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Apresentação

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CONTENTS

A Prefatory Note

Márcia Lemos..... 8

darling! because my blood can sing: Contours of Lust and Sensibility in Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy

Sara de Sousa 10

“Try seeing indians”: Auto, Hetero e Meta-imagens em *A Passage to India*

Inês Monteiro..... 25

Displacement e Interseções entre Espaço e Identidade em *Voyage in the Dark*, de Jean Rhys, e *The Lonely Londoners*, de Sam Selvon

Mariana Batista da Cruz..... 40

A Borrowed Place on Borrowed Time: Childhood, Ambivalence and the Symbolic Power of the Japanese Occupation of Hong Kong in Martin Booth's *Music on the Bamboo Radio* (1997)

Ana Brígida Paiva..... 57

The Policing of Private Conscience: Literary Interjections on Public Morals

Mark J. R. Wakefield..... 72

John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley*: In Search of What Kind of America?

Alice Carletto 91

Alegoria Distópica da Contemporaneidade e Biopolítica em *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013), de J.M. Coetzee

Cidália Barbosa..... 109

Refracted: *Alias Grace* Series Through a Freudian Perspective

Bárbara J. Paiva 121

A Prefatory Note

Márcia Lemos

The current issue of *Via Panoramica* is a tribute to narrative and its celebratory powers as regards the human experience. In such an exciting journey there could be no better start than Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* which is the focus of Sara de Sousa's article suggestively titled "*darling! because my blood can sing: Contours of Lust and Sensibility in Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy*". Sousa's main purpose is to analyse how sexual practices and expressions of sensibility juxtapose with language to generate meaning.

From Sterne's foundational novel the focus shifts to postcolonial readings of twentieth century novels. Indeed, while Inês Monteiro's "'Try seeing indians': Auto, Hetero e Meta-imagens em *A Passage to India*" revisits E. M. Forster's 1924 novel to provide a new insight into Forster's social commentary on the Indian society under British colonial rule, by using the theoretical tools of Imagology; in "*Displacement e Interseções entre Espaço e Identidade em Voyage in the Dark, de Jean Rhys, e The Lonely Londoners, de Sam Selvon*", Mariana Batista da Cruz examines how two Caribbean exiles deal with a sense of displacement while living in London, thus creating new postcolonial identities. Ana Brígida Paiva's "A Borrowed Place on Borrowed Time: Childhood, Ambivalence and the Symbolic Power of the Japanese Occupation of Hong Kong in Martin Booth's *Music on the Bamboo Radio* (1997)" further develops this compelling theme of postcolonial anxiety by analysing how Booth's novel, set during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, subverts colonial power structures by showing British and Hong Kong Chinese joining forces against another common enemy.

Mark J. R. Wakefield and Alice Carletto centre their respective articles on American literature. In "The Policing of Private Conscience: Literary Interjections on Public Morals", Ray Bradbury's influential *Fahrenheit 451* is subject to Wakefield's analysis in his interpretation of how literary works can act as a counterweight to diversified censorial forces. Carletto, on the other hand, focus on John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley* to revisit American road narrative from an ecocritical perspective, searching for yet another vision of America as the title of the article

indicates (“John Steinbeck’s *Travels with Charley: In Search of What Kind of America?*”).

Twenty-first century narrative is represented in the current issue by Cidalia Barbosa’s article titled “Alegoria Distópica da Contemporaneidade e Biopolítica em *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013), de J.M. Coetzee”. Barbosa’s main purpose is to analyse how dystopian elements and biopolitics underlie the novel producing an allegory of contemporaneity.

The issue is brought into a conclusion through Bárbara J. Paiva’s Freudian reading of *Alias Grace*, a TV miniseries inspired by Canadian author Margaret Atwood’s 1996 homonymous novel. Paiva’s “Refracted: *Alias Grace* Series Through a Freudian Perspective” attempts to show how visual narratives can add further layers to an already successful literary narrative. Taking film studies language as an important theoretical set of tools, while establishing other connections, Paiva aims to prove the copious presence of the male gaze and patriarchal values in a narrative that depicts a nineteenth century stereotyped society invested in the annihilation of the female subject represented by Grace Marks, the main protagonist of the tale.

darling! because my blood can sing: Contours of Lust and Sensibility in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*

Sara de Sousa

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Abstract

As Viktor Shklovsky describes in his *Theory of Prose* (1929), Laurence Sterne's masterwork *Tristram Shandy* (1767) can storm the most proficient of readers with an overwhelming "sense of chaos". In fact, critics have amply discussed the novel's innovative treatment of fictional possibilities, where language as a medium receives an undeniable prominence. However, another topic of interest stands out in Sterne's critical heritage, that of an apparent qualitative antagonism regarding sexuality and sensibility: as demonstrated by numerous critical reviews of the time, physicality is deemed unbecoming within the novel's sensitive landscape. The main purpose of this paper is to consider how sexual practices and expressions of sensibility overlap in verbal and non-verbal discourse, forming inherent connotative symbolism. Moreover, it seeks to establish relevant connections between the author's manifold intertextuality and contemporary understanding of anatomical dissociation, its sociological outcomes, and, most importantly, how they manifest tangibly within the narrative.

Keywords: Literature; Laurence Sterne; Sexuality; Sensibility; Science; Criticism

Resumo

Como Viktor Shklovsky descreve na sua *Teoria da Prosa* (1929), a obra-prima de Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy* (1767), pode invadir o mais proficiente dos leitores com uma esmagadora "sensação de caos". De facto, a crítica tem discutido amplamente o seu tratamento inovador das possibilidades da ficção, no qual a linguagem como meio recebe uma proeminência inegável. Contudo, outro tópico de interesse destaca-se no património crítico de Sterne, o de um aparente antagonismo qualitativo concernindo a sexualidade e a sensibilidade: como demonstrado por numerosas recensões críticas da época, a fisicalidade é entendida como imprópria na paisagem sensível do romance. O principal intuito deste artigo é o de ponderar como práticas sexuais e expressões de sensibilidade coincidem no discurso verbal e não-verbal, formando um simbolismo conotativo inerente. Ademais, procura estabelecer conexões

relevantes entre a intertextualidade múltipla do autor e o entendimento contemporâneo de dissociação anatômica, os seus efeitos sociológicos, e, sobretudo, como estes se manifestam de forma tangível na narrativa.

Palavras-chave: Literatura; Laurence Sterne; Sexualidade; Sensibilidade; Ciência; Crítica

. . . REASON is, half of it, SENSE; and the measure of heaven itself is but the
measure of our present appetites and concoctions . . .

– Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy* (7.13)

since feeling is first
who pays any attention
to the syntax of things
will never wholly kiss you;

wholly to be a fool
while Spring is in the world

my blood approves,
and kisses are a better fate
than wisdom
lady i swear by all flowers. Don't cry
– the best gesture of my brain is less than
your eyelids' flutter which says

we are for each other; then
laugh, leaning in my arms
for life's not a paragraph

And death i think is no parenthesis

– e.e. cummings, “since feeling is first”

In his 1827 commentary to the *Edinburgh Herald*, Thomas Carlyle marvels at the apparent conflict found within sensibility and humour.² The British essayist's concerns are indeed undeniably conscious of their current atmosphere: it seems that the general tendency of early criticism on Laurence Sterne's notable work *Tristram Shandy*³ recurrently gravitates towards this exact anxiety: whether fine feeling can be reaped from minds “coarse and callous” (qtd. in Howes 379).

Indeed, one can picture an entirely new theory of anxiety of influence applied to the diachronic transfiguration of a work's criticism. Dynamics of legacy, mediation, completion and antithesis⁴ rule the inevitably intertextual exercise of any creation - medieval *marginalia*, for instance, are an admirable case of how commentary composes a renewed textual cosmology. As a result, it seems legitimate to observe how Carlyle's nineteenth-century critique of the “shallow endowment” of humour unfounded in matters of the heart⁵ flows from a fixed chain of thought. Beyond Samuel Johnson's nearly epigrammatic remark on the novel,⁶ Owen Ruffhead refutes an exercise of “Folly” and “want of *Discretion*” of a writer “worse beluted and bemired

than the . . . squab Doctor” (qtd. in Howes 121). Ralph Griffith underlines a defeat regarding “what is *proposed* and what is *done*” in supposedly half-witted “preliminary scrap” (*TS* 441*⁷). Langhorne, however, regrets the clergyman’s breach of character⁸ by the use of “obscenity as wit” (qtd. in Howes 141), a positional concern shared by the anonymous author of a letter to the *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*:

Whether the using of immodest words, and the want of decency, always imply want of sense; . . . or whether, on the contrary, such freedom, may not, on certain occasions, be the result of good sense; I will not take it upon me absolutely to determine But how far it is excusable in any author, especially one who wears the gown, to gratify and promote a prevailing corrupted taste, either directly or indirectly, let himself and the world judge. I again repeat that it is really great pity he has not shewn more delicacy in this particular, for otherwise the book is truly excellent in its kind. (qtd. in Howes 63)

Yet, ensuing responses often praise later volumes. Carlyle’s piece is assumedly more benevolent than most of its antecedents: it acknowledges Sterne as the “finest” among his peers, achieving a heartfelt quality devoid of a “bitter and caustic rind” - as is, according to the author, the case with Swift and Johnson (qtd. in Howes 380); Bulwer-Lytton would too admit a similar view of synchronic antagonism.⁹ Unsurprisingly, Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim are recurring honourable mentions: to Samuel Richardson, their “admirable characterisation” embroiders a silver lining on “gross and vulgar tales” (qtd. in Howes 129).

As a result, it is possible to gather that the aforementioned tradition of reception appears to convey an impression of severance: the expression of sexuality as humoristic discourse blemishes the recognised brilliance of fervent emotion, lauded by its “extreme tenderness of feeling” (Hazlitt, qtd. in Howes 361). Nevertheless, I find it is worth acknowledging Frank Brady’s conciliatory view of inescapable association. While admitting that a disjunctive analysis is not as feasible,¹⁰ one is more eager to trust that humanness is equally “lyrical” and “devilish” (*TS* 8.13: 351): an attempt at rupture “merely brings them together at the drop of a hat” (Brady 53). The purpose of this essay is therefore to discuss how this dialectic of sentiment and sensation is, in fact, a fundamental element in *TS*’s structure, a propelling - and digressing, as it is inevitable to mention - mechanism in the complex clockwork where intertextuality, formal experimentalism and innovative carving of language are indispensable cogs. Moreover, its line of research endeavours to expand on relevant undercurrents of

interpretation: most particularly, the novel's exegesis on the vortex-like constructions of gender and anatomy commanding the scientific and sociological discourse of the eighteenth-century.

Few would dispute the impact of Laurence Sterne's treatment of sentiment in the - as Singh asserts, unfortunately unattended¹¹ - following practices of the theme. In fact, as Tim Parnell defends, "perhaps more than any other aspect . . . [it] has been consistently misunderstood" (*TS* 498*). According to the author, Sterne frames sentiment devoid of ironic undertones derived from hyperbolic *pathos*. It may seem odd to admit that an authorial voice as "critic of critics" as Sterne's would surrender to "sacrific[ing] his own preference for wit in the interests of a readership hungry for *pathos*"¹² (*ibidem* 491*), a possibility Parnell only partially admits as a means of financial sustenance; however, such a pragmatic reading seems generalised and incomplete (*ibidem**). Following this line of reasoning, it may be problematic to accept a trite tear-jerking device if one ponders the fondness expressed in Sterne's letter to Lady¹³ -, or his "epitaph" of "kindred tempers" addressed to Mrs. James.¹⁴ Moreover, it would seem spiteful to presume that sentiment must be considered "an aberration of Sterne's sickly final years": as Parnell befittingly concludes, pathetic landscapes "are consistent features of *Tristram Shandy*", "not a licence to emote indiscriminately" (*ibidem* 495*). An approach based on conjectural senility - and a supposed movement towards feeling blooming from feebleness - fails to recognize that sexual humour remains firmly present until the concluding paragraph.

Therefore, must delivery of sentiment be seen as an "unusual" twist of events devised for "relief" (Brady 51) to erotically impregnated discourse? To consider sensibility as "a different key" (*ibidem*) is to betray an idea of necessary disparity between phenomena, a reiterated disposition in the work's early criticism. A breaking of the fourth wall frequently restricts the space between narration and reception: by censuring "gravity" as "design, and consequently deceit" (*TS* 1.11: 20), self-preaching intellectuals are presented parading "beggarly accounts of a little learning, tinselled over with a few words which glitter, but convey little light and less warmth" (4.26: 204), neglecting that "the soul and body are joint-sharers in every thing they get" (9.13: 391). The novel ardently compels us to examine the moments when "the *extreams* of DELICACY and the beginnings of CONCUPISCENCE" (5.1: 224) continually converge. The ambiguity in these encounters vastly enriches the tender, heart-healthy atmosphere that brings delight and banishes LA TRISTESSA (7.PLAIN STORIES: 342), the ultimate Shandean intent (4.32: 216). Therefore, as it can be acknowledged, intrinsically distinct keys can coexist in a progression without causing bewilderment:

that is, I tend not to recognise one full-fledged harmonic division, but rather the presence of inversions and developments of the same fundamental chords.

Firstly, it seems inescapable to analyse the work's handling of sexuality not merely by its behavioural outcomes: what academic and cultural forces enact these patterns? In fact, *TS* braids old and new anatomies, often disconnected from their contextual framework and “juxtaposed in an often arbitrary and relativist fashion” (Hawley, “The Anatomy of *Tristram Shandy*” 479*). The scientific mosaic composed by ancient humoral readings and eighteenth-century research supporting the interests of vitalism and iatromechanics in human development, as Hawley explains, are not to be taken merely as a strict, unyielding theoretical background, but as a pliable landscape of character experimentalism for novelists.¹⁵

As fittingly exposed by Karen Harvey in “The Century of Sex? Gender, Bodies, and Sexuality in the Long Eighteenth Century” (2002), eighteenth-century historiography “posit[s] this period as the century of change in the ways in which the bodies were understood, sexuality constructed, and sexual activity carried out” (900). The reordering of sexual anatomy's understanding to a “two-sex model”, recurring to Laqueur's proposed terminology, progressively effaced the biological foundations of the “one-sex model”, a structural correspondence between male and female genitalia supported by the ancient humoral system amply mentioned in *TS*.¹⁶ Following this reasoning, *TS*'s *Argumentum ad Rem* seems oddly representative and revealing, as it strives for enlightenment over “the right end of a woman”: “. . . let them likewise be kept apart, and be treated of in a place by themselves” (*TS* 1.21: 48). This assignment of distinctive status to the feminine body is considered the birth of modern sex (Harvey, “The Century” 901). Yet, sociological studies explain how it primarily translated into a reinforcing of unequal distribution of power and of restraining gender norms, as the scope of desirable sexual conduct increasingly narrowed to a phallogentric, procreative paradigm (Tosh, qtd. in Harvey 906). However, significant change occurs not in a clear-cut point of disruption: sexual practice, as a cultural product, is strenuously prone to disagreement between academic writing and synchronic social practices.¹⁷ It appears urgent to recall that “culture is not a monolith”, as it is uncertain to what extent did Laqueur's dichotomies permeate everyday interaction (Harvey, “The Century” 913-5).

Sterne did not take this renewed range of possibilities lightly. Indeed, Harvey's article is keen on weighing distinct narratives regarding bodily interpretation: by deeming diachronic assessment inadequate, it demonstrates a legitimate logomachy where normative investigation and oral erotic culture toiled for psychological

presence. Hence, it can be argued that *TS* mirrors the ambiguous nature of this debate, as this paper will attempt to demonstrate by a particular set of characters and events. A chemist of foregone eras and modern theories, Sterne combines four valuable test-subjects: Walter, his *MAN OF SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY*; Elizabeth, the alienated, *poco-curante* spouse; Toby, obviously building castles in the sky; lastly, as *militat omnis amans*, Widow Wadman.

Standing before the aforementioned historical environment, it would seem groundless to evade the rendering of the wrongful “daughter[s] of Eve” (*TS* 8.8: 348). In other words, bawdy, gender-specific humour is, as previously displayed by a brief overview of striking critical pieces, one of the most discussed traits of *TS*’s “comedy of errors”.¹⁸ Nonetheless, though facing a plethora of *COVER’D-WAY-IN* jests (2.6: 66), readers are still seized by an uncanny sense of obscurity regarding the concrete woman. An atmosphere of hazy mistrust envelops the local midwife: the ineptitude of “her own efforts” is heavily implied, as the “happy fortune” of “dame nature” (1.7: 10) arises as a valid solution for two decades of successful births: as explained in 1.18, there is not “one slip or accident which could fairly be laid to her account” (1.18: 33; emphasis added). Further denial of corporeal self-awareness is revealed in Walter Shandy’s rantings in Volume 1: Tristram’s more benevolent justifications of “wind or water . . . the mere swell of imagination and fancy” (30) spiral into accusations of “vile trick and imposition” (31).

