are still experiencing an oligarchic ruling class swaying violence and maintaining poverty throughout the continent. Fanon (2005) had predicted the scene, while, more recently, Memmi (2007) have compounded it with the overall homogenizing globalization process wrought by U.S. and European politics for the maintenance of a North-South system in which the latter continue to be othered and "enslaved". For instance, Nigeria, one of the economically and culturally richest countries in Africa, has been in such a situation since its independence from Britain in 1960. While the Biafra War ravished the country and threatened the political stability of the nation, coup after coup has beleaguered the country ever since (Benson & Conolly, 1994). Current relationships between globalized capitalism and dependence have been dealt with in post-colonial fiction in the context of a single country: Jamaica Kincaid and Marina Warner respectively in A Small Place and Indigo have criticized rich countries of re-colonizing the Caribbean through tourism, devastation of the ecology and the servant system. Guyana-born Karen King-Aribisala goes further. The Hangman's Game (2007) spans two countries (British Guiana and Nigeria), two periods (1823 and late 1990s), and two events (the Demerara slave uprising and the heroic resistance to authoritarian rule in Nigeria) and interweaves the British Guiana

slave colony and Nigerian military dictatorship. The Guyanese novel may be a metonymy of the workings of power relationships still extant in current history.

The fabula and literary status of The Hangman's Game

The Hangman's Game is the story of a fictitious female Guyana writer whose aim is to see "why slavery, the slave trade, occurred in the first place [...] and to know why God allowed it" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 10). To this end, she intends to write a novel on the 1823 Demerara slave revolt and moves to Nigeria for research. She has three things on her mind: a cast of characters, the 1823 Demerara slave revolt and the nursery rhyme "Three Blind Mice". Within the context of a current pregnancy, the impact of death by hanging of a Nigerian poet friend by the ruling dictator (perhaps respectively the poet Ken Saro-Wiwa and general Sani Abacha) and a coup attempt, the narrator begins to write her hypodiegetic novel with seven "characters" of the 1823 Demerara slave uprising: John Smithers (the historical Rev. John Smith), Mary (the little known Jane Godden), Quamina (same namesake), Rosita, Governor Murrain (the historical Gov. John Murray), Auntie Lou and Captain McTurkeyen (the historical mayor Michael McTurk), twinned to seven "characters" in Nigeria with practically the same functions (for instance, Murrain's counterpart is the dictator Butcher Boy). It should be emphasized that in 1823 some 80,000 people lived in Demerara, of whom 75,000 were slaves distributed throughout the plantations, and 2500 were white, half of them living in Georgetown. The Demerara revolt was at first successful but later vanquished by British soldiers with their superior weapons, contrary to the Nigerian counter coup. The Negro slave Quamina was hanged and the white pastor John Smith, accused of being the instigator of the revolt, was condemned to death by hanging but died in prison before knowledge of having received pardon from the King. However, Murrain and Butcher Boy survive, albeit not in power anymore. Only fiction makes them harmless. The "colonial" othering hierarchization system is still very much alive, even though the birth of the narrator's new baby heralds hope and a new beginning.

The Hangman's Game is a typical post-modern novel with self-reflexivity on the writing of fiction and the permeability between historical and contemporary events. Although the narrator is aware that the characters in her hypodiegetic novel are rebellious, her endeavour to control (a key word throughout the novel) them does not seem to be easy: she wants to analyze slavery in Guyana and tries to make

use of the main characters in the historical Demerara uprising to clarify the deep reasons for slavery. Difficulties abound because of the ambiguous features (Mary's trust and jealousy; John's faith and infidelity; the Governor Murrain's personal hilariousness and firm stand on colonialism) of each and every character – these running parallel to "real life" in Nigeria. The hypo-narrative of the Demerara slave revolt, titled Three Blind Mice, is divided into three parts of very unequal length, namely, "Three Blind Mice", "See how they run" and "Sight", and dependent on the main narrative of the fictitious Guyana author's narration of her prolonged sojourn in Nigeria and intercalated by events in that African country. In fact, the Peepal Tree edition uses two print types: the bold font for the fictional recounting of the Demerara revolt (hypodiegetic narrative); normal font for the "current" episodes in Nigeria (diegetic narrative), held together by the apparently absurd "childish" play of Hangman's Game with its conclusive word CONTROL and by the recurring nursery rhyme "Three Blind Mice". Moreover, there are variegated hypo-narrations, ranging from stream-of-consciousness to heterodiegetic narration, "controlled" by the female narrator. All these factors affect the narrative with their concomitant absurdity, playfulness, sense of foolishness, seriousness, embodying the ambiguous stances of revolts and the split subjects involved.

Although King-Aribisala's novel exposes the persistence of imperial and colonial practices well into the 21st century through the metonymy of dictatorship in Nigeria and insists on the durability of imperial ideologies, under the guise of globalization, current essay intends to limit itself to the hypodiegetic rewriting of the 1823 Demerara revolt and the ensuing power dynamics within the slave system, the ambivalence of colonial power and the political strength of unarmed violence, mimicry and sly civility within the colonial context.

Torture and power

Torture and death are recurrent events in a slave society and The Hangman's Game is no exception. The novel teems with administration-sponsored torture (the beheading of Quamina and the exhibition of his head on a spike for all to see; John Smithers's martyrdom in the dungeon; the hunting, whipping and massacre of fugitive slaves; the hanging of the Nigerian poet; the killing of the Nigerian "Quamina" by Butcher Boy), sarcastic torture (McTurkeyen's rape of a black girl; Gov. Murrain's ritual pissing in Auntie Lou's presence and his satisfaction in observing the latter scrubbing the stairs of the colonial residence) and personal torture (Mary's inconsequential cutting of

Rosita's hair). The above events bring to the fore the important relationship between torture, domination and dehumanization. Whilst in the case of the victim, torture is the total violation of the self's integrity and the unwanted transformation of the person into pure flesh, for the torturer it means the absolute denial of a human system which grants life, abolishes pain and does not legitimize extermination (Améry, 1980). Intertwined with the consequent resistance to "the colonial present" (Gregory, 2004), torture has been the essence of colonial and post-colonial violence by which, respectively, the slaves and "Third World" peoples are shown to be unqualified as full members of humanity, and conceived as a kind of üntermenschen. On the other hand, the torturer feels outside the rule of law and unbound by any humanitarian obligation to the other. However, the torturer does so in colonial outposts and on the outskirts of "civilization", but not within the confines of the metropolis (Hersch, 2004). Aggressive humanism (underlying "the white man's burden") pits against "brutes" so that its imperial violence could be justified. Perhaps this is the glaring truth in Said's phrase on being "critical of humanism in the name of humanism" (Said, 2004, p. 10). Further, the torturer's aim is not the seeking of truth but the imposition of ideology on resistant bodies and discourses. The consequence is deep distrust in any discourse of power and a belief in the suffering victim's eloquence, or rather, the start of a new morality: "Pain is truth; all else is subject to doubt" (Coetzee, 1982, p. 5).

Total control of the slaves was the colonial policy of the white masters in the Demerara. Murrain had the "power of death in his governing hand" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 23) and prohibited all intellectual development and consciousness-raising, especially teaching the slaves to read and write. The white plantation owners suspected the missionaries of inciting the slaves to revolt. According to the contemporizing (fictional) Rev. John Wray, the missionary had to be at "service to King George and the British Empire and to the Big Man himself, Governor Murrain" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 78) by holding one's tongue and keeping one's views to oneself. In fact, the first clash of opinion occurred during an informal conversation between the Governor and John Smithers when the former objected that the new pastor dispatched the slaves from his household and the latter insisted in accomplishing "God's mission here to the best of my ability" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 86). A racist discourse followed ending with the high-brow statement: "I, as Governor of this colony, will not permit any change in the regulations, Christianity or no Christianity, God or no God" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 87). In his "us – them"

distinction, the Governor produced the Negro slave as the "other": the blacks belonged to a species different from that of the European race and their unique role was to work and serve the white man. The conclusion reached by Hume (1993) and Jefferson (1904), even within the Enlightenment period, that Negroes were naturally inferior to the whites, was repeated by Murrain. Further, the premises underlying the three-fold accusations brought forth during the trial, namely, teaching the slaves to read and write, work on Sundays, and the distribution of abolition-inciting papers, involved the complete othering of the Negro slaves and their debasement to the class of non-humans. The prosecutor produced a framework of alterity by stereotyping the Negro as indolent, slothful and lazy, animal, chattel, disobedient, savage heathen, needing protection and civilization, ignorant and lacking intelligence. Underpinning by spurious Biblical and theological interpretations ("Sons of Ham"; "If God did not approve of slavery, it would not exist", King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 86-87; "Did not Apostle Paul send Onesimus, a slave who stole his master's goods and ran away from him, back to his master Philemon and to slavery once more", King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 146) reinforced cultural hierarchization by the "racial epidermal schema" (Fanon, 1967, p. 112; Bhabha, 1994, p. 78) which, in its turn, gave full power to the white man within global production to his own benefit and the metropolis.

Perhaps harking back to Behn's Oroonoko, torture (selling included), rape, killing and dismembering of slaves are described in King-Aribisala's novel as the reducing of the human person to mere flesh. The narrator's account of the rape and death of a nameless Negro girl by McTurkeyen illustrates the European's concept of the sheer instrumentality of othered persons (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 160). Further, Auntie Lou's stream of consciousness during the funeral procession reveals the dehumanization process through which black people are denied their right to think and feel. In fact, the transformation of "the slaves into men" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 146) is the main and most serious accusation against Smithers. This statement implies the Negroes' object status fabricated by the white man and the blindness of the colonial master to perceive the subject-subject status of all human beings. The recurring theme of blindness in the novel partially refers to the colonial authorities' absolute lack of any openness towards the other, defined by Harris (1989) as "illiterate imagination." It's antidote is the "miracle of roots, the miracle of a dialogue with eclipsed selves which appearances may deny us or into which they may lead us" (Harris, 1973, p. 47).

Lack of openness did not merely affect the humanity and culture

of the slaves but also affected any white man who dared subvert the colonial ideology. The white people's reading of Smithers's words that "everyone is His servant, His slave" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 85) and that "we, mankind, created slavery. God provides us with liberation as He did with the Israelites of old" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 87) is actually thought to be the implosion of the slave institution, the erasure of colonial authority and the subsequent bankruptcy of the British economical structures. Disregarding the pastor's "white buckra" and "religion" status, the colonial authorities reduced John Smithers, qua protector of the slaves, to an object with no rights and prerogatives. "Under my nose they cut my John into little pieces, with his spent body and his racking cough. [They put him] in a cell with no windows, the floorboards gaping to release the stench of water gone stale and putrid" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 24). Even though the white man theoretically denied the humanity of the Negro, in practice he knew their possibilities if they were given any chance of competing with him intellectually or physically. That is why they were merciless with those, black or white, who "actively resist[ed] being fully integrated into a group" (Appiah, 2005, p. 110) and refused towing the line. Shunning to be integrated within the "colonial club" and accepting to intermediate the humanization process of the slaves through literacy and Christian principles, made him different from his predecessor and from all the white colonizers in Demerara. John was "identified" with the rebellious slaves and thereby condemned to death. John was condemned not only because he went beyond the philosophy of his time that the so-called "primitives" would reach, on their own terms, the top of the so-called civilization, but because he was Biblically and a priori convinced that all men were equal and endowed with the same rights.