A play of many plots is thereby enacted in this clouded feminine frame. Elizabeth seemingly embodies McLaren’s picture of “the passive Victorian lying back and thinking of the empire” (qtd. in Harvey 903) - or, in a curious twist of events, thinking of the household deity of a winding clock. Following Harvey and Merchant’s modelling of the eighteenth-century middle- and upper-class woman, Elizabeth’s body is enclosed in the private sphere,¹⁹ rendered chaste, dispassionate, asexual in male recollection:

A temperate current of blood ran orderly through her veins in all months of the year, and in all critical moments both of the day and night alike; nor did she superinduce the least heat into her humours from the manual effervescencies of devotional tracts . . . And as for my father’s example! . . . ‘twas the whole business of his life to keep all fancies of that kind out of her head - Nature had done her part, to have spared him this trouble; and what was not a little inconsistent, my father knew it (*TS* 9.1: 381)

However, the clock soon strikes on the stage of perceptions; a change of costumes is due. In Walter Shandy's stage of perceptions, the phantasms of the loving, domestic spirit and that of the capricious Eve seem inextricable. From maternal nursing, the "inescapable biology" (Hitchcock, qtd. in Harvey 905), the child inherits "prejudice of education . . . *the devil*" (TS 5.16: 240). Beyond the maternal processes of nurturing, Walter, the "late but defiantly antifeminist reader of the Genesis story" (Loscocco, "Can't Live Without 'Em" 166), seems most terrified of psychological influence, one he can never properly systematise. Though the physical efforts of labour may dislodge the fine web of sapience, it is harmful fancy that shapes ruthless emperors.²⁰ Unfortunately for the stiff, self-denying natural philosopher, his idealised one-seed method for the begetting of a capable copy-child is yet a distant dream.

Walter Shandy is indeed emblematic in his extensive intellectual idiosyncrasies. From dissertations on NOSES to disastrous attachment to first-name influence, Walter aims to rectify even the slightest gestures of his son's future governor (TS 6.5: 265), emphasising his preferences of machinery over organic matter. However, Walter still exhibits signs of dwelling in interactive sexual standards. In his "letter of instructions" to Toby in 8.34, he fosters the persuasive nature of whispering, as "[s]ilence, and whatever approaches it, weaves dreams of midnight secrecy into the brain" (377). Moreover, he betrays performative anxiety, recognising that, though his pleasure increases "not a jot" (2.12: 75), it is desirable "to shew himself a man of prowess", "no matter whether he loves the service or no" (8.34: 375). At the same time, humorous recognition of a shaved head for concealing the inexorable passage of time also uncovers wary sensitivity towards heteronormative expectations:²¹

Shave the whole top of thy crown clean, once at least every four or five days, but oftner if convenient; lest in taking off thy wig before her, thro' absence of mind, she should be able to discover how much has been cut away by Time - how much by Trim. - 'Twere better to keep ideas of baldness out of her fancy. (376-7)

A third agent intervenes in the reconfiguration of sexuality; in a stroke of irony, one that is famed specifically for not acting. Unlike his brother, Uncle Toby allows enchantment to rewire every fibre within him. As Widow Wadman casts her spell, he is as submissive "as a lamb", sitting "still and let[ting] the poison work in his veins without resistance" (8.26: 369). With his compassionate demeanour and his mirthful naiveté, Uncle Toby embodies a spiritual counterpart of Walter, a militarised utopia where the fiends of "art and circumvention of woman" (8.34: 375) dissolve in blissful oblivion of the Other.²²

These options of representation, allied to the continual cloaking of events behind aposiopes***, have catalysed significant discussion on many possible anti-feminist readings of the novel. Though not dismissing the soundness of such interpretations, I find it necessary to recognise Loscocco's pertinent portrayal of a titanic conflict in the field towards accountability,²³ as it can be argued that "the novel implicitly defines his antifeminist ways as erroneous" (*ibidem* 168). If one considers the implications of gender-focused reception, it is indeed curious to see Sterne's account of "squeamish" women guided as frightened Dantes through an *Inferno* of whiskers, an ironic account of perceived prudery amongst critics.²⁴ In fact, the inversion of the characters' own inclinations is realised by placing the lens on sexually charged evidences, to which Slawkenbergius's tale stands as an important occurrence. Whole sisterhoods are possessed by projected chimeras of larger-than-life NOSES as they scratch, tumble and toss in their blankets for hours on end (TS 4.SLAWKENBERGIUS'S TALE: 163). Thus, visions of the "earthy" medieval body are liberated into the enclosed space of chasteness, where ladies count their "beads with both hands, unsuspected under [their] farthingale" (5.1: 222), and the erotic significance of tousled locks heightens proximity and evokes "the simplicity which poets sing of in better days" (7.PLAIN STORIES).

Furthermore, it would seem undeniable to concede that a great part of this dialogue is performed outside the boundaries of verbal language. Such transgression is native to the novel's macrostructural games. If the novel wanders beyond its original premise, how could one blame its characters for engaging in reverie and misunderstanding? As Brady reasonably describes, sex and sensibility in Sterne are entwined threads streaming from a common mead: equivocation. As a result, writhing as if embraced by too tight a pair of breeches, characters endeavour to surpass verbal fallibility and find closure beyond the "hundred little delicacies that st[and] in the way" (*A Sentimental Journey* 27).

What forms of expression constitute these attempts? Firstly, it seems imperative to grant touch its authority of persuasion, as *A Sentimental Journey's*²⁵ Yorick and his fleeting *dame* would vehemently subscribe. Accidentally determined hand-holding is prolonged to tender yearning; yet, words blaze and boil bonded by custom and "good breeding", and a self-recognised defeat closes the most eager of lips:

She had scarce got twenty paces distant from me, ere something within me called out for a more particular enquiry; - it brought on the idea of a further separation: - I

might possibly never see her more: - The heart is for saving what it can I wished to know her name, - her family's - her condition; and as I knew the place to which she was going, I wanted to know from whence she came: but there was no coming at all this intelligence; a hundred little delicacies stood in the way. I form'd a score different plans. - There was no such thing as a man's asking her directly; - the thing was impossible. (ASJ 27)

When all speech is barren, Sterne composes the poetics of silence: *in their most frail gesture are things which enclose them*.²⁶ However, as Widow Wadman's LOVE-MILITANCY proves, unsuspecting hearts are often set aflame "at both ends at once" (TS 8.16: 353). When close combat in the sentry-box seems scant, gaze is the heavy artillery of choice, for it truly "has the quickest commerce with the soul . . . and leaves something more inexpressible upon the fancy, than words can either convey" (5.9: 272) - then, a digressive mind inclined to endearment recalls yet again cummings's imagery: Toby's denuded innocence does "not know what it is about [Wadman] that closes / and opens; only something in [him] understands / the voice of [her] eyes is deeper than all roses".²⁷ As Tristram acknowledges, "[i]t was an eye - But I shall be in love with it myself, if I say another word about it" (8.25: 368): it was precisely the ardent gentleness of its silent whispers that "did [his] uncle Toby's business" (*ibidem*). In other words, Widow Wadman fulfils her conquest in a scene that truly walks the line separating humour, erotic endeavour and the embodiment of sentimental conflicts. As a result, it would seem constraining to dismiss the sensible in body Sexual or the physical in body Sentiment.

The present association does not intend to affirm that all physicalities displayed are immanently sentimental. Key-scenes such as Tristram's conception and circumcision compose a comedy by contradiction: attainable *tableaux* arise from a common bedrock of narrative experimentalism that transcends its immediate symbols. Edmund Burke, albeit reproachful of "tiresome" digressions, is indisputable when referring to "a perpetual series of disappointments" (qtd. in Howes 106). Yet, these comical reversals, often performed in the novel through the medium of language, are fundamental to the development of emotional and physical allegories. As Allen describes, *TS* proposes a principle of intimate connection between an ideal, stable univocity of symbols and sexual potential ("Sexuality/Textuality in *Tristram Shandy*" 655). Unfortunately, "[t]he major difficulty presented by language is that it is not a stable form of signification" (*ibidem*). As such, the recurrent motif of sexual inexperience and impotency mirrors, in a sense, the novel's defeat at achieving its own title's commitment. To a certain extent, it is also worth considering how

Laqueur's theory of "violent pleasure" as *conditio sine qua non* of "successful generation" (qtd. in Harvey 903) thoroughly dismisses Walter's farcical paroxysms and hopes of reproductive self-sufficiency beyond "his scapegoat of choice, woman's body" (Loscocco, "Can't Live Without 'Em" 176). Thus it seems perfectly possible to assume the presence of a metafictional trick according to which Elizabeth's iconic observation is not the only encumbrance in the act of conception. If, on the one hand, Elizabeth's absent-mindedness betrays sincere disappointment,²⁸ Walter's "perfect maleness" (Loscocco, "Can't Live Without 'Em" 169), on the other hand, cannot manage anything beyond hollow silence:²⁹ how could Tristram ever thrive? Thus, disruption of pattern is sovereignty in a novel where formal chaos is the metric for expectation and denial. Brady stresses "arrest of affect", where sex and sentiment coexist in permanent inhibition:

Many critics have remarked on what might be called "arrest of affect" in the novel, the way in which the sentimental and the sexual inhibit each other. Arrest of affect permits Sterne to undermine the reader's settled patterns without unduly disturbing him. (Brady 54)

These perpetual assertions of promise and denial, disquiet and repression followed by unsatisfactory delegation of meaning, contribute to the riddle of Shklovsky's "erotic estrangement"; readers are left in a myriad of literary purgatories where an elucidation on "button-holes" will never come (*TS* 5.8: 233). Cloaked in euphemism, they are root for convolution within the mechanics of the narrative, continuously dimming and delaying events:

He [Toby] is being wooed by a widow, who would very much like to know whether or not he had in fact been castrated by that wound. Yet, at this time she cannot bring herself to ask the fateful question . . . [misunderstanding] is introduced into the text as a device for the purpose of impeding the Toby-widow romance. (Shklovsky, *Theory of Prose* 163-4)

Nonetheless, despite the necessary equivocation, some communicative compromise is accepted by all parties involved: touching, beckoning, gesturing, the bare flourishing of a sword slashing through the air are structures of "proper speech" (*ibidem* 167). This is crucial to all levels of narration: in *THE INTRICANCIES OF DIEGO AND JULIA* (*TS* 4.1), a meticulous progression of gestures contributes to the furthering of two reunited journeys. Emerging towards the core plot, Trim's body language with Mrs Bridget in 9.28 serves as a restorative agent in Toby's public image:

. . . and in this cursed trench, Mrs Bridget, quoth the Corporal, taking her by the hand, did [Toby] receive his wound which crush'd him so miserably *here* - In pronouncing which he slightly press'd the back of her hand towards the part he felt for - and let it fall.

We thought, Mr. Trim, it had been more in the middle - said Mrs. Bridget -

That would have undone us for ever - said the Corporal.

- And left my poor mistress undone too - said Bridget.” (406)

Finally, boundless metalepsis leads us to Tristram-as-narrator, waving his forefinger at an undetermined point of his “vessel of the human frame”, knowing all too well we cannot “help ourselves” (8.4: 345-6) from pantomiming all doubt away.

This analysis has explored how euphemistic literary figurations, in varying degrees of transparency, have striven to depict the body as an agent of pleasure. Yet, as the sensible element complexifies the experience, it seems impossible to overlook its authority. When physical eruption is unfeasible, the inner workings of lust in the mind-to-mind dialogue are, in fact, approached to a considerable extent, thus expanding the vocal scope for the female perspective. For instance, Widow Wadman’s extensive inner world of expectation is crucial to the development of Uncle Toby’s *amours*, the erecting of dreams intrinsically tied to self-perception, as “a woman has a power, physically speaking, of viewing a man in more lights than one - but here, for her soul, she can see him in no light without mixing something of her own goods and chattels along with him” (8.8: 348).

As such, in nearly eleven years of armistice (8.10: 350), Wadman has little to grasp and nurse beyond her archetypal haven,³⁰ formed with “the best and kindest of clay”, tempered “with her own milk” (9.22: 398). Such exercise of idealising does not, however, efface tender remembrance of past intimate connections: in the second night of Toby’s brief stay, “she took out her marriage-settlement, and read it over **with great devotion**” (8.9: 349; emphasis added). This experience of recollection enables closure for former tangles of yearning, a final step towards the determinant kick of the pin in the third night.³¹

By considering the centrality of daydreaming in the feminine sexual behaviour of the novel, it is equally pressing to mention how the Sternean male psyche is far from exempt of idealising. No gardener nor gladiator is exempt from the control of FANCY, “musing upon the bank . . . [turning] straws and bulrushes into masts and bowsprits” (TS 8.5: 346). In addition, *ASJ*’s Yorick shows how enchantment, “the root of the root and the bud of the bud”³² of attraction, can be mordaciously pictured as a fanciful Eros:

I had not yet seen her face - t'was not material . . . *Fancy* had finished the whole head and pleased herself as much with its fitting her goddess . . . - but thou art a seduced, and a seducing slut; and albeit thou cheatest us seven times a day with thy pictures and images, yet with so many charms dost thou do it, and thou deckest out thy pictures in the shapes of so many angels of light, 'tis a shame to break with thee. (ASJ 19)

It is natural to visualise how Yorick's admiration mirrors Uncle Toby's impression of Wadman's considerate kindness (TS 9.32: 408-9): one can scarcely believe how he has managed not to explode into a cacophony of *Lillabuleros* after such great disillusion.

Thus, it seems relevant to clarify that, though halted bewitchment runs the play, characters are not necessarily lost in a mire of semantic confusion. Corporal Trim is keen to acknowledge his tender inclinations towards the young Beguine:

. . . - she wish'd me rest, and promised to be with me early in the morning. - She wish'd me, and please your honour, what was not to be had. My fever ran very high that night - her figure made sad disturbance within me - I was every moment cutting the world in two—to give her half of it - and every moment was I crying, That I had nothing . . . to share with her . . . my heart sickened, and I lost colour when she left the room . . . (TS 8.20: 364-5)

Corporal Trim promptly “clarifies” - if one is allowed to use such a term on enigmas and periphrases, the ruling planets of the novel's linguistic cosmology - that said disposition is initially a product of lust, rather than “love” (*ibidem*). Moreover, Uncle Toby's solution of (very periphrastic) “passion . . . to the highest pitch” (8.22: 366) may likely cause a comical reaction; however, this warm memory, tinted with awareness of “sad disturbance within” the electrified body, enhances the proximity of the sentimental and the erotic, as lust and longing overlap in remembrance. As 8.22 endorses, this synergy “contain[s] in it the essence of all the love-romances which ever have been wrote” (*ibidem*).

In conclusion, this analysis of attainable literature has striven to emphasize a perspective on TS increasingly embraced by scholars: as Friedrich Nietzsche eloquently expressed, Laurence Sterne “knew what lies between sublimity and rascality” (TS 453*). Physical responsiveness and emotional awareness meet in a unique “carnal and spiritual hermaphroditism” (*ibidem*), where language as a medium is simultaneously device and motif. In this inexhaustible novel, profoundly conscious of the academic discussions and the necessarily multifarious social practices of its era, “uncrystallised

flesh and blood” render “the soul stark naked” with a subtlety and conscience of raw humanity that paint Nietzsche’s “freest writer”.

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² "It has sometimes been made a wonder that things so discordant should go together - that men of humour are often likewise men of sensibility. But the wonder should rather be to see them divided." (qtd. in Howes 379)

³ Henceforth referred to by its initials as follows: *TS*.

⁴ As proposed by Harold Bloom in his *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (1973).

⁵ "That faculty of irony . . . which often passes by the name of humour, but consists chiefly in a certain superficial distortion or reversal of objects, and ends at best in laughter." (qtd. in Howes 379)

⁶ "Nothing odd will do long. 'Tristram Shandy' did not last." (Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* 733)

⁷ All in-text references with this configuration of asterisks indicate additional critical reviews, biographical evidence and essays included in Hawley's Norton Critical Edition of *TS*. Such is the case of Parnell's and Hawley's articles, the critical review of Griffith and the epitaph to Mrs. James quoted in Parnell. These individual occurrences are mentioned in separate references in the "Works Cited" section.

⁸ "[W]e have hitherto had occasion to lament that, while the author was exerting his talents to maintain the humour and consistency of his characters, he himself was so much out of character, and we could wish sincerely that we had now no farther reason for complains of that kind." (qtd. in Howes 141)

⁹ "In a context of praise of Sterne's digressive style: "In an age when other grand writers were squaring their periods by rule and compass, he flings forth his jocund sentences loose and at random; . . . yet how they shine where they soar, and how lightly rebound when they fall!" (qtd. in Howes 28)

¹⁰ "The larger relationships among sentiment, sensibility, and sexuality in *Tristram* are not so easy to define." (Brady 51)

¹¹ "[H]owever, the role of sentimentality usually comes second when discussing the literary movements of the century." (Singh, "The Sentimentality of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*")

¹² Regarding *pathos* and the fantastic phantasmagoria of an "invisible cock", an anonymous article from *Critical Review* 19 comments: "[v]ideri vult et est" [He wants to be seen and is.] (qtd in Howes 160).

¹³ "I am scribbling away at **my Tristram** . . . I shall write as long as I live, 'tis, in fact, **my hobby-horse** . . . so much am I **delighted** with my uncle Toby's imaginary character, that I am become an **enthusiast**." (qtd. in Howes 135; all emphasis added). This aura of fond commitment to his task is further heightened by allusions to Sterne's daughter Lydia, as well as his wife, who knitted while listening to the novel's coming-to-life. As Hawley notes in her 2019 Norton Critical Edition, the addressee of such words is yet to be accurately identified, though Howes admits the possibility of Lady Anna Dacre's presence.

¹⁴ "The sweet companion, and the friend sincere, / Need no mechanic help to force the tear." (*TS* 491*)

¹⁵ "[M]edicine does not form an objective background in *Tristram Shandy*; rather, it is worked into his fiction and intricately connected with his literary techniques . . . new anatomies . . . exploited by novelists to describe and account for the feelings of their characters." (*ibidem*)

¹⁶ "Prior to the eighteenth century, men and women were placed on a vertical, hierarchical axis, in which their bodies were seen as two comparable variants of one kind. Underpinning this 'one-sex model' was the humoral system . . . The way in which this became clearest was in the structural equivalence of

male and female genitals: 'the vagina is imagined as an interior penis, the labia as foreskin, the uterus as scrotum, and the ovaries as testicles.' (*ibidem*)

¹⁷ "[I]t is worth pausing to ask whether sexual polarization was anything more than a discursive trope. Did it reflect the reality of relations between men and women?" (Tosh, qtd. in Harvey 915)

¹⁸ On this particular problematic, Paula Loscocco comments on feminist readings of the novel, which tend to attribute Shandean sex-specific humour as necessarily "misogynistic" ("Can't Live Without 'Em: Walter Shandy and the Woman Within" 167). Nonetheless, as the author comes to develop by invoking Leigh Ehler's ideas, this choice can be viewed as the creation of a corrective "satiric norm" (*ibidem*).

¹⁹ "Carolyn Merchant tied changing perceptions of Nature during the scientific revolution to the reassertion of women's passive role in reproduction, the concomitant repression of 'sexual passion', and the increasingly powerful association of middle- and upper-class women with domesticity." (Harvey, "The Century" 903)

²⁰ "You see 'tis high time, said my father . . . to take this creature out of these women's hands, and put him into those of a private governor. Marcus Antoninus provided fourteen governors all at once to superintend his son Commodus's education . . . I know very well . . . that Commodus's mother was in love with a gladiator at the time of her conception, which accounts for a great many of Commodus's cruelties when he became emperor." (*TS* 6.5: 265)

²¹ The time-wary sketch of Janatone's beauty reveals how this perception is transversal in gender: ". . . but he who measures thee, Janatone, must do it now—thou carriest the principles of change within thy frame; and considering the chances of a transitory life, I would not answer for thee a moment" (*TS* 7.9: 312).

²² Following this reasoning, it is curious to compare both characters' reactions in the end of chapter 4.12.

²³ "I am not denying that *Tristram Shandy* compels this kind of literal, sex-differentiating reading. But I am asserting that failure to examine this compulsion has caused critical discussion to remain unselfconsciously within the novel's antifeminist paradigm of a woman-provoked Fall of man, trying to decide whom to blame for the misogynistic portrayal of women." (Loscocco, "Can't Live Without 'Em" 167)

²⁴ See Sterne's letter to an anonymous physician in Howes, *Critical Heritage* 48-51.

²⁵ Henceforward named after its initials as follows: *ASJ*.

²⁶ cummings' undying poem encapsulates Yorick's running thoughts while holding the lady's hand: "The pulsations of the arteries along my fingers pressing across hers told her what was passing within me: she looked down—a silence of some moments followed" (*ASJ* 22).

²⁷ From "somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond" (cummings, *Complete Poems* 367).

²⁸ Such readings inevitably place an onus on a necessarily unreliable narrator: "Leave we my mother - (truest of all the Poco-curantes of her sex!) . . . that is, - indifferent whether it was done this way or that,—provided it was but done at all" (*TS* 6.20: 282). Is Elizabeth truly "indifferent", if the thought of a winding clock is immediately succeeded by "the thoughts of some other things unavoidably popp[ing] into her head"? (1.4: 8)

²⁹ "Walter's ideas about proper procreation, however, feature an even more telling prescription: it should be done in silence Walter's ideal of procreation is refraining from action. Elizabeth's question in l.1. . . . interrupts the process and causes Walter to 'scatter . . . and disperse . . . the animal spirits.' But if Walter perceives 'scattering' as an accident, then arguably his idea of safe conduct involves maintained concentration, continued retention." (Loscocco, "Can't Live Without 'Em" 172)

³⁰ See Slawkenbergius's Tale in Volume IV: "The less they understood of the matter, the greater was their wonder about it—they were left in all the distresses of desire unsatisfied" (169).

³¹ "- With a kick of both heels at once, but at the same time the most natural kick that could be kick'd in her situation - . . . she kick'd the pin out of [Bridget's] fingers - the etiquette which hung upon it, down - down it fell to the ground, and was shivered into a thousand atoms." (*ibidem*)

³² From cummings's "i carry your heart with me(i carry it in)" (*Completed Poems* 766).

“Try seeing indians”: Auto, Hetero e Meta-imagens em *A Passage to India*

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Abstract

E. M. Forster's novel *A Passage to India*, first published in 1924, portrays the various dynamics in relationships between British Raj members in India and members of the Indian society under colonial rule. The differences between the two communities, coloniser and colonised, are underlined from the outset, with the deconstruction of preconceived images constant throughout the work. In this way, using the concepts in Imagology of auto, hetero and meta-images, with a particular focus on the definitions offered by Joep Leerssen of these same concepts, this article reinforces the density of Forster's social commentary. It also aims to give a new perspective regarding the novel's classification as a vindication of the much-discussed British colonial structure of the early 20th century.

Keywords: Imagology; Colonialism; Post-colonialism; British Raj; National representations

Resumo

O romance *A Passage to India* de E. M. Forster, publicado pela primeira vez em 1924, retrata as várias dinâmicas nas relações entre os membros do Raj Britânico na Índia e os membros da sociedade indiana sob governação colonial. Do início, são sublinhadas as diferenças entre os dois povos, colonizador e colonizado, sendo a desconstrução das imagens pré-concebidas constante durante a obra. Assim, empregando os conceitos da área da Imagologia de auto, hetero e meta-imagens, com particular enfoque nas definições oferecidas por Joep Leerssen destes mesmos conceitos, pretende-se reforçar a densidade do comentário social de Forster e dar uma nova perspetiva quanto à discutida classificação da obra enquanto texto apologista da estrutura colonial britânica do início do século XX.

Palavras-chave: Imagologia; Colonialismo; Pós-colonialismo; Raj Britânico; Representações nacionais

A Passage to India de Edward Morgan Forster foi publicado pela primeira vez em 1924. A obra é um estudo sociopsicológico dos dilemas Anglo-Indianos durante o período do Raj britânico (Abu Baker 68). A ação desenrola-se à volta da possibilidade de existir uma amizade entre indianos e ingleses no contexto do império colonial, e é demonstrada sobretudo na relação entre Dr. Aziz, um indiano que, por princípio, despreza os ingleses, e Cyril Fielding, o diretor inglês da escola local colonial para indianos. A visita de Mrs. Moore e Adela Quested a um dos mais importantes membros da estrutura britânica em Chandrapore, Ronny Heaslop, desestabiliza as certezas de Aziz e a dinâmica entre colonizador e colonizado ganha uma complexidade que o protagonista não previra nos estereótipos que desenvolvera acerca dos ingleses.

Peter Childs classifica este romance de Forster como um dos mais controversos da sua autoria, apesar de muitos críticos estarem de acordo que é o seu melhor trabalho (188). A posição quanto ao humanismo liberal que o autor explora tem vindo a mudar ao longo do tempo, sobretudo devido à influência dos Estudos Culturais nos Estudos Literários e ao surgimento de perspetivas pós-colonialistas que vêm com desconfiança a imagem da Índia apresentada por Forster. De entre os vários nomes que trouxeram uma nova perspetiva para a análise da obra, é de realçar o de Edward Said, que, tanto em *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), como em *Orientalism* (2003), demonstra a falibilidade da dialética entre o Oriente e o Ocidente enquanto pólos distintos, uma vez que, segundo o autor, o Oriente não é um facto inerte da natureza, não está apenas lá, assim como o próprio Ocidente também não está apenas lá (*Orientalism* 4-5). Os conceitos, enquanto ferramentas ontológicas para encapsular a essência do oriental e do ocidental, são formas discursivas construídas pelo ser humano que afastam a realidade complexa da heterogeneidade patente em cada um dos grupos.

Não obstante, é nesta polarização que se criam os estereótipos que Forster explora na sua obra; é ainda na indefinição da narrativa enquanto produto do colonialismo que se desdobra a enorme amplitude de interpretações da mesma. E.M. Forster tenta desconstruir a imagem do indiano como *o outro*, mostrando as várias facetas pelas quais é composta. *A Passage to India* é um exemplar de que os estereótipos são extremamente fortes e que a sua perpetuação é uma força difícil de demover. Neste sentido, e porque a obra em estudo se foca na possibilidade de relações entre pessoas de diferentes culturas limitadas a um mesmo espaço, substituídas pelas suas caricaturas nacionais, a Imagologia - “working as it does primarily on literary representations” (Leerssen, *Imagology: History and method* n. p.)

- fornece as ferramentas adequadas para um entendimento mais profícuo da construção discursiva destes estereótipos.

Com efeito, o objetivo deste artigo não é fazer uma análise histórica ou sociológica do colonialismo britânico na Índia dos séculos XIX e XX, mas sim abordar os preconceitos que são criados de parte a parte e que influenciam as relações transculturais. Para tal, começarei por abordar brevemente a utilidade da Imagologia e da exploração dos conceitos de auto, hetero e meta-imagens na compreensão das dinâmicas literárias da obra em causa, para, de seguida, explorar algumas das cenas em que estes conceitos melhor se traduzem narrativamente, justificando a resposta final de Forster à sua questão inicial: sob o espectro do imperialismo, uma amizade anglo-indiana é impossível.

A importância da Imagologia

Joep Leerssen, imagologista holandês, esclarece que uma imagem é a reputação ou uma representação mental ou discursiva de uma pessoa, grupo, etnia ou “nação”. Estas mesmas imagens variam consoante a perspetiva a partir da qual são analisadas. Temos por isso auto-imagens (que Leerssen define como uma reputação caracterológica atual compartilhada por um grupo) e hetero-imagens (a opinião que outros têm sobre o suposto carácter de um grupo). Estas conceções não são estanques no tempo, estão sujeitas a mudanças, e influenciam-se uma à outra de forma a criar uma terceira categoria, as meta-imagens, que existem inteiramente por meio da imputação aos Outros da maneira como pensamos que eles nos vêem (Leerssen, *Imagology: On using ethnicity to make sense of the world* 24).

Ainda segundo o mesmo autor, na construção destas imagens, as semelhanças entre as nações são geralmente abafadas pela ênfase dada à diferença. Deste modo, as características apresentadas que surgem como sendo significativamente representativas de uma nação como um tipo, são selecionadas e destacadas porque distinguem aquela nação das outras. Para Leerssen, o que intensifica os antagonismos não é a forma como vemos o Outro ou como nos vemos, tampouco consiste em como os Outros se vêem - o antagonismo surge quando imaginamos o que o Outro pensa de nós e quando os Outros especulam sobre o que pensamos deles:

In times of conflict, these imputations are characterized by a disconcerting lack of generosity: we believe the others guilty of ill-will, a refusal to be reasonable, a deep animus, without realizing that it is us ourselves who display such ill-will and animus by imputing it to the Other. We suspect the other of being suspicious, without being

aware that to do so is an act of suspicion on our part. (Leerssen, *Imagology: On using ethnicity to make sense of the world* 24)

As perspectivas oferecidas pela Imagologia, aqui nas palavras de Joep Leerssen, são bastante interessantes quando aplicadas à tensão étnica presente em *A Passage to India* (que, sublinhe-se, o próprio Leerssen usa como exemplo na sua explicação das meta-imagens). Tal acontece porque, efetivamente, Forster faz uso destes dispositivos literários para explorar os temas mais importantes da sua obra. De igual forma, estes tornam-se ainda mais relevantes quando cotejados com um pano de fundo imperialista, em que tanto sujeito colonizado como sujeito colonizador procuram, também de uma forma discursiva, legitimar a sua posição quanto ao conflito que os opõe. Por conseguinte, as secções que se seguem serão compostas por uma análise destas imagens enquanto fator explicativo das dinâmicas entre as personagens principais de *A Passage to India*, recorrendo a cenas do livro em que as concepções mútuas são postas à prova, e com o intuito de sustentar a ideia de que o império, mais que a raça ou a etnia, é a causa primária da impossibilidade de estabelecer relações pessoais transculturais.

As imagens na obra

Em *A Passage to India*, duas mulheres inglesas, a jovem Adela Quested e Mrs. Moore, visitam a cidade de Chandrapore, onde trabalha Ronny Heaslop, magistrado britânico, com quem Adela se deverá casar. É nessa mesma cidade que vive Aziz, um jovem médico muçulmano, cada vez mais frustrado com o tratamento que recebe por parte dos ingleses, em particular de Major Callendar, o cirurgião civil seu superior. A distinção entre anglo-índios e locais é desde logo explorada por Forster na descrição da cidade onde tudo se desenrolará: “Edged rather than washed by the river Ganges, it trails for a couple of miles along the bank, scarcely distinguishable from the rubbish it deposits so freely” (5). Chandrapore é assim descrita como um local sujo, outrora rico, mas num claro estado de decadência.

Em contrapartida, no interior da cidade, encontram-se os prédios simples e práticos dos colonos britânicos: “inland, the prospect alters. There is an oval maidan, and a long sallow hospital. Houses belonging to Eurasians stand on the high ground by the railway station” (Forster 5). A partir desses edifícios, Chandrapore é atraente e um local digno para os membros da estrutura imperial, uma vez que as partes menos sedutoras se escondem por trás da vegetação tropical; dentro da antítese que é o

próprio cenário da obra, o céu é a única coisa que têm em comum as diferentes partes de Chandrapore (Forster 6).

Asseguradas as primeiras diferenças, Forster transporta-nos diretamente para a questão central da obra. O segundo capítulo abre com uma conversa entre Aziz e o seu amigo e advogado Hamidullah, acerca dos ingleses e da impossibilidade de travar uma amizade com estes, concordando que uma sociedade que tenha na sua base uma estrutura britânica é uma sociedade baseada na discriminação. Hamidullah refere Ronny Heaslop, como o rapaz do nariz vermelho (Forster 9) que o insultou mais uma vez em tribunal. Não obstante, ao contrário de Aziz, o proeminente indiano tem uma visão mais complacente de Ronny, culpando a estrutura de que faz parte e não o sujeito individual: «I do not blame him. He was told that he ought to insult me. Until lately he was quite a nice boy, but the others have got hold of him» (Forster 9). Num verdadeiro discurso conduzido no eixo “Eu vs. Outro”, os dois indianos não têm qualquer esperança de que no futuro a situação se modifique.