Female power

Mary, the white female

The first sub-section (of the first part) deals with the funeral of Rev. John Smithers and its cortege, composed of Mary Smithers (John's wife), Rosita (slave Quamina's wife and alleged lover of John) and Auntie Lou (Govt. Murrain's concubine and servant). The diegetic Guyana-born female narrator makes the British-born Mary Smithers give a bird's-eye view of the accusation, judgment, sentence and funeral of John Smithers and opine on these events in the slave colony of Demerara. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries white women were starting to travel along with their husbands, sometimes alone, to the tropical British colonies. Although hierarchized with regard

gender, they had an anti-conquest role (Pratt, 1992) through which they surveyed the land and inscribed European presence. Unaware of the male-female metonymy to which these women were subjected, their worlding of the uncanny environment is underpinned by a subject-object stance and represents the metropolis-colony binarism. Mary's opinion of the colonial and mission territory of British Guiana is highly derogatory. She compares it to the familiar English landscape and finds British Guiana wanting: "wretched hole of a place"; "harsh parchment of a colony"; "a wilderness"; "hot stone tower of this tropical life"; "prison"; "untamed land"; "the Fall"; a "godforsaken place" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 25-6). Whereas she perceives the strangeness of the Amerindians, she comments that the Negroes are more dangerous still: they are liars ("Those slaves – Paris, Bristol, Aggie – who swore on oath that John planned the insurrection," King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 31) and mischief-making obeahs ("Rosita is responsible for the loss of my daughter," King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 27). Not only does the "too possessive" Mary unjustly blame the half-breed Rosita for John's imprisonment and death, but tortures her by giving her absurd orders, cutting her long hair and slapping her on the face. It seems that the white Mary equates the "creamy-white" Rosita to the Demerara and violates her subjectivity as she would have liked to objectify the slave population. Mary's actions to the colony and to the slaves may be likened, mutatis mutandis, to McTurkeyen's rape of the slave girl.

Further, Mary Smithers passes judgment on the males (John, Quamina and Murray) involved, calling them blind, and attributes to the women a more correct evaluation of the social and political situation in the Demerara. "The three of us who wanted the freedom of a living life for all. But we had to struggle with our men who were blind. If only they had waited, if only they could have seen as I saw ... things could have turned out ..." (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 21). The above is merely Mary's opinion as a white lady in the colony and not shared by the slave women. Although not in favour of slavery, Mary never emits an opinion against it. The misjudgement that the fictional Mary Smithers accounts on the males seems to have been historically started by a conversation that Quamina, the slave deacon of Bethel Chapel, had with Rev. John Smith on July 1823. Quamina asked Smith whether Gov. Murray had received orders to free the slaves and whether the vital decision had been deliberately postponed by the white slave-owners. In fact, Lord Bathurst, the British Colonial Secretary, had sent instructions for the improvement of slave conditions but not the edict of emancipation. Although John Smith denied

the rumours brought forth by Quamina, the slaves were erroneously convinced that the important correspondence referred to the abolition of slavery. On the 18th August 1823 they rebelled and two days later were defeated by the colonial militia. Quamina was beheaded, John was given a death sentence by hanging for indirectly inciting the revolt ("'Teach the slaves to read, [...] reach them from parts of the Bible which let them feel all men are equal in the sight of God, [...] and you teach them revolt"' (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 23), and Murray was recalled to London for condemning a white person in a predominantly black society.

Mary Smithers insists that the men were wrong. Even if Quamina is "wooed [...] to the freedom of the slaves" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 48), she says that Auntie Lou instinctively and logically corroborates her opinion that the time is not ripe. "Auntie Lou had said a revolt would have to have superior weapons, superior to that of the buckras. They had to be organized. Any rebellion would have to be organized" (KING-ARIBISALA, 2007, p. 49). Regarding John, Mary vouches for his innocence, albeit rumours of the rebellion were known. "John, if only you had listened to our eyes. To our vision" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 22). Although in the novel John is more socially and politically minded than his contemporizing predecessor, Rev. John Wray, the fabricated evidence of John's planning the slave rebellion is questioned by Mary. Mary's evidence in court on her husband's activities is shunned by Murrain, the "buckras" and the court authorities, who refuse to see that John is a well-intentioned, martyr-like figure. The slap that Mary gives Govt. Murrain after the latter has imparted to her the King's pardon is not motivated by any qualms about the debacle of the slave rebellion but by purely personal feelings against the man who condemned John to death and deprived her of her husband.

The nursery rhyme "Mary, Mary, quite contrary" that ushers Mary in the narrative and which she herself remembers at John's burial may be evoking the ambiguity brought about by the 16th century royal namesake who was responsible for many Protestant martyrs. Although it seems that Mary Smithers, as a white woman, is insensitive to the slave institution, black slave labour and their dire need for subjectivity, the narrator refuses to blame her outright and tries to show her to be a conflicted character. In fact, Mary as an intriguing and ambiguous character foregrounds the complexity of the slave system in which common people got involved. The narrator does not condemn her for her reluctant acceptance in accompanying her husband-pastor to the "godforsaken" Demerara and in John's dismissal of the slaves allotted to them in the parish house. When she agrees

with the Governor on "subversive attitudes" (preaching, teaching to read and write) against the British colonial system, no anathemas are issued. On the other hand, she is described as a loving person, filled with compassion, dedicated to her husband, eager to have a child – tender feelings which she does not impart to the slaves. On her return to England and considered mentally deranged, she devotes her life to the care of orphans from the London slums. This humanization of Mary lies in stark contrast to the dehumanizing portrait presented by the narrator when the white woman sheared the female slave's hair. King-Aribisala, therefore, subscribes neither to a monster-like image of white people, as abolition literature was want to do, nor to a simplified and homogenized type of travellers who, with their anti-conquest imperial eyes, objectified natives. Similar to Caryl Phillips who also deals with the slave system in his novels, she rather prefers not to repeat the one-sided view of people who, in one way or another, supported slavery. In fact, she reveals a more complicated character different from that given in streamline discourse.

Auntie Lou, the black female

The network created by 58-year-old Auntie Lou, the Negro female slave, ranges from attendance to sick slaves and pregnant women, to the status of servant and "comfort woman" in Murrain's house, to participation in the Quamina-organized rebel movement. If there is a subversive voice in subalternity, it must be Auntie Lou's voice, both in ideas and in the Creole code used, which is perhaps more damaging to male and white hegemony represented in fiction.

In her stream of consciousness during John's burial Auntie Lou subjectifies herself by criticizing the three main characters in the 1823 Demerara slavery revolt and calls them blind to the issues brought about by the endemic slaver system. Her statement that "he in realize what he up against" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 55) brings to the fore not only John's inability to measure the white men's strong reaction to any intervention for the abolition of slavery but also his lack of perception with regard to the deep contradiction between the tenets of Christianity, slavery and the freedom proposed by the Gospel. The alien creed of Christianity heralds "freedom" to the Negro population but fails to question the liberty-less society instituted by a Christian Eurocentric political regime.

Governor Murrain is criticized by Auntie Lou because of his hubris which causes such blindness of reason that he and all the white plantation owners fail to perceive, on the one hand, the terrible injustice meted to Negroes and, on the other, that the development of

capitalism and the Industrial Revolution would turn slavery into an extinct labour system.

> Stupid white man. All pouf pouf with he big belly and he red face. Is so when you play great. He forget he just the Govna and he think he God. [...] He always want to make you crawl on you belly so he could play great. Of all the men in this blasted colony, he want to play great with me. Is so all the buckra stay. (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 56)

Murrain's hubris (and Europeans' in general) comprises the objectification of Negroes through sex ("They will take down they pants and have it with any black skirt what catch they eye"), race ("then they goin' turn round and start cussing you for being black"), servitude ("That man treat me like animal all these years") so that the slave system and the hierarchization of populations may be perpetuated. Further, denying any metropolitan communications on slave manumission ("[...] first shout he hear of we taking we freedom the King give we and he want to kick me in the behind", King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 56) indicates his blindness on the stubborn and anti-historical continuation of slave labour within the British Empire.

In spite of the fact that Auntie Lou is a slave in the household of the Demerara governor, her subjectivity and autonomy are indicative of how subaltern females may overturn the balance of power. Her self-appraisal in the determination on issues of life, death and work, in her power of persuasion to prevent slave family separation and in her courage in facing authorities in the colony is surprising. This is brought about by helping black mothers in giving birth to numerous progeny (through her midwifery) and by sexual intimacy with the governor. The latter may seem to be another instance of colonial servility but for the fact that it reveals the colonizer's fragility and ambiguous self. The governor's ritual of the chamber pot makes the slave woman perceive that colonial authority is a fabrication and a construct, that colour is a flimsy argument to other and hierarchize black people, and that almost insignificant things (giving a glass of water and scrubbing the stairs, for instance) may subvert the white man's colonial control. "Auntie had smiled, seeing in the Governor the man" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 60). From Auntie Lou's point of view, the revolt should not be an armed rebellion ("Auntie Lou had said a revolt would have to have superior weapons, superior to that of the buckras", King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 49) but a subtler, non-violent one. The narrator remarks that "[i]t was [...] for the relative freedom the Governor's

slaves enjoyed on the plantation. It would provide a platform for the liberty to come" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 61).

Auntie Lou's revolt may be delineated by her deep invectives when the question of religion and its symbols are dealt with. "She glanced at the big black Bible, which Mary in her anguish had left behind. There it was, on the ground. She picked it up; making a fist, she thumped it. She threw it down; she kicked it out of the way" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 56). Ever since the birth of the New World the Eurocentric Christian faith has been one of the main colonial strategies for the submission of Indoamericans and Africans (Castro, 2007). Besides the lip service paid to liberation and transformation, the imposed religion partakes of the ecclesiastical and political imperialist domination of European powers. If many Negro slaves complied with the tenets of the new religion, others were deeply aware of its alienating presumptions. In her stream of consciousness triggered by the fallen Bible, Auntie Lou questions God's wisdom and design in creating a beautiful world and, at the same time, making the colonizer who marred and turned upside down the orderly flow of creation. "You make a garden out here for we. We got flower and nice thing...then you bring in the snake...What for?" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 63). The challenge that these two paradoxical factors provoke brings about the subjectivity of the Negro slave. Her female empowerment produced by increasing the number of Negroes ("And ah going birth so many pickney them, you going see," King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 63) and her awareness that the superiority exhibited by white people has a feeble standing, devoid of any meaning, and that people, Black and white, females and males, are equal in dignity, are positive tools for her revolt.

> I know the Govna. I know the King. I know all the buckra then when you piss. I know they does piss. [...] You does pass wind. It smell. You does belch. You like women them. You like me. But I know. You does piss...and every time I see you piss I get strong, man. I get strong. Woman get strong". (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 64)

Through a non-violent intervention, seeped in sly civility, the slave's control of master is guaranteed not by weapons but by the use of timing and the word. The term "control", the final solution of the narrator's Hangman's Game, is a constant in the narrative. On the surface it may mean the white colonisers' manipulation of the slaves in plantation labour and in their delaying tactics with regard to their

freedom. However, control, aiming at the utopia that "This Demerara going to be free" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 63), seems to be more efficient in the slave's hand. Auntie Lou's persuasive petition to Murrain not to sell Samuel (and break up Aggie's family), her almost threatening aside to Murrain in his discussion with John on the latter's religious mission and her intervention in John's trial are instances of subjectivity as a slave and of female power as a woman.

The latter episode may be summarized as the subaltern's recovery of voice, both as a slave and as a woman. It starts with a parody of the triumphal hymn "Onward Christian soldiers," intercalated by the Governor's threats and the prosecutor's impatient asides. She ridicules the court's oath by asking whether she is to swear to God or to the Governor (the latter making himself equal to the deity) and walking upright to the Governor-Judge's seat, in a gesture of African identity, she doffs her head bandana and faces the white colonizers. She accuses the white colonizers, the British, of all people, of a trial vitiated by prejudgment, corrupted witnesses and lack of proofs. Auntie Lou also indicts the authorities of torturing black people, high treason and underestimating Negro intelligence. Marginalized people recover their subjectivity when they overcome the inferiority stance and the blame complex inscribed by the oppressing colonizing system. In this process they emulate the power they are entitled to with regard to their life, work and family. The perception of autonomy is immediately processed in the subaltern when the mask of white authority is removed and its superiority revealed to be a figment. Although identity as an African subject is the result, the recovery of the female identity is profounder still since it affects the doubly colonized person. Auntie Lou becomes a metonymy of Black empowerment when she faces not only patriarchy ("She had never seen so many buckra in one place at one time," King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 150) and colonialism ("I don't fear you buckra. Governor, King George, prosecutor...not one of all you," King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 151), but especially when she asserts the constitution of the colonial subject. "I don't fear you. [...] I been laughing at all you. You in know that this going be last slave revolt this Demerara going see. [...] I know slavery over and I free" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 152). The scene of the expelled obeah slave from the court premises, her haughty attitude and her disdainful act of spitting in the dust foregrounds the discursive and non-violent intervention that subalterns have on their hands that will guarantee their subjectivity.

The conclusion reached by Ashcroft (2001) that intervention and its subtler revolutionary tools have more lasting effects than armed

insurrection is confirmed by the female slave's position-taking. Owing to the destabilization caused by her flight from the governor's house when Murrain received the King's order to return immediately to England as punishment for his incompetence in the colonial administration, or rather, when he most needed her, the narrator revealed that intervention, albeit non-violent, is a positive act of subjectivity. This may be confirmed by her power to trigger a remote-controlled sickness and the death of her dismissed master when on board the ship to England. "Auntie Lou stabs the rat and she cuts off its tail. The Governor writhes. The ship's doctor dips into his black bag and puts some smelling salts to the Governor's nose" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 179). The obeah's words are not mere wishes. A leitmotif in Guyanese (for instance, Koko Lupi's beans and Father Napier's derangement, in Pauline Melville's The Ventriloquist's Tale) and Caribbean fiction (Christophine in Jean Rhys's Wide Sargasso Sea), they signify real events. "You in going piss in London. In England you in going piss. Like you piss on we with your control of we, I gon fix you piss" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 64).

Rosita's sly civility and seduction

The "creamy-white" half-breed Rosita, Auntie Lou's daughter (perhaps by Murrain), wife to Quamina and mother of three children, is introduced and given by Murrain to the Smithers when they arrive at his house for the birthday dinner. An immediate, albeit mute, intercourse occurs between John and Rosita and the servant-girl is admitted in the pastor's household. A deep distrust on Mary's part ensues with the latter's obsession with regard to Rosita's alleged allurements. She controls Rosita's sexual appeals by degrading the Negro woman to the point of giving her absurd (taking off her clothes) and contradictory (invite her to her room and expelling her from it) orders and violating her body by sheering her long hair. Further, on the sly, Mary gives Rosita dangerous papers (Wilberforce's speeches on the abolition of slavery) that would be fatal if found in the hands of slaves. Although it was she who gave the pamphlets to Quamina, in court John was accused of personally handing the papers to Quamina and thus inciting him to rebel against the slave institution and the white colonizers. The prosecutor's lie and the accusation brought tears to her eyes since she knew that the white man would be condemned. In her stream of consciousness Mary shuns the presence of Rosita even at the funeral, unjustly accusing her of bringing John's death. "Why did I allow Rosita to come here? If it hadn't been for her...If it hadn't been for them" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 164).

Rosita's role in slave policy seems to the silent implosion of the colonial monolithic basis of supposed higher morality. Priests and pastors arrived in the New World with the European invaders and endeavoured not merely to preach the Gospel but, in a special way, to sustain the theological premises of Europe's right to save the heathen from their religious backwardness and announce their salvation. Little did the members of the religious orders accompanying Columbus, Cabral, Pizarro, Cortes, Vespucci and other adventurers give a moment's thought to the great cultural upheaval they were provoking with the introduction of Christianity. Even less was their successors' concern when they witnessed thousands of Africans uprooted from their villages and implanted in the Caribbean, South America and southern United States. The certainty of the Christian religion imposed on the colonial subjects and the monolithic stance this ensued, however, produced deep representations of the priest/pastor as God's spokesman and, at the same time, introduced subversive elements in the relationships. John Smithers, sent to the Demerara by the London Missionary Society, was not a mere servant of the Church but a conscientious "man of the cloth" who wanted to undertake, against great social odds, a good job in the evangelization of the slaves. The convictions of his faith, the responsibility of the flock and his integrity in marriage constructed a monolithic, albeit controversial figure in the Demerara social and political environment. It was the half-breed Rosita's mission to cause a fissure in the centre of coloniality. Rosita's gaze on John does not seem to have the objectifying qualifications common in male-female relationships; nevertheless, the man's integrity was shaken.

> Rosita, who had been standing still, her eyes fixed on the floor, raised her head and looked directly into John's eyes. She saw their blue-grey earnestness. She saw the firm jaw, the neck clothed in rounds of white cloth in a stylish cravat; she saw the aquiline nose, the face so lean and ascetic it made her want to reach out and touch. She saw the burnished red of fiery orange hair moving rebelliously over a white forehead and she looked away, enchanted. John was the first to speak. To be tempted so soon. 'If you insist, Sir' (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 85-86).

Seeped in the rituals of African-Caribbean lore ingrained in the obeah concept, the gaze "enchants" the white missionary who is overwhelmed by its power. It is commonplace knowledge that the main

obstacle to hybridism was the white man's innate fear of "going native", losing distinctiveness and superiority by mixture with native genes and practices (Torgovnik, 1990; Ashcroft et al., 1998). This is especially the case when the white man is not merely British but also a 'man of the cloth' (Loomba, 1998, p. 111). However, the touch, the corrosive stain brought about by hybridity, causes the pastor's ambivalence and the subaltern's gaze provides the consciousness of the colonizer's tool being used to implode the centre. Following the 'logical' sequence of the female gaze's power and the white man's blindness of reason (the âte of Greek tragedy), the unique furtive meeting between John and Rosita, John's gaze and touch, the struggle with temptation, the remembrance of social distance in between, Rosita's seduction through tenderness, humility and femininity, John's disguised remonstrance and deep guilt shatter his colonial superiority and hegemonic stance.

> He waited for her to speak, mesmerized by her grace as she sat in a semblance of composed reading. She had not given him the means to sublimate his longing. He was fascinated by her as never before. He walked to her stool and surprised himself with a swoop of the head and a burning mouth which left a kiss on hers. A kiss on her mouth; an embrace in his arms which enriched her as she claimed his mouth (King-Aribisala, 2007, p.106).

Similar to what occurred to Auntie Lou, in the secular milieu, when she discovered the common humanity of Murrain, Rosita immediately perceives, within the religious context, that the awe-inspiring monolithism, characterized by John's redoubtable and inflexible quality, is a figment of Eurocentrism to maintain the slaves under the religious law and, as a direct consequence, under the dictates of imperialism. Rosita's sly civility, therefore, is an exact replica of Aunt Lou's strategy in colonial subversion. Knowing the colonizers' superior weaponry, the females immediately perceive that firearms and insurrections only brought massacres, whippings and sufferings. "Quamina had failed in his first attempt at revolt. His back was whipped to shreds and his fingers squeezed with iron clamps until the bones broke and his fingers left misshapen" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p.50). Their subversive method corroded hegemony and revealed the weakness of colonial power and refracted it by bring Eurocentric people to sheer human conditions. Hybridity and ambivalence, therefore, challenge the dynamics of colonial stance and brings to the fore

the power of the colonial native's duplicity. This fact is corroborated by events produced by the colonized subject whose power influences events to such an extent that the supremacy of the white man is annihilated. The prosecutor's allegation that the incriminating papers (printed issues of British abolitionists' speeches in Parliament) were passed by John to Quamina reveals the dichotomy of colonial power shattered by two opposing poles, or rather, one in favour of the slaves and the other in favour of the maintenance of slavery.

Armed Intervention

Why does King-Aribisala put the courageous Quamina somewhat out of the limelight? The historical Quamina was born in Africa and brought to Guiana as a child together with his mother who died in Demerara in 1817. Quamina was the resident carpenter in Success Plantation, married the free woman Peggy (who died in 1822) and was already a deacon in Wray's and Smith's Church. In fact, he became one of the most assiduous and favoured Christians in the community and the intermediary between the slaves and their pastor. In 1823 Quamina received news that London had despatched the prohibition of whipping slaves and the incentive to receive religious instruction, maintain family life without any family separation by selling and other topics favouring slave conditions. These contemporizing dispatches seem to have produced the myth that the Demerara slaves were free and that the British plantation owners wanted to keep the news a secret so that the slaves would continue their work. On the 25th July 1823 Quamina asked the Pastor Smith whether such news had in fact arrived; the pastor replied that the rumours were false. Things came to a head and the slaves were thinking that the British plantation owners had lied. Although the rebellion was prepared without the participation of females, males and females fought for their freedom. Due to sheer numbers and weapons the plot failed. Quamina took refuge in the forest and died fighting. Quamina's body was quartered on the 17th September, 1823 (Viotti da Costa, 1998).

In King-Aribisala's novel, Quamina is already dead. The novel brings to the fore the three different instances in which imperial control was disobeyed: running away and brought back by McTurkeyen; receiving the abolition-inciting papers; leading the Demerara slave revolt. As may be surmised, in all instances the absolute power of the colonial regime was merciless both to him and to his accomplices. Following Arendt's philosophy (1970), against Fanon's (2005), Ashcroft (2001) analyzes the two modalities of colonial revolt and brings arguments for unarmed resistance: political results are

more solid and enduring. He advocates for transformation since "post-colonial societies cannot avoid the effects of colonization. [...] The effects of imperial culture are a form of capital – neutral in itself but politically potent in its possibilities – acquired and utilized in the negotiation of post-colonial cultural transformation" (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 44). Although in the fiction under analysis Auntie Lou calls the men who planned the Demerara rebellion blind mice, Quamina may be seen as a slave who partook of both strategies for his and his communities' freedom.

Flight from the plantation and thus refusing to work for the European masters is one of the most conspicuous transformation strategies since it heralds the formation of black communities and the restoration of African culture, language and religion within its environment. Unarmed, Quamina's first flight produced the vision of freedom when he saw the vast landscape of Guiana with its mountain ("The living rock and the silent patience of earth beneath," King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 94) and its Amerindian inhabitants living in freedom. Needless to say, the freedom of the Amerindian was actually a mirage owing to the greed of the white man who would put to nought their lands and forests. It was a utopian society that runaway Negro slaves could construct for themselves shunning all white interference.

After being captured and whipped the transformation strategy was once more implemented by Quamina through the teaching of literacy to slaves.