A segregação torna-se ainda mais clara no Clube de Chandrapore, um lugar reservado aos britânicos onde nenhum indiano deve entrar. Não obstante, uma das cenas mais interessantes para a análise das auto e hetero-imagens em jogo prende-se com a única vez em que se abre a exceção a essa regra. Mr. Turton, o governador britânico da cidade, decide dar uma festa (“a Bridge Party”) para que Adela e Mrs. Moore, que anseiam ver a Índia além da realidade turística, tenham a oportunidade de conhecer alguns dos nativos locais mais importantes e ricos. Não obstante, e como se poderia antecipar, a festa não se revela um sucesso (Forster 35). A separação física ilustra a separação cultural, dado que inicialmente um campo de ténis ocupa o espaço entre as duas comunidades; de certa forma, é como se esta festa estivesse condenada desde o início. Elaborada com o objetivo de unir culturas (ou pelo menos de aparentar que há essa intenção), o único resultado é o crescente fosso que se abre entre os dois lados, visivelmente antagónicos.

Com efeito, a definição dos britânicos é construída à volta da ideia de superioridade. Mrs. Turton, o epítome de orgulho e de autoridade, vendo a festa organizada pelo seu marido falhar leva relutantemente Adela e Mrs. Moore a conversar com um grupo de senhoras indianas. No curto caminho que percorrem até “ao Outro”, Mrs. Turton avisa Adela que:

‘You’re superior to them, anyway. Don’t forget that. You’re superior to everyone in India except one or two of the ranis, and they’re in equality.’ Advancing, she shook hands with the group and said a few words of welcome in Urdu, she had learned the

lingo, but only to speak to her servants, so she knew none of the politer forms, and of the verbs only in the imperative mood. (Forster 38)

Mrs. Turton, esposa do homem que representa o poder máximo da estrutura imperialista no local, apenas sabe as frases mais óbvias e pragmáticas do dialeto regional, as palavras relacionadas com ordens. Começamos então a compreender qual a hetero-imagem dos indianos na mente dos britânicos: pessoas inferiores, sem oportunidade de se cultivarem intelectualmente. Ora, a circunstância é particularmente gravosa se atendermos à indicação que o narrador nos dá quanto à proeminência e riqueza dos convidados; ou seja, para a estrutura britânica, que parece agir toda de igual modo,² mesmo os indianos mais ricos e importantes são tidos como objetos de subordinação da supremacia política e cultural dos ingleses. Apesar de, ao Urdu grosseiro de Mrs. Turton, uma das mulheres convidadas responder num inglês perfeito, a necessidade de rebaixar os locais nunca é abandonada; o que inicialmente é tido quase como um insulto torna-se uma oportunidade para minorizar a situação: “‘They pass Paris on the way, no doubt,’ said Mrs Turton, as if she was describing the movements of migratory birds. Her manner had grown more distant since she had discovered that some of the group was westernized, and might apply her own standards to her” (Forster 38).

Adela é desde cedo colocada de parte pelas suas compatriotas, pois recusa a mentalidade de rebanho imposta no Clube, a que Hamidullah se referira inicialmente, ao falar de Ronny. Enquanto os restantes britânicos tentam recriar Inglaterra em Chandrapore, recolhendo-se no Clube, planeando refeições tipicamente europeias e vendo representações de peças que em Inglaterra seriam já consideradas ultrapassadas, Adela é descrita como alguém que “always said exactly what was in her mind”; observando que saíra de Inglaterra para se encontrar numa outra versão da sua terra-natal, anuncia prontamente que se sente “desirous of seeing the real India” (Forster 23). É Cyril Fielding, ostracizado pelos restantes homens ingleses por manter boas relações com os nativos, quem responde a Adela: “Try seeing indians” (Forster 23). A visão romantizada de Adela acaba por se mostrar como uma outra forma de distinção relativamente às restantes senhoras inglesas. Dessarte, Mrs. Moore e Cyril Fielding são as únicas personagens que se aproximam realmente de fugir às amarras do *status quo*, dado que Fielding mostra entusiasmo e vontade de participar da cultura indiana e Mrs. Moore é capaz de estabelecer uma interacção genuína com Aziz, que conhece na mesquita local.

O encontro entre ambos é fortuito. Mrs. Moore decidira dar um passeio numa noite e Aziz ia a caminho da casa de Major Callendar, decidindo parar na mesquita.

Quando a vê, como muçulmano de grande fé, exalta-se, pois crê que ela está a invadir um lugar sagrado. Apesar da reação do médico, Mrs. Moore apressa-se em explicar-lhe que tirou os sapatos ao entrar e que percebeu que Deus está presente na mesquita. Ao contrário do que Aziz teria suposto, a mulher que encontra não é a típico anglo-indiana em Chandrapore; ela respeita o Islão, mesmo sendo uma religião diferente da sua. Mormente, descobrem que ambos têm três filhos, o que fomenta a afeição e a empatia de parte a parte. A forma como Mrs. Moore respeita o que não entende, o que não pertence à sua cultura, faz com Aziz lhe diga: “then you are an Oriental” (Forster 20). A auto-imagem de Aziz e da sua cultura, composta por oposição ao Ocidente, à estrutura imperial britânica, é a de uma vida baseada no amor por todos os seres, na benevolência, pela afinidade espiritual - na tolerância. De facto, a harmonia entre ambos é tal que o médico fica verdadeiramente surpreendido quando sabe que Mrs. Moore é mãe de Ronny Heaslop, o britânico de quem ele e Hamidullah se queixavam no início do livro. O contraste entre mãe e filho é o que leva a que Ronny seja colocado numa posição de alteridade, enquanto Mrs. Moore, exatamente por não encaixar no padrão estabelecido na hetero-imagem que os indianos têm dos britânicos, é uma “oriental”. Ronny, fazendo parte da administração, pertence ao grupo que se crê superior. Aliás, o mesmo o afirma, enquanto porta-voz do fardo do homem branco:

I am out here to work, mind, to hold this wretched country by force. I'm not a missionary or a Labour Member or a vague sentimental sympathetic literary man. I'm just a servant of the Government We're not pleasant in India, and we don't intend to be pleasant. We've something more important to do. (Forster 45)

Como indica Lidan Lin: “seen as a ‘baby’ country, India thus needs a mature adult to take care of her, to make decisions for her, and above all, to claim sovereignty over her” (137). Dentro do mecanismo britânico, as personagens são forçadas a agir como representantes de uma instituição e não como indivíduos (Lehmann 86). Ronny sacrifica qualquer prazer ou ambição pessoal em prol de um “bem maior”. Se, por um lado, a sua mãe apela à crença em Deus e ao entendimento de todos os seres humanos como iguais perante o criador, para o filho a única religião é o Império: “Ronny approved of religion as long as it endorsed the National Anthem, but he objected when it attempted to influence his life” (Forster 47). O mesmo se verifica com todos os representantes ingleses no local, cuja missão implica serem formatados segundo os atributos do “bom inglês”: “the powerful discourse of the colony guarantees the generation of people who are ‘exactly the same’ in terms of their ideologies and practices” (Abu Baker 73).

No entanto, e apesar das várias tentativas de Ronny, nem a sua mãe nem a sua futura esposa largam o desejo de conhecer melhor o país onde se encontram. Aproveitando a deixa de Aziz quanto às Cavernas do Marabar, Adela consegue convencer Aziz a planejar uma viagem que crê ser a sua oportunidade de encetar uma nova aventura. A amizade de Fielding e de Aziz é reforçada quando o próprio Fielding salienta a forma juvenil como Adela vê a Índia e como espera uma apresentação de matizes performativas. Adela procura uma “Índia”, sem se aperceber que cada cultura, cada país resulta da convergência de uma multiplicidade de fatores que nenhum indiano consegue reunir plenamente em si, pelo que o seu desejo não é alcançável: “Adela’s desire to see the ‘real’ India is never fulfilled” (Abu Baker 71). Neste sentido, como repara Timothy Christensen, até o próprio Aziz é apenas parte de uma cadeia de objetos que parecem servir o propósito de desvendar alguma verdade aparente sobre a Índia. Inevitavelmente, o resultado não é outro senão a total decepção - a sua ânsia pela autenticidade segue um caminho metonímico, pois a Índia “real” continua a escapar-lhe durante toda a narrativa (169).

Todavia, Aziz prepara a viagem, convidando, para além de Adela e Mrs. Moore, também Fielding e o Professor Godbole, um hindu que trabalha na escola que Fielding dirige e que estivera presente na festa de chá que o mesmo organizara e em que as cinco personagens estão juntas pela primeira vez. É esta a cena do livro em que melhor se testemunha a força das expectativas no comportamento individual. Duvidando que a verdadeira Índia, a sua, seja o que Adela e Mrs. Moore querem ver, Aziz planeia um dia turisticamente perfeito. A imagem do seu país é modelada para melhor encaixar naquilo que Aziz acredita ser esperado por parte das duas senhoras inglesas. Dado que o comboio que faz a ligação entre a cidade e o acesso às Cavernas partiria cedo, Aziz, Mohammed Latif e os seus criados passam a noite na estação para evitar atrasos. Na manhã seguinte, já com Adela e Mrs. Moore presentes, Aziz sente ter tudo controlado. Embora Fielding ainda não tenha chegado com Godbole, Aziz não está nervoso porque sabe que os ingleses nunca se atrasam (Forster 121). Não obstante, depois de algum tempo, o comboio começa a andar. É nesse exato momento que Fielding e Godbole chegam à estação. Fielding grita que Godbole estivera a rezar e que por isso se haviam atrasado. Embora Fielding tente saltar para o comboio em andamento, este segue sem o inglês.

Quando a viagem de ida termina, Adela e Mrs. Moore ficam ligeiramente desapontadas ao ver que Aziz alugou um elefante - símbolo das expedições inautênticas que os Turtons e outros colonos ingleses normalmente organizavam - para os transportar. Simultaneamente, Aziz assume que as mulheres estão encantadas com

o elefante, pois é essa a meta-imagem estabelecida da Índia e dos indianos. A tentativa de corresponder ao que pensa ser a “verdadeira Índia” que as inglesas esperam conhecer afigura-se como uma incongruência ainda maior quando o leitor se apercebe que Aziz nunca foi às Cavernas de Marabar, mas age como um guia experimentado, porque a única pessoa com conhecimento sobre as cavernas, o professor Godbole, não chegou a tempo. Numa camada ainda maior de ironia, o motivo do atraso de Godbole é um dos exemplos da pluralidade de Índias que existem. As orações a que se dedica nessa manhã são um dever hindu que a sua fé manda cumprir. Ora, num país composto por várias religiões, a unidade é posta em causa pelas próprias contendas internas. Aziz, enquanto muçulmano, proclama repetidas vezes o seu despreço por hindus. Quando fala com Adela sobre um casal de hindus que deveria ter enviado uma carruagem que a transportaria a ela e a Mrs. Moore para a casa de Cyril Fielding, Aziz comenta:

Slack Hindus - they have no idea of society; I know them very well because of a doctor at the hospital. Such a slack unpunctual fellow! It is as well you did not go to their house, for it would give a wrong idea of India. Nothing sanitary. I think for my own part they grew ashamed of their house and that is why they did not send.
(Forster 63)

De uma forma mais contida, a diferença também é plasmada quanto a Godbole na preparação da viagem às Cavernas de Marabar, especialmente no que toca à dieta do professor, cuja refeição é motivo de sobrançeria, pois é dito que só come arroz “if cooked by a Brahman” (Forster 119). Após a visita às Cavernas, em que Mrs. Moore se sente mal e em que Adela alega ter havido uma tentativa de violação por parte de Aziz, a história centra-se no julgamento - em que Aziz é ilibado, pois Adela admite ter mentido - e na deterioração das duas amizades transculturais que tinham sido bem sucedidas. Mrs. Moore morre na sua viagem de volta a Inglaterra, viagem essa orquestrada por Ronny para que a sua mãe não defendesse Aziz no julgamento, e o médico indiano aborrece-se seriamente com Fielding por este ver no ato de Adela algum tipo de coragem.

No final, a esperança de uma amizade entre um britânico e um indiano é já escassa; dois anos após o julgamento, quando Aziz e Fielding se reencontram, a relação entre ambos parece condenada. Os dois recordam o passado, mas os velhos tempos sofrem com as desvantagens, novas e antigas. Nesse intervalo, Fielding tornou-se mais favorável ao Império Britânico. Da mesma forma, o lado afetuoso de Aziz deu lugar a um orgulho ardente em si mesmo e no seu país. “The muddle of India” (Forster

63) ganha uma unidade perante a imagem de invasor que o Império adquire, sobretudo depois do caso que envolvera Aziz e Adela, no qual a imagem dos britânicos é gravemente abalada. Nas palavras de G. K. Das:

Dr Aziz's trouble unites the Hindus and the Moslems in the story. 'Another local consequence of the trial', we are told, 'was a *Hindu-Moslem entente*. Loud protestations of amity were exchanged by prominent citizens, and there went with them a genuine desire for a good understanding'. In the trial *Aziz is defended both by a Moslem pleader and by a Hindu barrister who is 'anti-British'*. . . . *Aziz is acquitted by a Hindu magistrate, and finally leaves British India to take employment in the Hindu state of Mau*. His 'genuine hatred of the English' prompts him to forget the differences between Hindus and Moslems, and he thinks, '*I am an Indian at last*'. The story ends with that note of Hindu-Moslem unity and the common political slogan, 'India shall be a nation! No foreigners of any sort! Hindu and Moslem and Sikh and all shall be one! Hurrah! Hurrah for India!'. (11, *itálicos meus*)

“An Indian at last”, Aziz deixa de ter uma auto-imagem do seu país como uma confusão (“muddle”), para agora se posicionar como parte de um todo que se define por oposição ao *outro* imperial. Cada vez mais consciente da necessidade de os indianos se livrarem do jugo britânico, é Dr. Aziz quem responde à pergunta inicialmente colocada, reagindo colericamente à réplica descrente de Fielding quanto à ideia de a Índia vir a ser uma nação:

'India a nation! What an apotheosis! . . . Fielding mocked again. And Aziz in an awful rage . . . cried: 'Down with the English anyhow . . . We may hate one another, but we hate you most. If I don't make you go, Ahmed will, Karim will, if it's fifty or five hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then' - he rode against him furiously - 'and then,' he concluded, half kissing him, 'you and I shall be friends.' (Forster 306)

O humanismo liberal de Forster, demonstrado a partir de Fielding, leva o inglês a inquirir o motivo da espera. Apesar das boas intenções demonstradas ao longo da obra de parte a parte, são as circunstâncias que não o permitem. Agentes externos, como se de destino se tratasse, mostram não querer que a amizade continue. Se algum dia será retomada, é algo deixado em aberto, mas o pessimismo presente deixa ao leitor uma sensação de ilusão quanto à possibilidade de alguma vez se vir a concretizar tal desejo. O próprio céu, que no início representava a única força agregadora entre a

Chandrapore “real” e a Chandrapore do Império, não mais serve como representante de união:

‘Why can’t we be friends now?’ said the other, holding him affectionately. ‘It’s what I want. It’s what you want.’ But the horses didn’t want it – they swerved apart: the earth didn’t want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single file; the temple, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they emerged from the gap and saw Mau beneath: they didn’t want it, they said in their hundred voices ‘No, not yet,’ and the sky said ‘No, not there.’ (Forster 306)

***A Passage to India*: uma obra colonialista?**

Muitos autores, como Mohammad Ayub Jajja e Benita Parry, têm acusado Forster de transmitir uma mensagem pró-colonialista na sua obra. Parry afirma mesmo que *A Passage to India* é um catalisador ideológico resultante das contingências naturais do escritor enquanto britânico (29-30). Esta visão é também elaborada por Edward Said, nas obras *Culture and Imperialism* e *Orientalism*, em que o autor defende, num tom consideravelmente mais moderado, que a ficção de origem europeia é, consciente ou inconscientemente, conivente com os pilares imperiais sobre os quais é erguida, pois herda e repete as mesmas representações. Said acrescenta que o Oriente ajudou a definir a Europa (ou o Ocidente), através do contraste de imagens, ideias, personalidades e experiências. Reconhecendo ambos os conceitos como distinções antropológicas, o autor afirma que: “Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’” (*Orientalism* 2-3).

Efetivamente, e como defendido desde o início, as imagens em jogo na obra de E. M. Forster são construídas com base na alteridade e no distanciamento do *Outro*; as próprias definições de Leerssen partem desse pressuposto, de resto. Contudo, é difícil considerar *A Passage to India* como um produto imperial que pretende perpetuar ideais imperialistas. A fragmentação da contenda Ocidente vs. Oriente verificada através do estudo das auto, hetero e meta-imagens é em si um argumento a favor da intenção de Forster em fazer precisamente o contrário. As auto-imagens são discursivas e falíveis, bem como as hetero-imagens. No caso das meta-imagens, mais clara fica a noção de que as expectativas daquilo que nenhum dos lados reconhece enquanto seu, do *milieu* ontológico, não comportam uma realidade verificável. “The real India” não existe segundo as representações de colonizadores nem de colonizados. A análise binária não se aplica de um modo simples e infalível, pois, dentro da auto-

imagem dos Orientais, existem outras tantas criadas também com base no distanciamento social e religioso, como é exemplo a difícil relação entre muçulmanos e hindus: “India - a hundred Indias - whispered outside beneath the indifferent moon, but for the time India seemed one and their own, and they regained their departed greatness by hearing its departure lamented, they felt young again because reminded that youth must fly” (Forster 13). A pluralidade de auto-imagens deve-se a um sistema hierárquico de castas e à coexistência pouco pacífica de inúmeras religiões:³ tal só é ultrapassado face ao “inimigo comum”, também ele colocado numa condição existencial de unidade pelos colonizados: “He [Aziz] too generalized from his disappointments - it is difficult for members of a subject race to do otherwise” (Forster 11).

Consequentemente, como bem explica Christensen, ver *A Passage to India* como um produto cúmplice do imperialismo sob o qual surgiu é ignorar as várias dimensões que Forster claramente apresenta ao longo da obra:

In Forster's India, . . . the cultural other who always seems to be concealing an essential truth for some unfathomable reason returns to us what we experience as a distorted image of ourselves. The problem of culture within *A Passage to India* is, then, fundamentally one of misrecognition: the recognition of oneself in the field of the Other is always shown to be a misrecognition, in which some essential feature, the very thing that defines the truth of one's being, is withheld or concealed. . . . Forster, the self-proclaimed humanist, foregrounds this problem of cultural misrecognition in a way that can be taken as devastating critique of the limitations of humanism when confronted with the problem of empire. Good intentions, based on the desire to fully accept the cultural other as an equal within the symbolic domain through a sympathetic cross-cultural understanding, is entirely inadequate in British India whenever such an attempt fails to take account of the dimension of misrecognition. (Christensen 162-3)

De resto, a cena final do livro parece não deixar qualquer dúvida de que a apologia não é imperialista. Aziz realça que qualquer amizade entre um oriental e um inglês só será possível quando livres das amarras coloniais. A mesma mensagem já vinha sendo desvendada em páginas anteriores, numa altura em que Fielding pergunta a Aziz se ele o acompanha no caminho: “Aziz sketched a comic salaam; like all Indians, he was skilful in the slighter impertinences. ‘I tremble, I obey,’ the gesture said, and it was not lost upon Fielding” (Forster 286). As últimas palavras que asseveram que a amizade não é possível “naquele momento, ainda não”, colocam sobre os braços fortes do Império o ónus da mudança. É o poder, mais do que as diferenças culturais, aquilo

que impede a amizade e a boa-vontade entre os povos. A crise política é uma crise de representação:

None of the Indian characters in the novel are represented as having access to the truth about India any more than the English characters or the narrator, any desire to replace the unstable, frequently self-undermining narrative view with the true understanding of India is relentlessly thwarted. There is, finally, no omniscient narrative view of Indian reality. (Christensen 161)

Não pode existir uma Índia real pelas limitações da heterogeneidade natural de qualquer grupo, mas, neste contexto, sobretudo porque as auto, hetero e meta-imagens respondem a uma dinâmica de subordinação que não permite a descoberta ontológica do Oriente.

Para um humanista como Forster, não há prova maior da falha do Império do que o facto de este impedir as relações pessoais entre indianos e britânicos, como explica Hawkins: “[Forster] can make his case most strongly by presenting friendly, rather than hostile, Indians. Even with the best of will, friendship is made impossible by the Raj; therefore, the Raj must end” (58).

Considerações finais

Este ensaio pretendeu mostrar como a Imagologia pode ser uma profícua ferramenta na análise sociocultural de uma determinada obra. Partindo dos conceitos esclarecidos por Joep Leerssen de auto, hetero e meta-imagens, tentou-se clarificar a posição de *A Passage to India* no contexto do Império Britânico no Oriente. Devido ao elencado, parece bem mais plausível que Forster tenha tentado caricaturar o Império e mostrar que este acabaria por minar algo tão fundamental como as relações humanas, do que a obra ser um instrumento de conluio com a estrutura imperial. O romance mostra o abismo que a boa-vontade humana não é capaz de ultrapassar numa situação de tamanha desigualdade como é a da colonização: “[W]hile the characters attempt to make human contact through the barriers of ruler/subject, coloniser/colonised, the ghost of the ‘Colonial Other’ is continually present, ultimately proving stronger than personal relationships” (Lehmann 85). Ou, nas palavras do nacionalista hindu Bankim Chatterjee: “so long as the conqueror-conquered relationship will last between English and Indians, and so long as even in our present degraded condition we shall remember our former national glory, there cannot be any hope of lessening the racial hatred” (qtd. in Meyers 335).

Há ainda, em *A Passage to India*, uma mensagem subjacente à necessidade de independência indiana e que torna a obra, a meu ver, intemporal: a carência de harmonia entre os seres humanos apenas pode ser resolvida com empatia, bondade e boa-vontade. Uma vez resolvidos os problemas coloniais, as divisões culturais, sociais e raciais requerem uma hetero-imagem capaz de prever a auto-imagem do outro. Quando Fielding diz a Adela “Try seeing Indians” (Forster 23), o recado torna-se tão mais poderoso se prestarmos atenção à polissemia do verbo “see”. O pedido para ver o *Outro* não alimenta uma visita ou um simples olhar; é uma súplica para uma mundividência mais ampla, para uma observação feita de outra perspectiva.

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¹ Deixo o meu agradecimento à Prof. Dr.^a Maria Fátima Gil, cujos ensinamentos tornaram este artigo possível e, mais tarde, melhor.

² "“But of course all this is exceptional. The exception does not prove the rule. The average woman is like Mrs. Turton, and, Aziz, you know what she is.’ Aziz did not know, but said he did. He too generalized from his disappointments—it is difficult for members of a subject race to do otherwise. Granted the exceptions, he agreed that all Englishwomen are haughty and venal. The gleam passed from the conversation, whose wintry surface unrolled and expanded interminably.” (Forster 11)

³ "Hamidullah had called in on his way to a worrying committee of notables, nationalist in tendency, where Hindus, Moslems, two Sikhs, two Parsees, a Jain, and a Native Christian tried to like one another more than came natural to them. As long as someone abused the English, all went well, but nothing constructive had been achieved, and if the English were to leave India, the committee would vanish also." (Forster 97)

Displacement e Interseções entre Espaço e Identidade em *Voyage in the Dark*, de Jean Rhys, e *The Lonely Londoners*, de Sam Selvon

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Abstract

Both Jean Rhys’ *Voyage in the Dark* and Sam Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners* articulate the experiences of exile and otherness by subverting the traditional conventions of the English novel, encoding the fractured perception of space of the postcolonial subject through an engagement with typically modernist discursive forms. This paper examines how representations of displacement in these two narratives, as both a physical and psychological phenomenon, contribute to shape the postcolonial identity of their Caribbean exiles within British society. It will do so by considering the characters’ relationship to and movement within London’s social spaces, as well as their subjective experience of the material and imaginary spaces between which their double consciousness is divided. The goal is to reach a better understanding of how this rootlessness unsettles collective and individual postcolonial identities and how displacement may flourish into a subversive and aesthetically productive force.

Keywords: Jean Rhys; Sam Selvon; Displacement; Space; Identity

Resumo

As obras *Voyage in the Dark*, de Jean Rhys e *The Lonely Londoners*, de Sam Selvon articulam as experiências de exílio e alteridade através da subversão das convenções tradicionais do romance inglês, codificando a percepção fragmentada do espaço do sujeito pós-colonial com recurso a formas discursivas tipicamente modernistas. O presente artigo analisa a forma como as representações de *displacement* em ambas as narrativas, enquanto fenómeno físico e psicológico, contribuem para a formação da identidade pós-colonial dos exilados da região das Caraíbas, no contexto da sociedade britânica. Considerará as deslocações das personagens nos

espaços sociais da cidade de Londres, bem como a sua experiência subjetiva dos espaços materiais e imaginários que dividem a sua consciência dupla. Pretende-se alcançar uma melhor compreensão da forma como este desenraizamento perturba os sentidos de identidade pós-coloniais individuais e coletivos e de como o *displacement* pode revelar-se, em última instância, uma força subversiva e esteticamente produtiva.

Palavras-chave: Jean Rhys; Sam Selvon; *Displacement*; Espaço; Identidade

Introdução

A Segunda Guerra Mundial precipitou os processos de descolonização para grande parte das potências europeias e dos territórios por elas ocupados nos continentes africano e asiático, traduzindo-se posteriormente, concretamente no caso britânico, num fenómeno de imigração massificada de cidadãos da *Commonwealth* para a Metrópole. A chegada de milhares de imigrantes da região das Caraíbas ao longo das décadas de cinquenta e de sessenta, com a chamada geração *Windrush*, foi um dos acontecimentos mais notórios de transformação demográfica da cidade de Londres neste período, ainda que a sua presença no coração da Metrópole já fosse visível antes mesmo do final da Grande Guerra.

No contexto da redescoberta do legado literário dos autores das chamadas, à época, *West Indies* - ou Índias Ocidentais -, que desembarcaram na Grã-Bretanha ao longo do século XX, o presente artigo propõe uma abordagem comparativa às obras de dois autores desta região, Jean Rhys e Sam Selvon, chegados à Metrópole em períodos distintos e representando momentos igualmente diferentes no processo de construção de uma voz literária pós-colonial caribenha. Serão analisados os romances *Voyage in the Dark* (1934) e *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), com o propósito de confrontar as duas representações do fenómeno de *displacement*¹ e as formas específicas como cada um dos autores articula esta experiência, evocando interseções entre questões de espaço e de identidade. O objetivo será demonstrar que o sentimento de desenraizamento que une os imigrantes representados nos dois textos resulta, em ambos os casos, de uma indefinição identitária característica das sociedades pós-coloniais, que se vê refletida e problematizada na relação das personagens com o mapeamento geográfico e social da cidade de Londres, bem como também na sua própria experiência psicológica dos espaços concretos e imaginados.

Para uma leitura comparada das duas narrativas, revela-se necessário, antes de mais, reconhecer que a ocorrência da Segunda Guerra Mundial no período que separa as suas publicações constitui um importante fator de diferenciação entre as obras. O

conflito precede o surgimento do texto de Selvon, chegado de Trinidad à Grã-Bretanha no ano de 1950, mas é posterior à publicação da obra de Rhys, que desembarca em Londres em 1907, proveniente da ilha de Dominica, portanto ainda durante o período de ocupação formal britânica. Estes diferentes enquadramentos históricos influem diretamente na forma como são representadas as questões de identidade e vivência do espaço em ambos os textos.

Apesar do intervalo cronológico, argumenta-se que a gênese da experiência de exílio solitário retratada nas narrativas, encontra-se na sua reprodução inversa da viagem original dos colonizadores para as ilhas desta região, contextualizada num discurso colonial histórico que preconiza a expansão dos valores da cultura britânica. As personagens de Rhys e Selvon, ainda que tendo históricos familiares e ascendências étnicas diferentes, surgem como os supostos produtos contemporâneos desta missão de civilização dos povos e raças inferiores, que procura transformá-los em protótipos artificiais do cidadão britânico, enquanto personificações de uma diferença que é, nas palavras de Homi Bhabha, “almost the same, but not quite” (LC 86). A evidência inequívoca desta diferença seria a garantia de preservação do binário Eu/Outro, colonizado/colonizador e raça superior/raça inferior, enquanto estratégia de afirmação da superioridade da cultura britânica que, contudo, acaba por produzir espaços de profunda ambivalência identitária: “the empire . . . is less a place where England exerts control than the place where England loses command of its own narrative of identity. It is the place onto which the island kingdom arrogantly displaces itself and from which a puzzled England returns as a stranger to itself” (Baucom 3). Geram-se desta forma visões contraditórias acerca do que significa ser inglês, uma crise identitária que se intensifica no período que enquadra e sucede os processos de descolonização e que surge materializada nestas personagens, enquanto símbolos de uma Grã-Bretanha confusa, que se debate para se reconfigurar no mundo pós-colonial e para enfrentar um Outro que se revela, afinal, parte de si própria.

A experiência do fenômeno de *displacement* nas obras em análise é, conforme será demonstrado ao longo deste artigo, indissociável da indefinição cultural que assombra os sujeitos coloniais no momento de retorno à capital do Império e que é complexificada na sua relação com o espaço da Metrópole, bem como com as memórias do espaço da ilha nativa. Esta análise começará, deste modo, por considerar a forma como a experiência do dia a dia nos espaços públicos e privados da cidade de Londres simultaneamente contribui para aprisionar as personagens no seu limbo nas margens da sociedade britânica, e por outro lado, lhes confere uma visibilidade subversiva para o discurso identitário dominante. Em primeiro lugar, serão analisadas

as várias facetas da cidade de Londres, enquanto espaço onde se projetam as expectativas e as decepções do imigrante chegado da colônia à Metrópole; em segundo, a forma como a transgressão das fronteiras internas e invisíveis da cidade permite às personagens transformar as suas deslocações numa manifestação ativa de insurreição contra as barreiras identitárias que lhes são impostas.

Na segunda parte deste ensaio, será explorado o modo como a vivência psicológica dos espaços da Metrópole e da colônia condiciona a experiência do exilado e como a capacidade para transformar esta dupla consciência numa ferramenta de afirmação cultural poderá constituir o elemento-chave para que o *displacement* vivido pelo sujeito colonial se converta, a longo prazo, num fenómeno produtivo e subversivo para o discurso identitário dominante. A conclusão tecerá considerações finais acerca das abordagens distintas dos dois textos às questões referidas e problematizará o significado dessas diferenças para o entendimento do conceito de *displacement* no contexto das sociedades e literaturas pós-coloniais.

I - O Espaço Físico e Social da Metrópole: Entre a Exclusão e a Transgressão

A cidade de Londres surge em *The Lonely Londoners* e *Voyage in the Dark* não só enquanto espaço físico que enquadra e estrutura a deambulação sem rumo das suas personagens principais, mas também enquanto lugar mitológico que já habita o imaginário destes imigrantes antes mesmo de estes habitarem a cidade, como é ilustrado por Moses, o protagonista da obra de Selvon: “Is like when you go back home and you hear fellars talk about . . . Charing Cross and gay Paree”. You say to yourself ‘Lord them places must be sharp.’ Then you get a chance and you see them for yourself” (73). Em *Voyage in the Dark*, também Anna afirma que desde criança lê acerca de Inglaterra, descrevendo o sentimento de chegada à capital da Metrópole como a esperança de renascer e iniciar um novo capítulo na sua vida: “It was as if a curtain had fallen. It was almost like being born again” (Rhys 7).

Em ambos os textos, a Grã-Bretanha e a cidade de Londres, em particular, enquanto centro administrativo e capital do Império, surgem inicialmente na percepção das personagens como o espaço onde se define e concretiza o seu sentido de identidade cultural, ainda que as perspectivas adotadas sejam distintas. Em *The Lonely Londoners*, na qualidade de colonizado, Moses refere-se à Grã-Bretanha como “Mother Country” (Selvon 2), o lugar onde os imigrantes vindos dos territórios da *Commonwealth* buscam melhores condições de vida e cumprem o seu destino enquanto “British subjects . . . who bleed to make this country prosperous” (21), numa referência ao sangue derramado na luta contra as tropas nazis durante a

Segunda Guerra Mundial e, implicitamente, ao trabalho forçado dos seus avós no período da escravatura. Por outro lado, Anna, descendente de uma família de colonos britânicos, detentores de escravos, mas filha de uma mulher crioula, realiza o caminho inverso ao dos seus antepassados, de forma a concluir a sua instrução nos valores britânicos e a comportar-se, nas palavras da sua tia Hester, “like a lady and not like a nigger” (Rhys 65). Apesar das diferentes condições destas personagens enquanto sujeitos coloniais e da posição particularmente ambivalente da protagonista de *Voyage in the Dark* em relação ao Império, existe em ambos os textos uma associação inicial da cidade de Londres à promessa de cumprir um destino de regresso ao lugar de pertença.