> He made it his business to attend the sick beds of those with smallpox in the company of Auntie Lou. Many a night, with or without a pass, he sat with Auntie Lou talking and talking. He and the men would gather in her cabin. Sometimes he would interpret in his own Quamina way, sections of the Bible John Smithers preached from. It was the only time a smile puckered his lips (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 50)

Community building (Kuznets, 1982) among slaves, approaching their tortured bodies, nursing the diseases contracted from the white man counteracted against the destruction of the indigenous culture, including the family life, brought about by empire building in which Murrain and the other European landowners were doing. Further, at great risks, Quamina specifically targeted the males who were systematically instructed. Literacy and slave instruction were actually

the most important objections that slave owners brought against the pastors and other educated people not only in Guiana but in all places where slaves worked. Reading and writing meant power, consciousness-raising and, therefore, a high probability of revolt. This type of non-violent intervention was accomplished by the study of the Bible. As may be seen in the text above, Quamina re-interpreted John's preaching and intervened in the slaves' decolonization and in their convictions against slavery. Even though John had a rather Christian favourable view of the slaves as human persons, albeit not revolutionary, he never condemned the British policy on slavery and his interventions were harmless. Quamina's mimicry was much more effective on the slave's behaviour. His interpretation of the Bible, although following the pastor's glosses, seems to be much more to the point on the question of slavery, refuting the white man's justification, insisting on the aberration of European buying Africans and denouncing the Christian faith as a pacifying strategy for the maintenance of the inhumane regime and of helping the demolition of African culture and religion. Quamina's mimicry through preaching, therefore, "locates a crack in the certainty of colonial dominance, an uncertainty in its control of the behaviour of the colonized" (Ashcroft et al., 1998, p. 139). Such mimicry is equivalent to Auntie Lou's abrogation of English in her discourses and in her feigned acquiescence to Murrain's demands. Quamina's interpretation of the master narrative represented by John's preaching boils down to the generation of the seeds of colonial destruction.

Resorting to armed revolt was the ringleader Quamina's last resource in slave resistance. Even the much discussed violence in Fanon (2005) has to be analyzed not only in the context of the atrocities and sufferings of colonial Algerians but also as a last resort only tolerated owing to the stubborn refusal of the French colonizer quitting invaded territory (Frazer; Hutchings, 2006; Gibson, 2003; Martin, 2004). Since Fanon know the inhumanity of violence and its widespread repercussions, Gibson (2003, p. 204-205) remarks that "Fanon's insistence on bringing 'invention into existence' and to imagine a future is in fact a concrete response to the thread-bare technical economic authoritarianism of structural adjustment, the grim reaper which continues to haunt the continent." In Quamina's case, when the rebellion was headway, there was no way back. No relief occurred within the violence that ensued on both sides (burning of houses, killing of white people, flight of the white ladies in carriages, black people murdered fighting to the end). The deliverance plan of the Israelites and the abandonment of Egypt were forsaken since no deity

came to their rescue as happened to the Biblical Israelites of old (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 125). If he considered himself and his people as the slaves that should be delivered from the Egyptian bondage into the Chosen Land of freedom, there was sufficient reason to believe that the Christian God stood by the white colonizers. Violence did not bring any relief. The repetition of the nursery rhyme Three Blind Mice reveals not merely the fragility of the Eurocentric colonizer but also the dashy colonized native who underestimates the strength of colonialism. "John dead. [...] Quamina dead and he smelling up the place too bad. Why you does give us crosses to bear when you know we can't bear them? Is why" (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 63).

Conclusion

Even though the underdogs were defeated, tortured and murdered, paradoxically the day was won not by the white plantation owners but by the African slaves. It was preponderantly the victory of the female slaves. In fact, freedom came, as Auntie Lou had predicted, at a time when knowledge of the revolt was absconded from the males.

> Cause time and woman always agree. Is not only when you monthly time does come with blood, is also the time when you going to birth pickney. Man don't know 'bout time. They are all true blind. All of them. Quamina, I did say if you want freedom, wait. It going come. The women them going get the freedom for you. All a could have tell him, all a could have say...We gotta plan good good. And we did plan good. But no...he can't listen (King-Aribisala, 2007, p. 56).

Omnipresent patriarchy in white and Negro society alike is defeated by the female slaves. When Auntie Lou discovers that racial and class supremacy is a mere figment and a lie, the dermal schemata had already lost its strength. Lou's interventions showed that the basis on which slave othering, hegemony and white predominance lay was a metonymy of highly ambivalent colonial strategy planned for the benefit of the colonial metropolis. On the other hand, Rosita's intervention tackled another aspect of colonialism. Since state and religion in the New World had always contributed to the establishment of imperial hegemony, Rosita's role was to erode the moral hegemony and to unmask the ecclesiastical strategy of human rights, humane treatment and denouncement of violence. The female slave disestablished ecclesiastical imperialism and disabled

the emissary from a superior culture with a divine mandate to impose a set of beliefs and mores on the colonized.

The Guyanese diegetic narrator makes the reader aware that the colonizing subject's ambivalence, in all its forms, creates a profounder upheaval than armed intervention. This fact may be corroborated by the author's apparently faithful depiction of reality underpinned by narrative techniques involving fragmentation, unreliable narrators, different narrators featuring helplessness and doubts. Nevertheless, when all is taken into account, does discursive intervention, ventured by literature, is efficient enough against the neo-colonial stance that several countries adopt to perpetuate and reproduce the 'colonial situation'? Does ambivalence in literature succeed in not merely representing but also subverting hegemonic conditions? King-Aribisala's novel seems to favour an ethical position that a revision of the history of rebellions in former slave colony would create equivalences and perhaps similar results in current North-South dichotomies.

In fact, though not focussed in this essay, the aftermath of the Independence struggle is rife with power dynamics dealt with in King-Aribisala's novel at the diegetic level. Further analysis of the relationships between erstwhile power dynamics and those current in post-colonial relationships should be undertaken to investigate the resistance factors of ambivalence, mimicry, sly civility and transformation from the foregrounding of the Guyanese author's post-modern novel.

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RADICAL POLITICS AND MULTIPLE IDENTITIES IN PROTESTING THE VIETNAM WAR: NORMAN MAILER ANDTHE NON-FICTION NOVEL

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ABSTRACT: Mailer's Armies of the Night (1968), published at the height of the Vietnam War, was not only a complex critique of the American intervention in the war but of corporate American society itself. The identities referred to in the title of this article refer both to the multiple adversaries depicted in the text—soldiers vs. students, police vs. protesters, Hawks vs. Doves, Middle America vs. radicalized youth—and to the multiple identities of the narrator, whose fictional strategies applied to an historical event made his work important to how fiction and non-fiction were perceived thereafter.

KEY WORDS: Vietnam War; Antiwar Protest; Non-Fiction Novel

Antiwar organizations had always existed in American culture but had never flourished to the extent that they did during the Vietnam War, which would become the most unpopular war in US history. Antiwar activists were initially stereotyped as defective by the press in an apparent effort to discredit them; they were portrayed either as a smaller minority than they actually were, or as "hippies," which they were not, or as Communists, which only a very few were (Smetack 1991:143). Although some of the leaders inherited leftist political attitudes from their parents—the so-called "red diaper babies"—many of them rejected what they regarded as Communist anti-democratic attitudes. .

American university complicity in the Vietnam War was first exposed by the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley in 1964, but the escalation of the war with the initiation of the bombing of North Vietnam in February 1965 was probably the incident that sparked the anti-war movement into more urgent action (Tucker 2000:19). The radical organization Students for a Democratic Society, which began protests at the Oakland Army Terminal, the dispatching point for Vietnam-bound troops, succeeded in raising dissent to a national level with the first march on Washington in April 1965, or one month after the arrival of the first US combat troops in Vietnam. This early demonstration was followed by a number of other active and aggressive forms of protests, including a second march on the Pentagon in Octo-

ber 1967, draft-card burnings, the dramatic destruction of draft-board files by spilling blood on them, the proliferation of provocative underground newspapers and newsletters, and the student take-over of the administration building at Columbia University in April 1968. (Tucker 2000:19). The police assault on protestors at the Democratic Presidential Convention in Chicago, in August 1968, when Hubert Humphrey was nominated as successor to Lyndon Johnson, might even be seen as an overreaction to the success of antiwar demonstrations.

As a result of the developing nature of antiwar protest, ever more radical as the war dragged on, with civil disruption and destruction of property, the antiwar movement began to splinter. The new cultural style of the protestors alienated middle-class liberals, who opposed the war but believed it ought to be protested only by legal and peaceful means. The movement regained its solidarity by the early Seventies, with the Kent State shooting of four students by National Guardsmen (May 1970) and the publication of the Pentagon Papers (Sheehan 1971), which exposed the secrecy and lies behind the conduct of the war.

The author who best captured the essence of the new radical cultural style of the late Sixties and its domestic political nuances was Norman Mailer, whose journalistic novel, Armies of the Night, reflects this turbulent period, when it seemed that the war had made a deep division in the national culture. Mailer's novel has also been regarded as an innovative work in contemporary American literature. Louis Menand, always a lucid critic of American culture, observes that how we think about nonfiction has changed since the Sixties and is largely due to Mailer's "undermining of traditional distinctions between journalism and fiction" (Menand 2002:157). Menand argues that modernism in fiction (Joyce & Co) destroyed the notion of writing as a transparent medium, the mimetic theory of holding the mirror to nature, by calling attention to the textual nature of writing. Journalism, on the other hand, held to the claims for the transparency of the written medium and the fact of non-fiction as opposed to the imaginative invention of fiction: "We cannot seem to acknowledge that writing, of whatever kind, is a technology like any other, a human invention for human uses. We cling to the belief that there must be one kind of writing that is a clear window on 'the facts'" (Menand 2002:156).

To counteract this retrograde view of writing, the so-called New Journalism appropriated the techniques of fiction for journalism. Tom Wolfe is usually thought to be the main figure of this tendency, but

(in Menand's view) it was Mailer—in a magazine article for Harper's on the antiwar march on the Pentagon, which would eventually be expanded into the full-length work Armies of the Night—who opened up the form of journalism by inserting himself as a character into the reportage:

> It was a way of placing directly before the reader's attention the circumstance that the text was written by a man armed with such-and-such prejudices, operating under such-and-such moral and physical limitations, altering events by his presence in such-and-such a way, and...induced to undertake the work by promise of such-and-such a fee. The conditions of production are visible right there in the story, since they are in the story whether they are visible or not (Menand 2002:158).

Making the reporter "visible" as subject and exposing the ideology and production values of the text become a critical judgment on the occultation of such fundamental matters in the old pseudo-objective journalism. Mailer's most distinguished follower in this respect for writing on the Vietnam War would be Michael Herr in his fictional-journalistic work Dispatches (1968)

The metaphorical treatment of Mailer's earlier novel Why Are We in Vietnam? (1967) gave way to the reportorial mode of the Armies of the Night. The oblique approach to the war was maintained, because the subject was not the war itself, which remained present yet distant, but rather the domestic resistance to it. Despite the militarism hinted at in the title, this is a "Home Front" novel in which, in marked contrast to the Home Front novels of the Second World War, the civilians are not supporting the troops but actively resisting the government who has sent them to war. The novel also aims at bringing home the "totalitarianism" that American politicians of the period identified in Communist ideology and practice to bear on the repressive structures of American government. The specific historical focus is the march on Washington in October 1967, when a large mass of people protesting the war converged on the Pentagon, locus and symbol of US military power.

In Book One, "History as a Novel: the Steps of the Pentagon," which makes up the bulk of the novel's text, Mailer takes the reader along, via a chronological diary that is replete with backward and forward digressions on his own life and work and on the mind and behavior of "corporate America," to observe his personal actions at, and observa-

tions of, the March. The account is intended to be "historical," insofar as it proposes to tell us what happened, but at the same time it is history-as-fiction, since Mailer knows that "objective" facts or events are never simply given but occur as effects on the observer or recorder. The novel therefore manages to be at once an eye-witness and an autobiographical account, since the author is both "present" at the scene of the events but, as he freely admits, constantly shaping the story to place himself at their center.

Any interpretation of what happens at an event, or even more so (as here) at a series of events, must organize the information that is presented, but Mailer proposes to go much farther than discreet authorial organization in his desire to write about a historical event that focuses on a person who is not central to the event. In compensation for his acknowledged peripheral status, his fictional construction of himself ("Mailer"), he need not always make himself look good. He is not one of the leaders or organizers of the event, "but ambiguous in his own proportions, a comic hero," aware of his pretensions and limitations (Mailer 1968:64). "Once history inhabits a crazy house," Mailer claims, "egotism may be the last tool left to History" (Mailer 1968:65).

Mailer, like Lear's Fool, has issued himself a license for truth-telling. Mailer, the author "outside" the text, is writing a book with Mailer-the-narrator observing "Mailer" the protagonist, who, as a character, even assumes a number of different names: Norman, the Novelist, the Ruminant, the Historian, the Participant—names, that is, that affirm the variety of his roles and attest not only to the arbitrariness of identity itself but to his invention of multiple identities. The author multiplies "Mailers" to adapt to, or perhaps better define, the multifarious nature of American society, analogous, if it may be given an appropriate cultural reference, to Walt Whitman's celebration of himself as representative of all Americans (Karl 1983:580).

It was suggested by one of the author's biographers that the plural narrative identity in Mailer's works, as seen in Why Are We in Vietnam? and The Armies of the Night and even in his several collections of essays, is a strategy of freedom. With a proliferation of identities, it is more difficult for both the internal super-ego and the external powers of the state to contain the individual (Bufithis 1978:288). The author himself seems to see it that way, but the plurality of identities also points to the crisis of the self that emerged from American fiction of the post-war years. The multiple selves, in this view, would be Mailer's pluralist equivalent of Ralph Ellison's "invisible" mask, hiding a precarious identity. The split personality that the narrator

admittedly shares, personified in these multiple narrative selves, is a survival tactic, but as in Why Are We in Vietnam? he does perceive a schizoid madness at the heart of the nation itself, torn between spirituality and technology:

> Any man or woman who was devoutly Christian and worked for an American Corporation had been caught in an unseen vise whose pressure could split their mind from their soul. For the center of Christianity was a mystery, a son of God, and the center of the Corporation was a detestation of mystery, a worship of technology (Mailer 1968:200).

According to Mailer, however, the businessmen, generals, CIA and FBI agents, and the myriad hucksters of the American Dream are all wrong, however. The US is profoundly un-Christian, which helps explain why the war must go on.

The WASP power-elite has become convinced that Communism is the enemy of Christian civilization and so must be relentlessly opposed wherever it seems to be making inroads. That Communism is threatening a remote country in Southeast Asia is therefore cause for alarm, especially in conjunction with the dubious central thesis of the "domino theory." Mailer summarizes in three pages (1968:193-196) the political and strategic arguments of the Vietnam war's supporters (the "Hawks") and their opponents (the "Doves"), only to conclude that, while on the face of it the Doves' arguments are stronger, power is never destroyed by superior argument. Ideology, it is implied, is more powerful than reason, but the overly patriotic American public can in fact still be swayed, for public opinion has been changing constantly as to whether or not the war should be continued. The Hawks have a firm hold on every form of power except the consensus of (reasonable) public opinion they have not been able to mold, and yet they are not too concerned about that because they use the mendacious but effective tactic of appealing to the patriotic (i.e. unreasoning) public by branding Doves as disloyal or cowardly. This is a tactic still in use by Republican war-mongerers.

Coercion is never enough to maintain repression for long without the aid of persuasion, i.e. "winning the hearts and minds" of the subordinated, which is what the US policy in Vietnam conspicuously failed to do. The relation between coercion and persuasion is also an underlying theme in the novel, as police repression on the domestic front was eventually foredoomed to have an adverse effect on the public's attitudes, especially after a great number of people had turned

against the war. For some time, it was debated whether media coverage of the police repression of "unruly" demonstrators turned a conservative public, anxious about "law-and-order" in a society already torn by racial strife, for or against the war. Initially, at least, the Hawks' hegemonic control of public opinion and their playing on fears of continued civil disruption worked, but it failed in the long run when it became increasingly apparent that a military victory would not be forthcoming and that civil opposition was not restricted to a minority of undisciplined youths. Public opinion was therefore central in the eventual but belated decision to end the war. As Hannah Arendt argues:

> When commands are no longer obeyed, the means of violence are of no use; and the question of this obedience is not decided by the command-obedience relation but by opinion, and, of course, by the number of those who share it (Arendt 1969:66-67).

Historically, what happened was that the war continued long after it was popular, with an empowered minority exploiting the lack of open opposition, but it eventually became so unpopular at home as to be untenable abroad.

Since political arguments in this climate of opinion have made little difference, Mailer offers semi-serious personal ones—any war is bad that has better-armed rich boys fighting poor boys, for example—and yet his analysis of Vietnam is not without subtlety, even foresight. His conclusion that Asia was best left to the Asians is, of course, unimpeachable, even though he knew that there still existed a mentality about Asia that perceived it as an adjunct of the West, a belief that had once led American officials, the same ones who would later pursue the war in Vietnam, to ask how it was that we had "lost" China, as if it had been "ours" in the first place.

And yet Mailer's suggestion to US leaders that "to leave Asia would be precisely to gain the balance of power" is an inspired paradox, for what would eventually ensue with the absence of colonial powers was far too complex to control or even predict (which is what happened), and is not merely the rhetorical strategy proposed by one congressman, who recommended declaring victory and getting out. By the same token, Mailer also correctly perceived the situation of the end of Communism in the late Eighties (which, however, took place in Europe, not Asia) as another paradox: "In the expansion of Communism was its demise" (Mailer 1968:199).

As in so many of his works, Mailer often perceives his subject—here, a particular historical event—in terms of the adversarial power struggles among individuals and groups in varied combinations. He sees two major forces opposing the mass demonstration in Washington. The first and apparently more powerful is the US government, present in the monolithic symbolic aspect of the Pentagon and the actual presence of the coercive state apparatus of police and National Guard. The second is a diverse mass of civilian demonstrators, united only by their marching in opposition to government policies. Behind this physical confrontation of demonstrators and police/soldiers, however, is the ideological conflict of Hawks and Doves. Mailer ranges the power of a corrupt government on the side of the Hawks, whom he calls "corporation-land villains." Their adversaries, whom he represents as a rather pathetic mass of neurotic wimps, are, however, empowered by the forces of history:

> All the healthy Marines, state troopers, professional athletes, movie stars, red necks, sensuous life-loving Mafia, cops, mill-workers, city officials, nice healthy-looking easy-grafting politicians full of the light (from marijuana?) in their eye of life they enjoy—yes, they would be for the war in Vietnam. Arrayed against them as hard-core troops: an elite! the Freudridden embers of Marxism, good old American anxiety strata—the urban middle-class with their proliferated monumental adenoidal resentments, their secret slavish love for the oncoming hegemony of the computer and the suburb, yes, they and their children, by the sheer ironies, the sheer ineptitude, the kinks of history, were now being compressed into more and more militant stands (Mailer 1968:44).

Such are the unlikely soldiers upon whom the anti-war movement depends. During the March, helicopters of the government and the police hover over this civilian army to remind them of "the secret of who owned the air—corporation-land" (127), but perhaps we are to recall that in Vietnam, too, these same people, or at least their military agents, also controlled the air and were still not winning the war. The demonstrators' target is the main building of corporation-land itself:

> ...the symbol, the embodiment, no, call it the true and high church of the military-industrial complex, the Pen-

> tagon, blind five-sided eye of a subtle oppression which had come to America out of the very air of the century (this evil twentieth century with its curse on the species, its oppressive Faustian lusts, its technological excrement all over the conduits of nature, its entrapment of the innocence of the best—for which young American soldiers hot out of high school and in love with a hot-rod and his [sic] Marine buddies in a platoon in Vietnam could begin to know the devil of oppression which would steal his soul before he knew he had one) yes, Mailer felt a confirmation of the contests of his own life on this March to the eye of the oppressor, greedy stingy dumb half of the worst of the Wasp heart, chalice and anus of corporation land, smug, enclosed, morally blind Pentagon, destroying the future of its own nation with each day it augmented its strength (Mailer 1968:125-126).

In this passage, Mailer the reporter yields to an unleashed narrator who fires on all the familiar targets: the military, nature-destroying technology, brain-washed American youth, the Wasp power-elite, corporate America: all the powers that made Vietnam possible, that kept it going, and that must be resisted.

The conflict over the war itself, which has defined the situation and constituted its background, will be examined in the second part of the novel; in the first part, Mailer concentrates on the conflicts of power within the opposition itself. One initial problem within the organized opposition to the war, despite the over-all coordination of the Mobilization Committee, was its lack of defined leadership. Unlike the Civil Rights march on Washington in 1963, there was no central organization determining the strategy or even the purpose of the March on the Pentagon, and yet Mailer believes that this lack of centralization is paradoxically part of the demonstration's strength, for "the authority could not comprehend nor contain nor finally manage to control any political action whose end was unknown" (Mailer 1968:99). The government could attack the marchers and put them in jail, but in the end it could not comprehend a mass movement that operated, unlike the older Communist movements, without a coordinated plan. In fact, the "solid-as-brickwork logic" of the Old Left had by now been adopted by the bureaucrats of "the American center." Like traditional Leftists, they too are appalled at political activity that is not run by the book.

In fact, the new kind of politics embodied in the opposition, or at

least that part of it called the "New Left," often including its "hippy" cohorts, with its emphasis on style, is the source of conflict within the Left itself, between aesthetics and action, where the notion of multiple identities once again comes into play. Mailer sees these people as a motley army, one not in uniform but in costume, "close to being assembled from all the intersections between history and comic books, between legend and television, the Biblical archetypes and the movies," and in this war-as-masked-costume ball, "the aesthetics was at last in the politics" (Mailer 1968:103). The apparent clash between aesthetics and action is reflected in the contradictory nature of the new generation's beliefs. The present generation is more in tune with technology than was any before it, despite some anti-technological rhetoric, but it also believes in psychedelic drugs, the occult, tribal ritual, and unstructured sexuality. The anti-authoritarian radicalism therefore cannot be repressed in the usual ways, owing to its unpredictable and extremely anti-logical character. In Mailer's mind, "belief was reserved for the revelatory mystery of the happening where you did not know what was going to happen next" (Mailer 1968:97-98).

Some sort of repression was sure to come, however, as a powerful government could not tolerate civil disobedience. And yet power did not automatically belong to the government because it had to reckon with negative propaganda. How can the US, self-denominated "leader of the free world," be shown stomping its own citizens without serious loss of face? When some marchers begin to go over barbed-wire fences, for example, Mailer has a paranoid vision of concentration-camp pens but immediately corrects himself: "he should have divined that the government was not going to pen people in full view of others who were free, nor give fields of such photographs to European papers with any faint reminders implicit of when last civilians had been seen behind barbed wire" (Mailer 1968:128). Memories of the Second World War coincide with the current technology of total media coverage. Past and present converge to the opposition's advantage.

And yet, this paranoid vision of government repression is not without its reality within the ranks of the demonstrators. The black militants at the March have their own priorities of resisting racism, in which they see Vietnam as merely an exported example, and they generally distrust the white Leftists, but they have to walk a fine line. If the black militants march to the Pentagon and do not "pre-empt the front rank, they would lose face as fighters; if they were too numerous on the line they would be beaten half to death" (Mailer 1968:114). Their relinquishing of the March is not entirely explained

by this dilemma, however. Mailer sees the black militants as a kind of Leninist revolutionary vanguard, sure of their secret power, with their own system of communication and silent movement, who had moved "into that Black twenty-first century when Black Power had succeeded in rendering the white man invisible at will" (112).