Os momentos de primeiro contacto entre as personagens dos dois romances com a cidade de Londres encontram-se, como tal, marcados pela sobreposição e o choque entre as duas configurações da capital da Metrópole - a real e a imaginária -, que eventualmente resultarão na desintegração quase total das ilusões alimentadas pelo mito colonial. A decepção cresce quando estas personagens tomam consciência de que as suas situações enquanto homens negros, no caso da obra de Selvon, e de mulher branca, mas crioula, na obra de Rhys, não correspondem à conceção dominante na Metrópole do que significa ser inglês. Em *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy refere que a onda de imigração vinda das colónias no período do pós-guerra originou uma nova forma de racismo, “where blackness and Englishness appeared suddenly to be mutually exclusive attributes” (10). Apesar de *Voyage in the Dark* ter sido publicado antes da Segunda Guerra Mundial e do início dos processos de descolonização, Anna sente antecipadamente os efeitos desta rejeição, constatando que a sua proveniência e ambiguidade racial a impedem, à partida, de completar a sua educação nos valores britânicos, já que é excluída dos círculos sociais onde poderia desenvolvê-los.

Este discurso identitário nacionalista, baseado numa lógica binária de branco/negro e Eu/Outro, encontra-se concretizado na cartografia da cidade de Londres e na organização dos seus espaços sociais, condenando os imigrantes ao estatuto forçado de estrangeiros e a uma vida de exílio nas margens da capital. O Terceiro Espaço identitário que estas personagens simbolizam e que foge aos limites de compreensão e enunciação deste discurso dialético, materializa-se no espaço liminal que estas ocupam na Metrópole: a fronteira entre o centro (o coração da capital do Império) e a periferia (a ilha nativa).

Em *The Lonely Londoners*, Londres é descrita como uma cidade dividida em “little worlds” (Selvon 60) e onde os imigrantes das colónias se encontram confinados

a determinados bairros periféricos, onde as condições de alojamento são particularmente precárias, como Notting Hill ou Harrow Road. Galahad culpabiliza a cor da sua pele pelos sucessivos episódios de marginalização de que é vítima na cidade, nomeadamente quando frequenta uma casa-de-banho pública e é acusado de contaminar o espaço ou quando lhe é recusado o aluguer de um quarto no centro da capital: “So Galahad talking to the colour Black, as if is a person, telling it that is not *he* who causing botheration in the place, but Black who is a worthless thing for making trouble all about” (77). Ao distanciar a sua subjetividade da cor da sua pele, Galahad procura rejeitar e expurgar-se da faceta alegadamente “não inglesa” da sua identidade, o elemento que medeia o seu primeiro contacto com os restantes britânicos e que o impede de usufruir por completo da cidade.

Também Anna, apesar de branca, é comparada pelos londrinos a um “damned baboon - a fair baboon, too, worse than a dark one every time” (Rhys 148), deparando-se com dificuldades semelhantes em encontrar alojamento, já que as senhorias se mostram relutantes em alugar-lhe um quarto por assumirem que Anna é prostituta, sugerindo uma ligação entre a sua identidade crioula e uma sexualidade potencialmente transgressiva: “I don’t let to professionals” (8). Os obstáculos enfrentados pelas personagens de ambas as obras na tentativa de encontrarem um quarto ou uma casa em Londres, bem como o seu vaguear sem rumo pelas margens da cidade, espelham a luta mais abrangente que travam diariamente no sentido de reclamarem uma posição legítima nos escalões da sociedade britânica, que reflita adequadamente o seu estatuto enquanto cidadãos.

No entanto, se em *The Lonely Londoners*, o sentimento de alienação que caracteriza o estado de espírito das personagens no centro de Londres parece surgir principalmente como resultado de fatores externos, enquanto consequência da experiência de segregação a que são sujeitas - Galahad, por exemplo, não é de imediato confrontado com este sentimento à chegada à Metrópole e é apenas a sua vivência pessoal da realidade hostil da cidade que o despoleta -, em *Voyage in the Dark*, Anna parece projectar, desde logo, o seu sentimento de estranheza e não pertença na configuração da própria cidade, que observa no comboio, à chegada: “this is London - hundreds thousands of white people rushing along and the dark houses all alike frowning down one upon the other all alike all stuck together - the streets like smooth shut-in ravines . . . - oh I’m not going to like this place” (17). Esta primeira impressão da capital como uma cidade homogénea, construída com base em normas rígidas e padronizadas, cujas ruas parecem vigiar e aprisionar quem nelas caminha, é interpretada pela protagonista como a primeira manifestação visível de uma sociedade

inflexível, onde a integração está dependente da conformidade para com as regras que ditam o que significa ser inglês. Anna compreende assim que, dada a sua indefinição racial enquanto mulher crioula e a sua transgressão da lógica binária que estrutura o discurso dominante acerca das culturas e da nacionalidade, nunca poderá verdadeiramente integrar-se na sociedade londrina.

Por oposição ao texto de Selvon, a alienação experienciada pela personagem de Rhys foge a um entendimento do fenómeno de *displacement* como uma perda de “a valid and active sense of self . . . by dislocation” (Ashcroft et. al. 9), uma vez que mesmo antes da sua viagem para a Grã-Bretanha, Anna já se demonstra consciente do seu sentido de identidade indefinido e fragmentado. Se na sua ilha nativa, a cor da sua pele e o seu historial familiar levam a que seja rejeitada por parte dos nativos, a sua chegada à cidade de Londres, inicialmente representada como a esperança de um recomeço, emerge como a derradeira confirmação do seu permanente desenraizamento, que Anna tenta combater através de uma constante idealização da ilha onde cresceu e de um esforço artificial de identificação com o que ela considera ser uma cultura negra: “I always wanted to be black” (Rhys 31). A perspetiva ingénuo, redutora e essencialista que Anna tem das diferenças étnicas traem a sua educação privilegiada no seio de uma família de colonos. Porém, ainda que a sua pele branca lhe permita mover-se em determinados círculos no seio da cidade de Londres, dos quais as personagens de Selvon seriam, à partida, excluídas, a sua condição de crioula parece também complexificar o seu exílio, ao subverter o binário racial e dificultar a sua integração em qualquer uma das comunidades.

Desta forma, Londres adquire significados simbólicos diferentes nas duas obras em análise, exprimindo também duas manifestações distintas do fenómeno de *displacement* que, contudo, têm origem no mesmo problema de (in)definição de identidade. Em *Voyage in the Dark*, a cidade é representada como o espaço físico cujo mapeamento social e geográfico consciencializam Anna, enquanto crioula, da desadequação da sua ambiguidade identitária a uma vida enquanto cidadã britânica na capital da Metrópole e da conseqüente noção por si já internalizada de não pertença. Se ambos os textos levantam o véu sobre uma Londres cuja cartografia fixa espelha uma forte hierarquização social, a obra de Rhys intensifica esta imagem de rigidez, retratando uma cidade cujos lugares se confundem pelas suas semelhanças na perceção da protagonista, emergindo também como um espaço claustrofóbico, que aprisiona Anna à sua condição marginal e ao seu estatuto de “Outro”, em quartos periféricos, frios e húmidos que, na perceção da protagonista, “[are] getting smaller and smaller until they crush you to death” (30).

Por outro lado, em *The Lonely Londoners*, Londres é representada como um espaço onde as personagens exercitam a sua liberdade, mesmo que, para tal, se vejam forçadas a transgredir os limites e restrições impostos pela própria cidade. Esta atitude espelha a auto-perceção destes imigrantes em relação à sua identidade, que, apesar de híbrida, eles identificam como inequivocamente britânica, recusando-se a agir em conformidade com o mapeamento social da cidade. A ousadia dos imigrantes da obra de Selvon nas suas movimentações pela capital não exclui, ainda assim, que Londres surja como a metade de um binário espacial que estrutura a sua consciência dividida e a sua visão ambivalente da capital britânica. Este binário coloca em contraponto duas facetas distintas da própria cidade: a de uma Londres suja e hostil, dos bairros pobres da classe operária, que estas personagens habitam, e a de uma Londres mítica, cujas ruas estariam “paved with gold” (Selvon 2) e cujos bairros “everybody in the world know about” (72), que os imigrantes tentam recriar e experienciar nas suas movimentações diárias, apesar da hostilização que frequentemente os vitimiza. A vivência do espaço da capital, mediada pelo choque face à existência de duas Londres contrastantes - aquela que estrutura o seu imaginário coletivo e a Londres cuja configuração real reflete e perpetua a deslegitimação do seu estatuto de cidadãos britânicos - é um fator de erosão da confiança identitária destes imigrantes, apesar de estes desenvolverem os seus próprios mecanismos para se apropriarem da cidade, como será analisado no capítulo seguinte.

Neste sentido, a definição de *displacement* acima referida, como consequência de uma destruição de um sentido de identidade sólido e ativo, aplica-se de forma mais evidente às personagens de Selvon que, ao contrário de Anna, não parecem manifestar a mesma angústia e incerteza em relação ao seu posicionamento entre nações e culturas, até serem confrontados com a hostilização do próprio espaço físico e social da cidade e com as manifestações externas de discriminação por parte dos londrinos. A cidade de Londres emerge, desta forma, em ambas as obras como o espaço onde se projetam e, em última instância, se desmoronam as expectativas do sujeito colonial de regressar à terra de origem e de experienciar a Metrópole enquanto lugar de pertença, enquadrando o seu exílio numa cartografia rígida, que o fixa no seu papel de “Outro” indesejável, mas também como um sítio cujas fronteiras internas são transponíveis, permitindo-lhe desafiar fisicamente a matriz do binário identitário dominante.

Tanto Anna como a maioria das personagens de Selvon exercem resistência, consciente ou inconscientemente, ao transgredirem as barreiras que lhes são impostas

e que delimitam a sua ação e movimentos no centro de Londres enquanto sujeitos coloniais. Anna acusa indiretamente a sociedade britânica de tentar segregar os seus espaços e ocultar a presença dos indivíduos que não correspondem aos seus padrões de pureza e normalidade quando afirma: “This is England, and I’m in a nice, clean English room with all the dirt swept under the bed” (Rhys 31). Neste sentido, enquanto mulher crioula e potencial personificação desta “sujidade” metafórica, Anna pode resistir a estas práticas de exclusão social ao recusar-se a manter-se invisível. A sua própria presença no coração da Metrópole, tal como a das personagens de Selvon, assume-se como disruptiva, uma vez que o seu posicionamento cultural ambíguo, um fator decisivo para a sua marginalização, desafia e transtorna as categorizações normativas do discurso do Império. Como tal, Anna é recorrentemente sujeita ao olhar fixo e hostil dos londrinos, o qual denuncia a sua presença nos espaços públicos da cidade como uma potencial ameaça: “it was terrifying - the way they look at you. So that you know that they would see you burnt alive without even turning their heads away” (120).

Também a incursão dos imigrantes de *The Lonely Londoners* a Marble Arch e o seu convívio por debaixo do arco triunfal, tradicionalmente reservado à passagem da família Real em cortejos e cerimónias, é um ato simbólico particularmente transgressivo, quando considerado o impacto visual da cor da sua pele, uma marca visível da sua diferença, por oposição ao branco do monumento Real. Neste contraste de cores encontra-se patente o impacto da ocupação por parte do colonizado de um símbolo por excelência do poder da Coroa Britânica, nomeadamente sobre os territórios da *Commonwealth*. As suas deslocações dentro da cidade e a frequência de estabelecimentos localizados em bairros particularmente modernos e populares, como as lojas de Shaftesbury Avenue em *Voyage in the Dark*, ou os teatros e as óperas de Picadilly Circus em *The Lonely Londoners*, conferem a estas personagens a ilusão de uma possível ascensão social, emergindo como estratégias para atenuar o seu exílio e procurar a integração através de comportamentos miméticos em relação aos britânicos nativos. Apesar de esta inclusão parecer longe de se concretizar, a sua conduta traduz-se numa transferência desafiante da presença e do olhar do colonizado para o coração da Metrópole.

II - A Experiência Psicológica dos Espaços: Dupla Consciência e Linguagem

O fenómeno de *displacement* surge nas duas obras como uma condição material da vida dos imigrantes, imposto pela configuração do espaço físico da cidade de Londres e perpetuado nas dinâmicas de poder e marginalização que ocorrem nos seus espaços

sociais. Porém, também a relação psicológica das personagens com o espaço da Metrópole e o espaço imaginado da colônia, espelhando por vezes uma internalização do mesmo discurso dominante na sociedade britânica, revela uma experiência que é complexificada pelo sentimento de indefinição identitária.

Para estes imigrantes, o espaço intersticial onde se configura a sua identidade é marcado por uma consciência dupla, que DuBois definiu como um sentimento de “twoness . . .; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings” (8), que se traduz num espaço psicológico permanentemente dividido entre duas realidades, entre os legados de duas heranças culturais, que o indivíduo procura reconciliar numa identidade individual coesa. Esta consciência dividida exprime-se também, para os sujeitos coloniais exilados na Metrópole, numa vivência psicológica de dois lugares distintos em contraponto, em divagações que os afastam invariavelmente do espaço concreto da cidade real e as levam para o terreno do imaginário, onde se materializa o sonho de uma terra de origem, de um lugar de pertença, o da Londres do mito ou o da ilha tropical nativa, descrita por Edward Said em *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*: “For an exile, habits of life, expression, or activity in the new environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment. Thus both the new and the old environments are vivid, actual, occurring together contrapuntally” (186). Esta imagem do exilado como um sujeito fragmentado, que habita dois espaços em simultâneo coincide, pelo menos parcialmente, com o retrato das personagens nas duas obras. Os imigrantes representados por Selvon experienciam com a mesma intensidade uma Londres dupla, cujas variantes constantemente se sucedem e sobrepõem no discurso das próprias personagens ou nas vívidas descrições das suas incursões e aventuras pelas ruas da cidade. Por outro lado, a memória da ilha nativa, em contraponto com a perspectiva mais lúgubre da capital da Metrópole, também não se encontra totalmente esquecida. A mesma língua crioula que é empregue para descrever as múltiplas facetas de Londres, é igualmente utilizada pelas personagens para invocar e articular a realidade das suas ilhas tropicais, traduzindo-se em representações igualmente nítidas dos dois espaços:

I want to go back to Trinidad and lay down in the sun and dig my toes, and eat a fish broth and go Maracas Bay and talk to them fishermen, and all day long I sleeping under a tree, with just the old sun for company I go and live Paradise - you know where Paradise is? Is somewhere between St. Joseph and Tacarigua. I would get a old house and have some cattle and goat, and all day long sit down in the grass in the sun, and hit a good corn cuckoo and calaloo now and then.” (Selvon 125)

A semântica e a estrutura gramatical do crioulo, que permitem às personagens descrever a cidade de Londres e a ilha nativa recorrendo a terminologia e referentes semelhantes, conferem a ambos os espaços a mesma vivacidade no domínio da linguagem e na consciência fragmentada destes imigrantes, subvertendo assim uma perspectiva essencialista sobre as diferenças que existiriam entre os dois territórios e as duas culturas. Em simultâneo, permite-lhes enquadrar e exprimir a sua dupla consciência, um elemento estruturante da sua experiência de *displacement*, num veículo que conjuga as duas dimensões da sua perceção de forma integrada, levando-os deste modo a posicionarem-se no Terceiro Espaço identitário que traz forma e sentido às duas realidades que estruturam o seu pensamento.

Apesar de este desdobramento evidenciar o desenraizamento sentido pelas personagens, a possibilidade de experienciar ambos os espaços em contraponto e de os conceber numa única língua crioula parece emergir como uma forma de atenuação deste sentimento de deslocação, especialmente quando comparado com o exílio estéril vivenciado por Anna. A experiência de Anna emerge como uma interpretação mais pessimista, mas mais complexa, do fenómeno de *displacement*, por oposição à descrição de Said, o qual parece sugerir a possibilidade da perceção do indivíduo exilado se dividir entre dois lugares que coexistem paralelamente no domínio da consciência e que dialogam constantemente entre si. Anna, por outro lado, vive o exílio como um permanente vaivém entre o espaço físico e o espaço imaginário, o passado e o presente, a colónia e a capital da Metrópole que, no entanto, não podem ser experienciados em simultâneo ou com a mesma intensidade: “Sometimes it was as if I were back there and as if England were a dream. At other times England was the real thing and out there was the dream, but I could never fit them together” (Rhys 8). A impossibilidade de aceder ao mesmo tempo aos dois espaços na sua psique e de os conjugar numa identidade pessoal minimamente coesa acentuam a ideia de *displacement* como uma perda aparentemente irremediável de uma identidade e de um lugar de pertença, sem esperança de solução ou alternativa, contrariando a descrição proposta por Said e também o exílio vivido pelas personagens da obra de Selvon.