For the white demonstrators who do take part, the comedy of their jostling for a place in the front rank, in competition for the television cameras, is not lost on "Mailer," who is in turn determined to keep his place in the line. "If his head is to be busted this day, let it be before the eyes of America's TV viewers tonight" (Mailer 1968:119), and he is candid about the many petty "power plays" among leaders and celebrities. On the eve of the March, for example, he argues with a movement lawyer over who is to preside at a public meeting with celebrity speakers. For the lawyer, DiGrazia, meetings are simply meetings, to be endured for the cause, but Mailer's instinct for the spectacle, even if only to play the fool, prompts him to call for an audience vote. When this turns out fairly even, he proposes to give the audience a lesson: "In the absence of a definite vote, the man who holds the power keeps it" (Mailer 1968:50), a variation on the expression "possession is the better part of the law."

Of these minor, mainly personal struggles, two are illustrative: one involves the authority of prestige, the other brute force. Novelist Mailer, critic Dwight McDonald, and poet Robert Lowell are the literary stars, "notables" who lend their names to the March propaganda. Mailer admits being jealous of Lowell, who besides possessing a WASP aristocratic serenity in contrast to what he calls his own brassy Jewish vulgarity, has the reputation of being the most distinguished living American poet, a claim Mailer says he would like to make for himself as novelist. Yet, when Lowell remarks to him that he and his wife (critic Elizabeth Hardwick, who has blasted Mailer's latest novel) thought Mailer "the finest journalist in America" (i.e. as opposed to the finest novelist), he takes their view as condescending and supposes that Lowell is really trying to "neutralize" any future risks of confronting him. When Lowell keeps congratulating him for a more moderate speech that Mailer had earlier made during a draft-card burning ceremony, Mailer doggedly keeps congratulating Lowell on his speech, determined not to lose in this private competitive game of mutual admiration.

In the physical confrontation, Mailer suffers an anti-Semitic slur by an "anti-demonstrator" (i.e. pro-war demonstrator) wearing a Nazi uniform. When Mailer returns the insult, a burly US Marshall steps in to break up the imminent fight, but the Nazi persists and the

Marshall bounces him off a truck and raps him with his club. Mailer cannot help wondering whether the Marshal secretly thinks the Nazi is just a contemptible distraction from the real danger, i.e. Communist-inspired demonstrators like himself. Curiously, however, Mailer does not consider the irony of his being protected by a government lawman nor the deeper irony of a powerful government so sure of itself that it can wage a grossly unjust war while giving guarantees of free speech and assembly to its own citizens protesting that war, although the paradox of this situation will indeed become clear in the second part.

The comic ironies involved in marching against a liberal authoritarian state are further shown by Mailer's pondering the moment he should get himself arrested, trying to time it right so that he will not miss a party in New York that evening and actually warning the Marshall who arrests him to keep his hands off him because he is not resisting arrest. In these circumstances, getting arrested is a ritual with little danger of violence and only a few hours actual incarceration. The price of confronting authority is therefore comically low, and yet Mailer soon learns that his celebrity status offers the government an opportunity to be vindictive. Expecting to be released immediately, he is given five days in jail for the Socratic offense of negatively influencing the young. There ensues a legal struggle between the judge, who is determined to keep Mailer, the celebrity, in jail as an example, and the dexterous movement lawyer, Hirshkop, who with great aplomb keeps pulling new arguments and legal technicalities out of his sleeve until the judge finally has to relent. What makes the judge back down, besides Hirshkop's legal virtuosity, Mailer ponders, is the realization that to resist on this particular case might entrap the government in future rulings, enfeebling that level of courts in dealing with civil disobedience. The government must indulge in some give-and-take: it reluctantly releases an important law-breaker, Mailer, to ensure flexibility later when a greater issue might be at stake.

Mailer's fame also prevents any realization of his romantic dream of being a real, "gun-in-the-hills" revolutionary: "he would pay for the pleasures of his notoriety in the impossibility of disguise" (Mailer 1968:89). On the other hand, he resists participating in radical organizations because they are too much like bureaucratic sects, "rusty tin cans" that attract the wrong kind of people, the mediocrities who join movements to indulge "their self-pity and self-righteousness" (Mailer 1968:107). This attitude shows the profoundly individualist basis of his politics, because, as Max Weber first demonstrated, what

counts in an organization is the power it can mobilize irregardless of the personalities of its individual elements. Mailer's more serious objection is that the opposition itself is part of the problem: "technology-land was the capitalist bastion, and the mediocre middle-class masses of the Left...were the first real champions of technology land" (Mailer 1968:107), a statement that exposes the romantic-pastoralist basis of his position. Consider the following diatribe against liberal academics, the very class of people who were almost unanimously opposed to the war:

> They were of course politically opposed to the present programs and movements of the republic in Asian foreign policy, but this political difference seemed no more than a quarrel among engineers. Liberal academics had no root of a real war with technology-land itself, no, in all likelihood, they were the natural managers of that future air-conditioned vault where the last of human life would still exist. (Mailer 1968:25)

The sociological truth behind this passage aside, it is one example of what Mailer does throughout the novel. He resists identifying with his true political allies, finding fault with their convictions, personalities, and especially style, displaying a "barely suppressed animus against all the good liberals whose arms are linked with his," as one admiring critic puts it (Menand 2002:152), by seeking out their contradictions and anomalies and even finding points of sympathy with their politically obnoxious adversaries. This belief may partly be a need to maintain a minority status for himself, partly a strategy to give his work a dialectical movement, to avoid its becoming just another radical harangue against right-wing America, although it is that as well.

Thus, there are sympathetic treatments of the US Marshall who arrests him, of the Commissioner who tries him, and of the young soldiers who guard the Pentagon. In opposition to his political allies, "Mailer" insists on the need for action, railing against wishy-washy liberals and pacifists whose cautious mood saps revolutionary spirit: "Mailer had recognized long ago that he was sufficiently devil-ridden to need a little action from time to time, and the promise of these pacifistic moods seemed to be that they would go on forever" (Mailer 1968:79). This description may be no more than Mailer (the protagonist) posing as another of his fictional alter-egos, Stephen Rojack, the protagonist of An American Dream (1966), tapping into his demonic side as a source of authentic energy and pretending it is not a fantasy. On the other hand, Mailer, author and public personality, often engaged in provocative or outrageous behavior, it has been argued, not so much as a means of self-promotion—although that is also quite plausible—but as a testing-ground for purposes of his work: "Till people see where their ideas lead, they know nothing," he would say. The process is cyclical. Ideas lead to action, which leads to writing and once again to new ideas (Bufithis 1978:279). Mailer's quarrel with liberal academics is that he thinks they do not see where their ideas lead, preferring the safe harbor of concepts.

In contrast to such people, who can only think of revolution in terms of lawyers, hospitals, and passing out pamphlets, Mailer, for his part, "liked good character when it issued in action which was visually tumultuous rather than inspiring awe in the legal mind" (66). The word "visually" tips one off that Mailer is not necessarily extolling violent action as superior to words. He knows that he is writing a book about the March that will ultimately be more effective in its power of persuasion than would be his own minor physical participation in the event. If he follows his own advice (seeing where ideas lead), it is as if he has to go through the motions in order to produce the book. To be sure, "action" cannot be armed conflict, for any serious attack by the demonstrators on the Pentagon would be suicidal. Mailer himself, after all, fights neither the Nazi nor a man behind him in the line provoking him, nor does he get in a fight in jail, as he expects. Action in the context of this historical event is not armed but symbolic conflict, action as leftist theater, a march "on the bastion which symbolized the military might of the Republic, marching not to capture it but to wound it symbolically" (Mailer 1968:65, his emphasis).

In Book Two, "The Novel as History: The Battle of the Pentagon," Mailer sacrifices immediacy for objectivity, relating events that he did not actually witness, i.e. history as created by others rather than history created by a Mailer. As usual, the power struggles are presented in binary terms. Thus, within the opposition, the important conflict is radicals vs. liberals. The radicals have greater motivation and are therefore more militant and less law-abiding, but the liberals have more resources, with greater numbers and much more money. In terms of influence, the earnest, respectable, well-behaved liberals have greater influence on the general American public and eventually on the outcome of the war, while the radicals function, as it were, as the political conscience of the liberals. Each of these tendencies contains an "alphabet soup" of organizations, the bureaucratic com-

plexities of which Mailer has little patience. As novelist, he tends to shade ideological nuances in the positions of representative individuals.

Within the militant ranks themselves is a conflict that arose together with the counter-culture of the Sixties: the Old vs. the New Left. Older radicals are not militants gone soft with age; they are "old" because they still employ the "solid-as-brickwork logic" and rhetoric of the Communist Party. Although many have dropped out of the Party, they still retain a Marxist outlook, and their natural enemies are liberals and enlightened professionals. The New Left is younger and more politically eclectic; they admire Mao and Che, Fidel and Malcolm X; they emphasize style and aesthetics in politics; they are more inflammatory than logical in their rhetoric; and they prefer improvised rather than meticulously planned tactics. Their natural allies are "hippies" and black militants.

These two positions Mailer personifies in the two main organizers of the March, David Dellinger and Jerry Rubin. Dellinger is an older, militant, but non-violent pacifist from the East Coast who has the difficult job of acting as intermediary between liberal and radical factions. He realizes that the March needs the money and numbers of the liberals if it is to continually grow. At the same time, the anti-war movement thrives on publicity. Media power can only be supplied by flamboyant radicals like Rubin, the Berkeley "Yippie" whose declared goal is "wholesale disruption and dislocation of American society." From this viewpoint, merely another mass protest, without civil disobedience, would cause the peace movement to "become a predictable figure in the tapestry, to be discounted by the power-elite rather than respected" (Mailer 1968:245), taking, that is to say, its non-effective place as pseudo-opposition to an oppressive state.

This unstable alliance was further strained by the timely occurrence of the Arab-Israeli war in June 1967, in which the New Left, in opposition to the Old, leaned toward the Arabs, and the difficult relationship of white radicals with black militants, who, after the joint militancy of the Civil Rights actions in the south, expelled whites from their organizations. This conflict is "settled" by the blacks, who simply abandon the demonstration, believing it is irrelevant to their needs. The Old vs. New Left disagreement on tactics is given a compromise settlement by Dellinger. A mass, peaceful demonstration would be followed by acts of civil disobedience by those who chose them. Behind this solution, however, is the unacknowledged compromise between the government and the Mobilization Committee, the ironies of which Mailer summarizes: "the compromise said in

effect: we the government wage the war in Vietnam for our security, but will permit your protest provided it is only a little disorderly. The demonstrators: we still consider the war outrageous and will therefore break the law, but not by very much" (Mailer 1968:252). These professed attitudes are, as Mailer says, absurd. The situation is unsatisfactory for any long-range goals and results in the division of tactics during the actual March. The radical organizations that reject compromise stage their own poorly planned attack, which results in brutal beatings and arrests. The government does not maintain its own legal fiction during the March, but is true to itself as the legal but coercive liberal state. It "remained to the end what it had been from the beginning: a part legalistic, a part co-operative, and a part threatening" (Mailer 1968:293-294).

The external confrontation, which can be summed up in the formula People vs. Pentagon, Mailer concretizes in the facing lines of demonstrators and soldiers. While "each side is coming face to face with its conception of the devil" (Mailer 1968:269), the long hours bring about less apocalyptic reactions, as demonstrators by turn tempt and taunt the soldiers. Although the demonstrators represent moral authority and the soldiers represent brute force, Mailer perceives class conflict in this confrontation. The demonstrators are urban middle-class, or hippy exiles from the middle-class, spiritually alienated, secretly in envy (Mailer thinks) of the tough, gritty lives of the working-class soldiers. Although he once again here identifies with the "enemy," the abused soldiers, he thinks that the demonstrators, although feeling physically weaker, will gain strength from the soldiers and "steal their balls" because they have the moral right on their side. His sympathy therefore shifts decisively in the "Battle of the Wedge," when the troops brutally crush last-ditch resistance by courageous demonstrators.

Finally, one more ambiguous element in Mailer's perception needs to be discussed, and that is the media coverage of the March. The novel begins with Mailer's quoting the article in Time magazine that grossly misrepresents his antics at the meeting, although, interestingly enough, another, favorable reviewer of Mailer's book, claimed that the Time article was reasonably accurate (McDonald 1968:168.). Mailer pretends to use this opening to write a book in which he will tell what "really" happened, and yet his version, while more complete and interesting than the versions of the conventional press, is just another version. As a writer, however, he is particularly indignant over the misrepresentation of his words: "the more one might have to say in a sentence, the worse one would probably sound. Henry

James would have come off in a modern interview like hippy who had taken a correspondence course in forensics" (Mailer 1968:76). Accordingly, the report on Mailer's arrest makes him a figure of ridicule in jail; the speech he gives when released makes him out to be a hypocritical fool; and Time magazine condescendingly calls the experiences he relates in the novel a "weekend revolution." His indignant attitude, however, is disingenuous, since he is obviously aware of the ideological distortions of the "objective" press.

By contrast, he is enthusiastic about the coverage of television and film, either because these media cannot misquote his words, or because he knows that the images of TV and film count more than the written word in shaping public opinion, or because he can more effectively play the buffoon on screen—probably all three. Besides the comic jostling for a good spot in front of the TV cameras, it turns out that "Mailer" is being filmed throughout his entire experience by a British documentary film crew. The misrepresentations of his words by the written news media will be corrected (he hopes) by the visual media represented by this film crew, as well as his own written account in his novel. Even Time magazine had characterized "Mailer" in cinematic terms, as "an extra, a bit player who will inevitably be cut out of the film" (Mailer 1968:120), a deletion that the magazine thought would effectively "silence" him. This view points up a dilemma in Mailer's adversarial stance. It needs the media to "record" the revolutionary event but not (mis-)interpret it, as the newspapers and magazines presumably do.

However much credence one gives to the presumed objectivity of visual media, Mailer is at least being true to the new (i.e. Sixties) form of aesthetic politics he himself has described, where style is more important than substance, and the "happening" replaces the Old Left logic. The disciplined mode of the "Leninist" Walter McTeague, a professional revolutionary, for example, has been passed by in the electronic age: "Leninism was built to analyze a world in which all the structures were made of steel—now the sinews of society were founded on transistors so small Dragon Lady could hide them beneath her nail" (Mailer 1968:201). The New Left showed by the political antics Mailer delineates in the novel that the struggle for power in the media, which was a struggle for the means of representation, was not trivial. Mailer realizes this point in the episode when the US Marshals are arresting the demonstrators and he thinks for a moment that the latter might be herded, concentration-camp style, into barbed-wire pens. He knows, however, that the television images would call up in people's minds the photographs and films of the Holocaust and thus cause the government to be equated with Nazism. In this sense, the media can work as much against the official versions of events as in their favor. As one theorist has put it, mow that official discourse has moved "full-scale into the video age, it must now operate within an altered representational economy that it cannot wholly control" (Shapiro 1992:120).

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Universidade de Campinas

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Em Sur Parole, Derrida diz que os herdeiros autênticos são aqueles que romperam com a origem, assinando ou contra-assinando a herança através de seu próprio movimento e assumindo por fim uma postura de fidelidade infiel. Assim podemos caracterizar o livro Performances: estudos em homenagem a Marlene Soares dos Santos, organizado por Luiz Paulo da Moita Lopes, Fábio Akcelrud Durão e Roberto Ferreira da Rocha, um tributo à herança da professora Marlene Soares dos Santos, que mapeia perspectivas contemporâneas em relação aos estudos de performance. Os artigos reunidos neste livro, contribuições de pesquisadores de diversas instituições brasileiras e estrangeiras, procuram conceitualizar performance e sua aproximação com a literatura nas mais variadas acepções, especialmente no que concerne à ampliação do escopo da crítica literária do que o texto diz para o que o texto faz.

O livro configura em si uma performance, incluindo primeiramente a tradução do "Soneto 46" de William Shakespeare, por Bárbara Heliodora (UNIRIO), e doze artigos divididos em três seções com quatro artigos cada. A junção de poesia e ensaios configura a impossibilidade da separação entre literatura e crítica, que se fundem em uma relação de retro-alimentação, interdependência entre observador e observado, sujeito e objeto.

A primeira parte, além do soneto, tem como foco a performance shakespeareana e o teatro elisabetano, área primeira de atuação da professora homenageada. O primeiro artigo, de Roberto Ferreira da Rocha (UFRJ), faz uma revisão do teatro shakespeareano como performance cosmopolita, que agregava todas as camadas sociais inglesas e tinha em sua composição elementos das artes da elite e do povo. O segundo artigo, de Janet Clare (University of Hull), trata da performance regia como máscara de outras identidades, através dos dramas históricos de Shakespeare. No terceiro, Aimara da Cunha

Resende (UFMG) aborda a questão da performance na loucura da peça Rei Lear, enfatizando especialmente a cultura popular na construção de identidades. Por fim, o último artigo desta primeira parte, escrito a quatro mãos por Luiz Paulo da Moita Lopes e Branca Falabella Fabrício (UFRJ), problematiza as diversas posições críticas para a questão de gêneros e identidades sexuais na peça Como Gostais.

A segunda seção do livro traz artigos que lidam com a extrapolação da performance para além da crítica shakespeareana, abrindo o escopo da performance dramática para incluir diálogos com outras produções e recepções. O quinto artigo do livro, por Munira H. Mutran (USP), fala das recriações do mito de Orestes na antigüidade, por Esquilo, e na modernidade, por Helen Edmunson. No sexto artigo, Sônia Torres (UFF) examina as peças do argentino naturalizado canadense Guillermo Verdecchia e suas montagens como performances de resistência política. A influência do teatro de Martins Pena para a formação da comédia, e do teatro brasileiro em sua totalidade, é o foco do sétimo artigo, escrito por Vilma Arêas (UNICAMP). Por fim, o oitavo texto desta compilação, de José Roberto O'Shea (UFSC), elenca elementos que devem ser observados ao se compor críticas acerca de performances teatrais.

A terceira e última parte do livro é composta de performances críticas, redimensionando a amplitude do livro para além das artes dramáticas. O nono artigo, escrito por Carlos Daglian (UNESP), faz uma releitura da ironia em Emily Dickinson como uma performance identitária estadunidense, que critica os fazeres de seu tempo e lugar. O décimo artigo, por Leila Assumpção Harris (UERJ), pensa o papel da mulher na performatividade das identidades diaspóricas, a partir da análise das obras literária e ensaística de Julia Alvares. Os diálogos entre os mitos aborígines e as figuras bíblicas na obra de Thomas King são o assunto do penúltimo artigo do livro, escrito por Eloína Prati dos Santos (professora aposentada da UFRGS). Finalmente, no último artigo do livro, Fábio Akcelrud Durão (UNICAMP) examina os escritos do músico John Cage, e também o papel performático da crítica, como estudos construídos a partir da indeterminação dos sentidos.

Assim, a rede de leituras que é disseminada a partir de um ponto de convergência, a obra de Marlene Soares dos Santos, se estende numa rede infinita de diálogos possíveis, dos quais os artigos reunidos nesta compilação se mostram um rápido, mas amplo, panorama, trilhando alguns desses caminhos. O livro demonstra por fim que o legado de uma obra pertence não somente à pessoa que a realizou, mas a todos que dela fizeram parte e ajudaram a construí-la, e aos que também reverberam seus rastros numa fidelidade infiel.

DEAF SENTENCE

MARISA LAJOLO
Universidade Estadual de Campinas

2008, Deaf Sentence by David Lodge, Harvill Secker

Deaf Sentence (Harvill Secker, 2008) is the latest novel by David Lodge. As it happens in many of his previous works, its main character and narrator is a university Professor, a Dr. Desmond Bates, a former Professor of the Department of Linguistics. The book is structured as a journal that starts in November, 1st 2006 and ends in March 8, 2007. Although this marked frame, its 291 pages run from the third person of the first line (the tall bespectacled gray-haired man) to the first person of the final line (I always learn something new at the lip-reading class) so performing a daring shift in the narrating voice.

The novel covers what happens to Desmond (who gets an early retirement) when the leisure and freedom of his new status start being invaded by the feeling of uselessness:

> He missed the rhythm of the academic year as a peasant might miss differences between the seasons if they were suddenly withdrawn; and he found he missed too the structure of the academic week, the full diary of teaching assignments, postgraduate supervisions, essay marking, committee meetings, interviews, and deadlines for this and for that required report, tasks he used to grumble about but the completions of which, however trivial and ephemeral they were, gave a kind of low level satisfaction, and ensured that one never, ever, had to confront the question: what shall I do with myself today? In retirement, he confronted it every morning as soon as he woke (p.28).

Although the journal model provides quite a chronological structure to the plot, some flashbacks break the linearity, getting the reader acquainted with past events of the life of Desmond Bates as well as linking the story to History, as for instance linking the plot to the bombing of the London metro in 2005.

Reviewers of Deaf Sentence are quite unanimous in pointing out the similarities between Lodge's personal life and some characteris-

tics of Desmond, mainly the retirement and the deafness of both of them. Even if it is the case (and the writer himself acknowledges it), this eventually biographical feature is better assumed as quite irrelevant. Is it not truth that we no more believe in biography as a key to any literary work? If this is so and so we teach our students we must find another key to read this excellent novel.

A very suggestive approach would be to read Lodge's books – mainly his campus novels and definitely this Deaf Sentence -- as artful piece of mimesis of contemporary university life. Lodge introduces his readers in a good-humored – although melancholic -- diagnosis of what is going on in contemporary universities particularly in the humanities areas.

From this point of view it might be interesting to point that when taken as a series, Lodge's campus novels seem to draw a perfect arch: the main character of The British Museum Is Falling Down (1965) was a postgraduate student and in Deaf Sentence (2008) the protagonist is a retired Professor. In between both, his other novels are populated by professors and researchers of different interests, different theoretical affiliations, interested in different subjects and in different degrees of their careers. Young assistant professors (always ambitious), full professors (always a little bit awkward), Deans, Dons and all the people which crowds in classrooms, libraries, and offices are present in his stories. Since in Deaf Sentence the protagonist is the retired Professor we have in Lodge's novels so far published, a complete range of the positions available for Professors can also be read one after the other as a kind of sequential documents, a collective biography: a biography not of its author, but of a career.

The most important feature characters of Lodge's novels share with their author is the university experience. Professor of Literature himself at the University of Birmingham (from where he retired in 1987), Lodge has the inside knowledge of academic life so essential to make his plots, characters and scenes sound true. The crowd of professors and postgraduate students that cross the pages of his books come usually from the Humanities, mainly from English, Literature, Linguistics and Language Departments. So, the plots quite naturally allow to quote writers (Larking, Hardy, Milton, Joyce, Hopkins, Evelyn Waugh, Tony Harrison are some of the authors mentioned in Deaf Sentence) and also allow for some transcription of poems and pieces of literary criticism. Far from giving a highbrow weight to Lodge's novels, this procedure allows the reader to breath, since even the most learned quotations are mocked some pages ahead, as it happens in Deaf Sentence with the Lombard reflex, my reader

(Lajolo's!) is here gently invited to investigate what it is about!