Procurando aligeirar este sentimento de permanente deslocação, Anna opta geralmente por refugiar-se no espaço da sua memória e identificar-se artificialmente com a comunidade negra da sua ilha nativa, numa tentativa desesperada de se posicionar num binário que não contempla a complexidade da sua herança cultural e genética. Dada a escolha de Anna, a ilha tropical concretiza-se de forma especialmente detalhada e sensorial no seu pensamento:

. . . that was what I thought about more than anything else - the smell of the streets and the smells of frangipani and lime juice and cinnamon and cloves and sweets made of ginger and syrup, and incense after funerals or Corpus Christis processions, and the patients standing outside the surgery next door, and the smell of the sea-breeze and the different smell of the land-breeze. (7)

Estas sensações que Anna revive no espaço do seu imaginário substituem-se à cidade de Londres onde a protagonista se encontra fisicamente e a qual parece tornar-se progressivamente irreal, “some other world” (52), reduzindo-se à homogeneidade das suas cores: “You were perpetually moving to another place which was perpetually the same. There was always a little grey street leading to the stage-door of the theatre and another little grey street where your lodgings were” (8). Este contínuo distanciamento psicológico de Anna em relação aos lugares por onde circula e às pessoas com quem convive traduzem-se na sua postura aparentemente alheada e indiferente: “You’re not all there, that’s what’s the matter with you. Anybody’s only got to look at you to see that” (145).

Por oposição ao alívio e distração momentâneos que voltar à ilha da memória ou reproduzir os nomes dos lugares emblemáticos de Londres parecem providenciar aos imigrantes de *The Lonely Londoners*, o conforto que a retirada estratégica de Anna para o seu imaginário lhe poderia trazer é invariavelmente breve, já que o seu sentimento de pertença à ilha tropical onde nasceu e à comunidade negra que vivia nos arredores da sua propriedade tem uma dimensão performativa. O seu esforço para fixar uma identidade própria estilhaça-se como uma ilusão quando Anna recorda com um sentimento de culpa o envolvimento da sua família no negócio de escravos: “Maillote Boyd, aged 18, mullato, house servant. The sins of the father Hester said are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation” (53). O desejo de Anna de se posicionar neste binário identitário que a própria internalizou acaba por contribuir para agravar ainda mais o seu sentimento de alienação, já que a levam a uma identificação superficial com uma determinada cultura ou comunidade que se revela, em última instância, impossível.

Num dos raros momentos em que a realidade física da Metrópole parece sobrepor-se à memória da ilha nativa e o cinzento dominante é substituído pelas cores da floração no período de Verão, Anna sente uma esperança renovada no seu futuro na Grã-Bretanha que, no entanto se dissolve quando Walter lhe pede que fale das flores que existem na sua ilha. Anna vê-se novamente confrontada com a necessidade de integrar de forma coerente as duas facetas distintas da sua identidade e com a impossibilidade de estas coexistirem no mesmo plano do real: “. . . when I began to

talk about the flowers out there I got that feeling of a dream, of two things that I couldn't fit together, and it was as if I were making up the names. Stephanotis, hibiscus, yellow-bell, jasmine, frangipanni, corolita” (78). O desconforto experienciado por Anna neste momento surge associado à questão da linguagem, que lhe soa desadequada para descrever a paisagem da sua ilha.

De resto, esta não é a única ocasião em que a protagonista se debate para encontrar as palavras apropriadas para reproduzir a realidade da sua terra nativa. Afirmando-se repetidamente como “a real West Indian” (52), traindo a sua própria insegurança em relação à sua identidade, Anna tenta partilhar com Walter as suas memórias do espaço das ilhas tropicais: “I wanted to make him see what it was like You can never tell about things” (53). A decepção da personagem perante a sua impotência para traduzir os seus pensamentos e memórias em palavras revela a desconexão entre a sua consciência, moldada pela sua experiência colonial, e a semântica e estrutura gramatical do inglês padrão, através do qual comunica com os britânicos nativos. Noutros episódios em que Anna invoca as suas memórias das ilhas, é possível discernir que a protagonista falava a língua crioula com a sua amiga negra Francine, em criança: “Exactly like a nigger you talked Exactly like that dreadful girl Francine” (65). O facto de Anna ver frustradas as tentativas de visitar e articular oralmente a realidade que percebeu através da língua crioula, no contexto da sua ilha nativa, utilizando agora o inglês padrão, contribuem para agravar o seu sentimento de desenraizamento e alienação. A utilização do inglês emerge ainda como um fator que identifica Anna com o discurso do colonizador, com a língua do centro, por oposição às línguas da periferia, espelhando o seu posicionamento na dialética colonial enquanto mulher branca, descendente de proprietários de escravos, do qual Anna se procura demarcar. O seu dilema, “the problem inherent in using a language while trying to reject the particular way of structuring the world it seems to offer” (Ashcroft et. al. 57), dita o fracasso da tentativa de verbalizar a sua consciência dupla na língua dominante: Anna é incapaz de exprimir e afirmar a sua alteridade, o que intensifica o seu sentimento de exílio.

Em *The Lonely Londoners*, por outro lado, a língua crioula que domina a voz narrativa e a comunicação entre as personagens demonstra uma relação de interdependência entre a linguagem e a sua identidade cultural híbrida, emergindo a primeira como o espaço onde se articula uma consciência pós-colonial, estruturada pela experiência de *displacement*. Neste contexto, a utilização do crioulo emerge também como uma estratégia subversiva da cultura e do discurso dominantes, ao simbolizar a invasão da Metrópole pelo colonizado e pelo Terceiro Espaço identitário

que este representa. Em simultâneo, ao permitir um remapeamento da cidade de Londres, com a reescrita da capital numa nova semântica e estrutura gramatical e com o recurso a referentes da cultura crioula que modula as suas identidades, as personagens de Selvon transformam a sua apropriação e crioulição da língua dominante num acto de colonização em reverso do próprio espaço da Metrópole. Através da linguagem, a experiência de *displacement* encontra um veículo de expressão e emerge como um fenómeno potencialmente produtivo e energizante, que supera uma conceção redutora do exílio como uma mera perda ou um vazio impreenchível, por oposição a *Voyage in the Dark*, no qual Anna revela maior impotência perante a sua situação.

No episódio que encerra a narrativa de *The Lonely Londoners*, Moses desperta para esta dimensão fértil do seu exílio, reconhecendo a semente de uma nova voz literária na busca activa pela palavra que defina o seu sentimento de deslocação:

. . . he could see the faces bobbing up and down in the millions of white, strained faces As if on the surface, things don't look so bad, but when you go down a little you bounce up a kind of misery and pathos and a frightening... what? He don't know the right word but he have the right feeling in his heart Over in France all kinds of fellars writing books what turning out to be best-sellers He watch a tugboat on the Thames, wondering if he could ever write a book like that, what everybody would buy. (Selvon 139)

Moses demonstra neste episódio ter tomado consciência da possibilidade de substituir a Grã-Bretanha do mito por uma nova visão da Metrópole, cujas ruas são renomeadas e reconfiguradas na língua crioula a partir do olhar da periferia, e de sobrepor às forças destrutivas da sua experiência de exílio o impulso criativo subjacente à sua identidade cultural única. Apesar do sentimento de vazio, solidão e desenraizamento continuar a dominar a experiência de vida dos imigrantes no coração da Metrópole, a afirmação manifesta da sua identidade híbrida e a promoção desta identidade e desta cultura no seio da sua comunidade, permite-lhes exercer resistência face ao discurso binário que os tenta definir e categorizar. Estes atos transgressivos raramente se traduzem em consequências positivas concretas e imediatas nas suas vidas, mas conferem-lhes uma visibilidade que obriga a uma reconsideração crescente do que significa ser inglês e que poderá contribuir, a longo prazo, para uma reorganização dos espaços sociais da Grã-Bretanha pós-colonial.

A conclusão do texto de Selvon, com a representação do despertar de Moses para o impulso criativo subjacente à sua experiência de exílio, contrasta com o

episódio final de *Voyage in the Dark*, em que o aborto espontâneo sofrido por Anna parece sugerir que o *displacement* que esta experiência se trata, em última instância, de um fenómeno infrutífero. Se a sua gravidez no final da narrativa, representando a perspectiva de dar à luz um produto vivo do processo de miscigenação, simboliza o potencial subversivo da sua sexualidade para o sistema dominante, para além de renovar a sua esperança em estabelecer raízes na Grã-Bretanha e de recomeçar a sua vida, o aborto que lhe coloca um término é a prova final da esterilidade do exílio de Anna e da sua impotência para se reinventar face às forças patriarcais e do Império que a oprimem.

O facto de Anna se encontrar privada das estruturas adequadas para transformar o seu exílio numa oportunidade de resistência activa a este discurso dominante, prende-se principalmente com a sua identidade crioula e consequente posicionamento ambíguo no binário colonizado/colonizador no contexto da Metrópole. Anna já transporta consigo o peso desta indefinição identitária à chegada a Londres, sendo que a vida na Grã-Bretanha parece apenas agravar e confirmar o *displacement* que dominam a sua condição social e o seu estado de espírito. Também por oposição aos imigrantes de Selvon, Anna não dispõe de ferramentas de afirmação da sua cultura híbrida, uma vez que foi instruída nos valores britânicos, com os quais não se identifica totalmente, nem de uma comunidade onde estas possam ser aplicadas e ritualizadas, já que a cor da sua pele e o seu historial familiar também não lhe permitem associar-se aos imigrantes negros. A condição liminal de Anna enquanto crioula, aliada ao facto de ser mulher, condenam a personagem a um exílio infértil, marcado por relações abusivas, que a reduzem ao papel de uma vítima em perpétuo silêncio, cujas incursões na memória e na fantasia constituem a sua única fonte de conforto e cujas deslocações transgressivas pelas ruas da capital representam, assim, a sua derradeira hipótese de tornar a sua presença visível e potencialmente disruptiva.

Conclusão

Em *Voyage in the Dark* e *The Lonely Londoners*, a deslocação do sujeito colonial para o centro da Metrópole leva-o a confrontar a sua identidade cultural ambígua através da sua complexa relação com o espaço. O *displacement* surge principalmente associado ao facto de a sua hibrididade identitária, disruptiva para o binário branco/negro e para o discurso nacionalista dominante, condicionar não só a sua movimentação e integração nas ruas da capital da Metrópole, mas também a sua própria experiência subjetiva dos lugares, condenando-os a um profundo desenraizamento. Contudo, as diferentes interseções identitárias que definem as personagens implicam uma vivência

necessariamente distinta do exílio, que pode resultar numa apropriação subversiva do espaço da Metrópole ou numa nova colonização do imigrante por parte das forças do Império, sendo que ambas as hipóteses ocorrem frequentemente em contraponto, revelando os complexos efeitos culturais da diáspora.

As experiências de Anna e das personagens de *The Lonely Londoners*, nas suas diferenças e semelhanças, demonstram que, ainda que a presença do “Outro” no coração de Londres seja, por si só, subversiva, principalmente quando as fronteiras artificiais do espaço físico e social são transgredidas, é no reconhecimento da sua hibridéz identitária e na afirmação da sua alteridade, nomeadamente através da utilização do crioulo como forma de reescrever a própria cidade, que o exilado pode apropriar-se do espaço da Metrópole e converter o seu *displacement* num fenómeno disruptivo a longo prazo. O facto de Anna se revelar, em última instância, impotente para melhorar a sua situação, é indissociável do facto de ser uma mulher de ascendência crioula no seio de uma sociedade patriarcal. Ironicamente, o facto de ser branca e parte de uma família de colonos, colocando-a numa posição de privilégio em alguns contextos, impedem-na também de capitalizar a sua diferença e de a converter num instrumento de subversão, que permita reconciliar na sua consciência os dois espaços entre os quais se divide.

O *displacement* não pode, desta forma, ser entendido como um fenómeno meramente destrutivo para o sentido de individualidade do exilado, já que este força também a Grã-Bretanha a repensar-se a si mesma. Ambos os textos representam a deslocação do sujeito colonial da periferia para o centro não só como um momento de progressiva desilusão e de destruição de expectativas para o recém-chegado, mas também como um fator de desconforto para a Metrópole que o recebe, localizando na estranheza deste encontro o potencial transformador que obrigará a uma revisão, mesmo que indesejada, do discurso de nacionalidade, no contexto da sociedade pós-colonial emergente.

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¹ Optou-se por utilizar ao longo deste artigo o termo inglês “displacement” no lugar de uma tradução em português, de forma a garantir uma correspondência rigorosa com a rede complexa de sentidos que esta noção adquire quando empregue e desenvolvida no âmbito dos estudos pós-coloniais citados.

A Borrowed Place on Borrowed Time: Childhood, Ambivalence and the Symbolic Power of the Japanese Occupation of Hong Kong in Martin Booth's *Music on the Bamboo Radio* (1997)

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Abstract

Martin Booth's *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, published in 1997 (the year of Hong Kong's transfer of political sovereignty to China), is a young adult novel set during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong. The 1941-1945 Japanese occupation represents a turning point in Sino-British relations, symbolising the beginning of the end of British rule in East Asia: although Britain regained administrative powers over Hong Kong at the end of World War II, the island of Hong Kong, Kowloon peninsula and the New Territories (according to treaties signed in 1898, following China's defeat in the Opium Wars) were inevitably to be returned to China at the end of the 20th century. By juxtaposing these two eras, Martin Booth explores the anxieties of a falling empire, and the uncertainty towards the future of post-handover Hong Kong, through the perspective of Nicholas, a British child raised in a territory under temporary and precarious colonial rule. This article examines how the author, by setting the novel during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, subverts colonial power structures, placing both British and Hong Kong Chinese as oppressed allies against a common enemy; and explores how post-handover anxieties are expressed through the ambivalent alignment of symbols of Japanese and British oppression, the use of metaphors of decrepitude, and representations of overt and covert forms of resistance to colonial occupation.

Keywords: Young Adult Literature; Postcolonial Studies; Hong Kong Studies; Children's Literature Studies; Anglo-American Studies.

Resumo

Music on the Bamboo Radio, da autoria de Martin Booth e publicada em 1997 (o ano da transferência de soberania política de Hong Kong para a China), é uma obra de literatura infanto-juvenil que recorre à ocupação japonesa de Hong Kong como pano de fundo. Este período de quatro anos, entre 1941 e 1945, foi um momento decisivo nas relações sino-britânicas, representando o início do fim do domínio britânico sobre a Ásia Oriental. Com efeito, apesar de o Reino Unido ter recuperado o poder administrativo sobre Hong Kong após a Segunda Guerra Mundial, os tratados assinados em 1898 após a derrota da China nas Guerras do Ópio determinaram que a ilha de Hong Kong, a península de Kowloon e os Novos Territórios teriam inevitavelmente de ser devolvidos à China no final do século XX. Ao justapor estes dois períodos, Martin Booth explora as angústias de um império em decadência, bem como a incerteza perante o futuro de uma Hong Kong pós-ocupação e pós-*handover*, através da perspectiva de Nicholas, uma criança britânica que cresce num território sob um domínio colonial temporário e instável. O presente artigo analisa de que forma o autor, ao escolher o período de ocupação japonesa de Hong Kong como pano de fundo para a sua narrativa, subverte hierarquias de poder colonial, representando britânicos e chineses de Hong Kong como aliados contra um mesmo opressor; e também aborda de que modo as angústias pós-*handover* são expressas no paralelismo entre símbolos de opressão japonesa e britânica, no uso de metáforas de decadência e na representação de atos de resistência, tanto visíveis como invisíveis, à ocupação colonial.