A former professor of literature himself and a very good reader, David Lodge gives his reader the best of both worlds: he knows how to tackle the readers interest in what he is telling, but he also knows readers enjoy sharing back stage stuff (writing devices, for instance) of what they are reading. So particularly this Deaf Sentence is always telling its reader how it has been written. Even the bold shift between first and third person (in a novel structured as a diary) is dully mapped for the benefit of the reader: I feel a fit of the third person coming on (25) the narrating voice tells us.

But it is in the register of the narrator's small gestures of writing and rewriting that the reader feels s/he is a privileged witness of the writing tasks, happily allowed inside the writer's office:

> I write this late at night in my study (23)
> What follows is a tidied up disambiguated and not altogether reliable record of our conversation (84)
> As I sit in my desk writing this in the Angle poise lamp's cone of light (126)

The bits of meta-language are discreet and do not steal the reader's full attention from what he is being told. Sometimes meta-language is even responsible for some good laughs as it happens when the book reproduces some of the contemporary discourse of literary studies. Lodge is wonderful in mocking the nonsensical phrasing that university criticism sometimes produces in the name of post-modernism, or any other denomination of the "ism" culture that pesters the theoretical pattern of contemporary literary studies:

> One exhibit was a blank sheet A4 taken from a copier whose operator had omitted to insert a document to be copied. it was entitled Oh and was on sale for L150 (L100 unframed). According to the catalogue, the artist, by introducing or accepting mistakes in the reprographic process, was interrogating the accepted opposition between "original" and "reproduced" work of art, and necessity of accuracy, uniformity and repeatability in the application of technology to artistic creation, thus carrying forward to a new level the debate initiated by Walter Benjamin in his essay "The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction". (116)

TEACHING LANGUAGE/CULTURE IN THE LIGHT
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Juliana Salvadori & Edna Crunfli

JOYCE: MEMÓRIA E IDENTIDADE EM
A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN
Sheila Amaral Zanetti

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Sigrid Renaux

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CLASS IN APHRA BEHN'S OROONOKO (1688)
Thomas Bonnici

no 29-30 (2005/2006)

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Carla Alexandra Ferreira

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Cristiane Navarrete Tolomei

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Íldiko Tholt de Vasconcelhos

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E O LEITOR DESAMPARADO
Leonardo Mendes

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SHAPING OF IDENTITY: JAMAICA KINCAID'S
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PROJECT
Mail Marques de Azevedo

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HIPERMIDIÁTICOS DE APRENDIZAGEM DO
LÉXICO EM LE
Patrícia Nora de Souza

UMA REFLEXÃO ACERCA DA CONSTRUÇÃO
DO CONHECIMENTO NA INVESTIGAÇÃO
DO ENSINO DE LÍNGUAS
Ricardo Augusto de Souza

TEXTUALIDADE ELETRÔNICA E ACERVOS DIGITAIS:
QUESTÕES DE QUALIDADE E PODER
Sérgio Luiz Prado Bellei

THE REPRESENTATION OF RESISTANCE AND
TRANSFORMATION IN LEVY'S SMALL ISLAND
Thomas Bonnici

A ORQUESTRAÇÃO DE DISCURSOS POR
PROFESSORES DE LÍNGUA INGLESA
Vanderlei J. Zacchi

EVENTOS REALIZADOS COM A PARTICIPAÇÃO DA ABRAPUI DESDE 1970, QUANDO A ASSOCIAÇÃO FOI FUNDADA

SENAPULLI
Seminário Nacional de Professores Universitários de Literaturas de Língua Inglesa
"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]

"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]

"O ensino da Literatura Americana e da Língua Inglesa nas Universidades Brasileiras"
USP, São Paulo, SP, 30 janeiro a 9 fevereiro 1972
[Comissão Fulbright]

"O ensino da Literatura Americana nas Universidades"
UnB, Brasília, DF, 4-10 fevereiro 1973
[Comissão Fulbright]

"O ensino da Literatura Americana e da Língua Inglesa nas Universidades Brasileiras"
PUCCAMP, Campinas, SP, 3-9 fevereiro 1974
[Comissão Fulbright]

"O ensino da Literatura Norte-Americana em Universidades Brasileiras"
UFPR, Curitiba, PR, 26 janeiro a 1 fevereiro 1975
[Comissão Fulbright]

"O ensino da Literatura Norte-Americana em Universidades Brasileiras"
UFBA, Salvador, BA, 2-6 fevereiro 1976
[Comissão Fulbright]

"Língua e Literatura Inglesa"
São Paulo, SP, 5-9 julho 1976
[Conselho Britânico]

"O ensino de Shakespeare"
São Paulo, 18-22 julho 1977
[Conselho Britânico]

"O Teatro Inglês Moderno"
PUC-RS, Porto Alegre, RS, 10-14 julho 1978
[Conselho Britânico]

"O Teatro Inglês Moderno"
Universidade Católica de Petrópolis, Petrópolis, RJ, 17-21 julho 1979
[Conselho Britânico]

"Commonwealth Literature"
Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 4-8 fevereiro 1980
[Conselho Britânico]

"O ensino da Literatura de Língua Inglesa em nível universitário"
UFES, Vitória, ES, 26-30 janeiro 1981
[Conselho Britânico]

"Anglo-Irish Literature with Emphasis on Joyce"
Nova Friburgo, RJ, 21-26 janeiro 1982
[Conselho Britânico]

"O Romance Contemporâneo Inglês desde 1960"
Embu, SP, 20-26 janeiro 1983
[Conselho Britânico]

"Teatro Contemporâneo"
PUC-MG, Belo Horizonte, MG, 26 janeiro a 1 fevereiro 1984
[Conselho Britânico, USIS]

"Poesia e Ficção Contemporâneas"
PUCCAMP, Campinas, SP, 28-31 janeiro 1985
[Conselho Britânico, USIS]

"Tendências da Crítica Contemporânea"
CIES "Farias Brito", Guarulhos, SP, 27-30 janeiro 1986
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq e USIS]

"O Conto Moderno"
Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, 26-30 janeiro 1987
[Conselho Britânico, USIS, CNPq]

"A Sátira na Literatura"
Ibirá, SP, 1-5 fevereiro 1988
[Conselho Britânico, Embaixada da Irlanda, USIS]

"Trends in Recent Literature"
Universidade Estadual de Maringá, PR, 23-27 janeiro 1989
[Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CONCITEC]

"Literatura Comparada: Teoria e Prática"
Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras de Poços de Caldas, MG, 22-26 janeiro 1990
[Prefeitura Municipal de Poços de Caldas, Conselho Britânico, CNPq]

"Literatura, História e Mito"
UFMG, Belo Horizonte, MG, 28 janeiro a 1 fevereiro 1991
[Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FAPEMIG]

"A Literatura dos Descobrimentos"
UFPB, João Pessoa, PB, 27-31 janeiro 1992
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, USIS]

"Interdisciplinaridade"
UNESP S.J. Rio Preto, 25-28 janeiro 1993
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FAPESP, USIS]

"Humor e Ironia na Literatura"
PUCCAMP, Campinas, 25-29 janeiro 1994
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, USIS]

"Redemarcando as Fronteiras: Literaturas de Língua Inglesa Hoje"
águas de Lindóia, SP, 30 janeiro a 3 fevereiro 1995
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FAPESP, USIS]

"Literatura e Cinema" (XXVIII SENAPULLI) "
Ouro Preto, MG, 29 janeiro a 2 fevereiro 1996
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CAPES, FAPEMIG, UFOP, USIS]

"Literatura e Estudos Culturais"
Atibaia, SP, 27-31 janeiro 1997
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CAPES, FAPESP, USIS]

"Ensaio e Biografia"
Atibaia, SP, 27-31 julho 1998
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CAPES, FAPESP, USIS]

"Neo-Realismo: Página, Palco e Tela – Neo Realism: Page, Stage and Screen"
Centro de Ensino Superior de Juiz de Fora, MG, 17- 21 julho 2000
[ABECAN, The British Council, Embaixada Americana, CAPES, CNPq, FAPESP]

"Literaturas de Língua Inglesa: Visões e Revisões"
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, SC, 06-10 abril 2003
[ABECAN, The British Council, Embaixada Americana, CAPES, CNPq, FAPESP]

"Literature and Other Arts"
Fortaleza, CE, 12-16 junho 2005
[Capes, Embaixada Americana, Yázigi Internexus, UECE]

ENPULI
Encontro Nacional de Professores Universitários de Língua Inglesa
"Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa"
Natal, RN, 29 janeiro a 2 fevereiro 1979
[Conselho Britânico]

"Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa"
UFMG, Belo Horizonte, MG, 30 junho a 4 julho 1980
[Conselho Britânico]

"Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa"
UFBA, Salvador, BA, 16-21 julho 1981
[Conselho Britânico]

"Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa"
UFSC, Florianópolis, SC, 14-20 julho 1982
[Conselho Britânico e Comissão Fulbright]

"Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa"
PUC-SP, São Paulo, SP, 17-22 julho 1983
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, Finep/FNDCT]

"Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa"
UFPE, Recife, PE, 22-27 julho 1984
[Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico, CNPq]

"Communicative Language Teaching"
UFC, Fortaleza, CE, 28 julho a 2 agosto 1985
[Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico]

"Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa"
UnB, Brasília, DF, 25-29 julho 1988
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq]

"Desafios na Formação do Professor/Profissional de Língua Estrangeira no Brasil"
UFRN, Natal, RN, 21-25 agosto 1989
[Conselho Britânico, FNDE/MEC, Inep/MEC, Funpec, USIS]

"Avaliação Curricular: Repensando Objetivos, Métodos e Testagem no Ensino de Inglês"
PUC-RJ, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 30 julho a 3 agosto 1990
[Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico]

"Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa"
Faculdade São Marcos, São Paulo, SP, 29 julho a 2 agosto 1991
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, Embaixada do Canadá, USIS]

"A Autonomia na Aprendizagem (Towards Learner Autonomy)"
UFRGS, Porto Alegre, RS, 19-23 julho 1993
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, Fapers, USIS]

"Interdisciplinaridade e Trocas de Experiências Inter-Universitárias: Compartilhando Recursos Humanos e Acadêmicos"
PUC-RJ, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 24-28 julho, 1995
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, Faperj, USIS]

"Social Implications (in Pedagogy and in Discourse) of Teaching English as a Foreign Language"
UFMG, Belo Horizonte, MG, 21-24 julho 1997
[Conselho Britânico, CNPq, Capes, Fapemig]

"The Teaching/Learning of English: Focus on Identity, Texts and Practices"
FFLCH/USP, São Paulo, SP, 19-22 julho 1999
[Conselho Britânico, Capes, Yázigi, Alpha Idiomas, CEL-LEP, CNPq, Fapesp]

"Formação de Professores em Tempos de Mudança"
UEL, Londrina, PR, 2-6 setembro 2001
[Capes, CNPq, Conselho Britânico, Embaixada Americana, Fundação Araucária]

"A Interculturalidade no Ensino de Inglês"
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, SC, 06-10 abril 2003
[ABECAN, The British Council, Embaixada Americana, CAPES, CNPq, FAPESP]

"Language and Media"
Fortaleza, CE, 12-16 junho 2005
[Capes, Embaixada Americana, Yázigi Internexus, UECE]

CONGRESSO INTERNACIONAL
"New Challenges in Language and Literature"
Belo Horizonte, MG, 3-6 junho 2007
[Capes, CNPq, Fapemig, Embaixada Americana, ABECAN, UFMG]

Outros
Mesa-Redonda sobre Pós-Graduação em Literaturas de Língua Inglesa no Brasil
Itamaraty, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 11-13 outubro 1982
[UFRJ, Conselho Britânico]
Encontro Regional de Profs. Universitários de Língua Inglesa (Região Centro-Leste)
PUC-RJ, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, julho 1986
[Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico]

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