Palavras-chave:

Literatura infanto-juvenil; Estudos pós-coloniais; Estudos sobre Hong Kong; Estudos sobre literatura infantil; Estudos Anglo-Americanos

Published in the year of Hong Kong's transfer of political sovereignty to China in 1997, Martin Booth's *Music on the Bamboo Radio* is a young adult novel set during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, between 1941 and 1945. Though Britain regained administrative powers over Hong Kong at the end of World War II, this territory would not remain under British rule indefinitely: in fact, according to treaties signed in 1898, following China's defeat in the Opium Wars (1839-1842 and 1856-1860), the island of Hong Kong, Kowloon peninsula and the New Territories were to be returned to China after a period of ninety-nine years. The 1941-1945 Japanese occupation represents, in this sense, a turning point in Sino-British relations, symbolising the beginning of the end of British rule in East Asia. By juxtaposing these two eras, Martin Booth, who spent his childhood years in post-World War II Hong Kong, explores the anxieties of a falling empire and the uncertainty towards the future of post-handover Hong Kong, through the perspective of Nicholas, a British child, born and raised in a territory under temporary and precarious colonial rule. This article¹ examines how the author, by setting the novel during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, subverts colonial power structures, choosing to emphasise how both British and Hong Kong Chinese²

were oppressed allies against a common enemy, only briefly alluding to British oppression and the negative effects of British rule over the Hong Kong population. Additionally, this article will explore how post-1997 handover anxieties come to play at an implicit level, through the ambivalent alignment of symbols of Japanese and British oppression, the use of metaphors of decrepitude and representations of overt and covert forms of resistance to colonial occupation, both British and Japanese.

Besides Hong Kong, which was occupied by the imperial Japanese army for four years, Japan also invaded other East Asian territories under Western rule, such as Burma, Malay and Singapore, claiming to be freeing them from European tyranny: for this reason, the Japanese invasion was relatively well accepted, at the start, in many of these countries - except for China, which was at war with Japan since 1894 (Snow xxiv; Tsang 119). Although relatively welcome in an initial stage of the invasion, the Japanese ended up leaving massive destruction in their wake, peddling opium, controlling all main infrastructures and viciously repressing any threat to their power with their military police (Tsang 127-8). According to Phillip Snow, author of *The Fall of Hong Kong: Britain, China and the Japanese Occupation* (2004), the Japanese, “by the very fact of their conquest, dealt a mortal blow to the prestige of the whites . . . it was impossible for the local populations to look on their former masters with the same eyes” (xxv). For Snow, the Japanese invasion of Western-dominated territories in East Asia, for all the misery it inflicted, still had what he calls a “dynamic effect”, leaving these societies brutalized, but irreversibly changed. In fact, the four-year period during which Britain lost imperial control over Hong Kong became a social, political and economic turning point in the history of Sino-British relations. Upon Japanese surrender in 1945, Britain reclaimed ownership of Hong Kong, although not indefinitely - the reason being that, according to treaties signed in 1898 (following China’s defeat in the Opium Wars), the island of Hong Kong, Kowloon peninsula and the New Territories were simply ceded to Britain, to be returned to the mainland after a period of ninety-nine years. The 1997 handover marked the end of British rule and is regarded by many as the final act of the British overseas empire (Hook and Neves 109; Maxwell 1384). The fact that British sovereignty over Hong Kong had an expiration date from the very beginning popularized the view, in the late twentieth century, that this territory was no more than “a borrowed place on borrowed time” (Snow xxii; Hook and Neves 110; Tsang 124).

Children and young adult literature, much like literature intended for an adult audience, is a space where colonial and postcolonial experiences are represented and negotiated (Grzegorzcyk 32, 3). The Japanese occupation and the 1997 handover play

an important role in a postcolonial reading of *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, a young adult novel set in Hong Kong during the four-year occupation, published in 1997, the year of the transfer of sovereignty to the People's Republic of China. The author was a British expatriate who spent his childhood and teenage years in Hong Kong post-Japanese occupation. By setting the novel in this period, Martin Booth presents young readers with a falling empire through the perspective of a British child, Nicholas, who was born and raised in Hong Kong and a witness to the Japanese invasion. Given this is a novel intended for a young adult audience, *Music on the Bamboo Radio* presents this ambivalence in subtle ways, symbolically linking both periods in such a way as to evoke the nostalgia and feeling of displacement of a British national contemplating Hong Kong's return to the mainland with unease. Hong Kong does not easily fit into the larger history of decolonisation, on the one hand, because it was under British rule until significantly later compared to other British former colonies, and, on the other, because it didn't become fully independent in 1997: it can therefore be argued that Hong Kong's post-colonial reality is, more accurately, *in-between* (Darwin 18). According to Yiu-Wai Chu, Professor at the University of Hong Kong, "the postcoloniality of Hong Kong is an ambiguous notion that goes beyond the framework of Europe and other Western countries, given its unique circumstances" (58). In this sense, in order to include this reading of *Music on the Bamboo Radio* in a postcolonial debate on children and young adult literature, this article shall apply the concept of ambivalence as defined by Homi K. Bhabha, essential to understand how a seemingly simple and straightforward narrative of a colonial setting can, paradoxically, allow more subversive readings, since, according to Bhabha, the ambivalence of colonial discourse resides in the fact that it openly contradicts itself (82-3; 97).

In his essay "The Other: Orientalism, Colonialism, and Children's Literature" (1992), Perry Nodelman compares western representations of the East to the way adults represent children, particularly in how both discourses reveal asymmetrical power dynamics. By applying Edward Said's analysis of the historical and social impact of Western discourse about the East as presented in his controversial study *Orientalism* (1978), Nodelman argues that children's literature also constitutes a discourse of colonization: in other words, that it teaches children how to be childlike, as well as providing them with good models, themes and messages that teach them how to be more like adults. According to Nodelman, children's literature as a discourse often reveals power hierarchies and "colonial" dynamics similar to those imposed by the western enterprise on Middle Eastern, East Asian and South East Asian nations throughout history, forcing them to adopt European values, languages and legislation,

all the while forcing these nations into objectifying, self-confirming and preconceived Western images and stereotypes (Nodelman 29). There are other authors, such as Clare Bradford, that consider Said and Nodelman's model excessively static, ahistorical and essentialist (7). Although the underlying power imbalance (inherent both to children and young adult literature as discourse and to orientalism as discourse) remains a pertinent issue, it must also take the ambivalence of colonial discourse and of the colonial relationship into consideration, reading beyond the surface-level stability of the adult/child and the coloniser/colonised dichotomies. In *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, this power imbalance and its ambivalence are explored through three main axes: adult oppression over children, Japanese oppression over British and Hong Kong Chinese, and, more implicitly, British colonial oppression over Hong Kong Chinese.

The asymmetrical power dynamic between adults and children is present in the first chapter of *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, particularly regarding the relationship between Hong Kong Chinese adults and the British child. When the Japanese imperial army invades Hong Kong on Christmas Day, 1941, Nicholas Holford, the main character of this novel, is alone in his home, a colonial style mansion known as Peony Villa. His parents left him at the care of his servants to join the resistance as civilian volunteers (Booth 5). When two Japanese soldiers approach Nicholas' hiding place, Ah Kwan, the gardener, comes up from behind and covers his mouth, ushering him to safety. Ah Kwan, along with Tang, the Holford family cook, and Ah Mee, his wife, take Nicholas to the New Territories; as they arrive to the fictional village of Sek Wan, they cut Nicholas' hair and dress him in Chinese garb to make him pass as a member of their family and avoid getting him sent to a European prison camp. Martin Booth's novel begins with a military invasion superimposed with a sequence of events that show how impotent Nicholas is to the will of the adults in his life. In addition to obeying his parents' orders to stay in the house during the attack, Nicholas is also forced to obey Tang's orders to ensure his survival, with the latter assuming the role of his "Chinese father". The cook, whom Nicholas calls "the ruler of the household" (Booth 8) makes all the decisions throughout the first chapter, and even silences Nicholas' objections by saying "You no talk . . . You do what I tell you, no question. Just do. You understand?" (Booth 12). Despite his status as "Young Master", as he is called in the beginning of the novel, Nicholas doesn't disobey Tang, Ah Mee and Ah Kwan's orders because they are adults and, therefore, authority figures - in other words, the fact that Nicholas is a child inverts what is perceived to be the conventional dynamic between himself and his Hong Kong Chinese servants, and that even when evading

Japanese oppression, Nicholas is still subjected to the orders and the whims of the adults around him.

In addition to his inferior status as a child in the adult/child power hierarchy, as a British citizen, Nicholas also finds himself oppressed by Japanese invaders, who overpower Hong Kong Chinese and European citizens alike. The existence of a common enemy helps create strong alliances between British and Hong Kong Chinese in this novel, a feeling of camaraderie generally expressed by the novel's Chinese characters. A few examples of this are, for instance, when Tang tells Nicholas that "this war not just English people and Chinese people fighting Japanese people. It is good people fighting bad people. We are good people. It is our job to fight evil" (Booth 79). It is important to point out that the "enemy" category includes not only Japanese soldiers, but also all those supporting the occupation: in the words of Dr. Wu, a Chinese doctor trained in London whom Nicholas visits in chapter 2, "only together can we survive this bad time. Yet do not trust everyone. There are people who work for the enemy. They kill their fellow countrymen and hoard food to sell at high prices. They are evil men" (Booth 45). In *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, the Japanese invasion also symbolizes the fear of role reversion, specifically, the fear that the coloniser would be overpowered and colonised in return (Bhabha 44), and this is illustrated by how Japanese oppression is often associated to symbols of British imperial administration. For example, when escaping Peony Villa, Nicholas comes across a British military vehicle being driven by Japanese soldiers, the headlights of which illuminate the corpse of a Chinese dock worker (Booth 11): in this instance, the instruments used to reinforce Western imperial power are appropriated and used against the British, reflecting what Bhabha describes as the coloniser's awareness that the colonised dreams of the opportunity to take their settler's place (44). Nicholas mentions this "dream of the inversion of roles" explicitly when he watches a group of British war prisoners walking by, surrounded by Japanese officials:

The British were no longer the rulers of Hong Kong but the vanquished underdogs. And, like the prisoners, *Nicholas too was conquered*. The realization scared him yet, at the same time, *it made him feel defiant* . . . He had no idea how he would - or could - fight back: all he knew was that, *if the chance arose, he would do so*. (Booth 15, emphasis added)

This feeling of outrage hints at what Phillip Snow called the "dynamic effect" caused by the Japanese invasion: namely, the fact that these acts of resistance to Japanese oppression ended up leading to deep political and social changes after 1945 (xxv). This

defiance finds its full expression in the character of Ah Kwan, the gardener, particularly through his involvement with the East River Column, a guerrilla formed in resistance to the Japanese presence in Hong Kong. This organization, although politically affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party, was also supported by some members of the Nationalist Party (also known as *Kuomintang*) and helped by Allied European forces, namely through the British Army Aid Group, “the first organisation in which expatriate Britons, Chinese and other nationalities of Hong Kong served together without clear and unbreakable racial divide” (Tsang 129). Ah Kwan works for the Column mostly as a spy, disguising himself as a dock worker in order to approach British war prisoners undetected and pass on messages and supplies. The only information provided on Ah Kwan background is that the Holfords met him when he was a child, begging in the streets of Hong Kong after his parents died in a devastating typhoon. Nicholas’ parents then decided to take him in and have Ah Kwan work for them (Booth 9). This double role of master and saviour played by the Holfords adds to the novel’s ambivalence, simultaneously displaying generosity and oppression. Ah Kwan is the only Chinese character that continues to call Nicholas “Young Master”, even as the young boy becomes more and more assimilated into the Sek Wan community and becomes involved in the East River Column’s activities, emphasising the social gap between them in an effort to keep a sense of fundamental difference: for instance, when Nicholas visits Kowloon to get medicine and sees Ah Kwan, in disguise, working next to British soldiers forced into labour, Ah Kwan shoos him away, saying “Young Master no see me” (Booth 51). Ah Kwan’s experience in many ways mirrors Nicholas’, from being taken in by another family to adapting to a new environment, language and job from a young age, which further emphasises the main difference between them: the fact that Ah Kwan is a Hong Kong Chinese local who is also part of a Communist guerrilla, wanting the Japanese occupation to be over and, implicitly, for Hong Kong to not be returned to the British in the aftermath. The ambivalence of Ah Kwan and Nicholas’ relationship intersects Ah Kwan’s status as a servant to the Holfords and his political beliefs, a doubling effect where images associated with safety and protection are superimposed with a sense of oppression and covert violence: for example, when Ah Kwan saves Nicholas in the beginning of the novel by coming up behind him and covering his mouth with his hand. In this moment, Ah Kwan is also the first character in the novel to speak (“No make noise!”), further reinforcing his symbolic importance despite his smaller role as a character (Booth 3).

Throughout the novel, acts of dissimulation such as the one shown in the previous passage are often perceived as forms of resistance. It is a trope especially

prominent in chapter three, when Ah Kwan finally asks Nicholas to get involved in an East River Column mission as an interpreter:

[W]e are not soldiers like your father. We have no uniform, we do not go in marching parades. We live over the mountains. Nobody knows where. At night, *under cover of darkness*, we go to Hong Kong or into Kowloon and fight the Japanese. No big battles like your father fought. *We have no big guns, no airplanes . . .* We do not kill the Japanese with a big noise. We do it,' he reverted to English for a few words, '*softly-softly, no sound.*' (Booth 61-2, emphasis added)

Nicholas ends up helping the guerrilla destroy a bridge, witnessing General Tai Lo Fu's execution of a Chinese informant. Curiously, the language used in this passage to describe the alliance between the Communist guerrilla and the Allied forces does not evoke a sense of unity and cooperation, but rather one of control:

Japanese no can win war. We win. *Communist fighter win. Chinese people win. . .* You want know why I talk English. I tell you. You see this boy? . . . He fighter for me, bring my men good luck . . . I know what you say. You say, if Tai Lo Fu got English boy, how many English men he got? I tell you. *I got plenty men.* In China. *Chinese men, English men, American men. We got gun, we got airplane, we got bomb.* One day, no long time. . . , Japanese soldier no more. (Booth 88, emphasis added)

This passage seems to suggest an additional layer of meaning regarding the dynamics of oppression represented in this novel - namely, that all forms of resistance to the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong can, in turn, be read as forms of resistance to Britain's presence in Hong Kong. In the abovementioned passage, we have a good example of this implicit contradiction: by highlighting the victory of the Chinese in general (and of the Communist Chinese in particular) without mentioning any possible re-establishment of British sovereignty over Hong Kong, General Tai Lo Fu reveals that the East River Column, through its cooperation with the Allied Forces, mostly served their own interests - namely, that of freeing Hong Kong (and East Asia) of all kinds of foreign occupation. Though the Column had supporters from all sides of the political spectrum, its official affiliation with the Chinese Communist Party from 1943 onwards affected Britain's relationship with China, particularly given that the British Army Aid Group was supporting the Column's activities in the field. Tensions between the Nationalist Party, then in power, and the Communist Party were escalating, culminating in an internal war won by the Communist Party four years after Japanese troops withdrew from the country (Chan n. pag.).

The narrative of *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, although linear and apparently straightforward in how it separates good and evil, enemies and allies, still displays some signs of ambivalence, especially when it undermines the fixed nature of these categories and implicitly subverts them (Bhabha 66). Resistance to Japanese oppression can be read metonymically as resistance to British presence in Hong Kong in many other instances throughout the novel: for instance, when Tang and Ah Mee pretend to not understand a Japanese soldier addressing them (Booth 30-1), or when Ah Kwan gives poisoned fish to Japanese soldiers ransacking his village's supplies (Booth 75). Although passive and dissimulated, these acts of resistance occur on a day-to-day basis through gestures that pass unnoticed to the coloniser's gaze. Symbolically, this ambivalence is also present when Nicholas comes across a *chow dog* trapped in a back yard in Boundary Street, wagging its tail in a friendly manner and then proceeding to growl at him when Nicholas gets closer (Booth 14); or when Nicholas finds the corpse of a Japanese soldier covered in flies and one lands on his own face (Booth 77): while the first example alludes to an apparently domesticated, yet trapped, animal that turns against his owners, the second embodies a sense of foreboding of what could happen to the British once the Japanese left Hong Kong. Witnessing acts of resistance and dissimulation towards the Japanese brings into question, as we have previously mentioned, the fact that these same strategies could (and definitely were) used against the British as well, adding to a sense of what Bhabha would call the inherent paranoia of colonial discourse, which requires implicit validation and recognition from the colonised. This feeling of uncertainty arises when the colonised resists (either overtly or covertly) the coloniser's demand for acknowledgement, reinforcing the narrative of the colonised as either resistant and violent, or complicit but secretly scheming and cunning (100-1).

Additionally, we encounter this ambivalence in the brief allusions to acts of violence enacted by the British: for example, when Tang threatens Nicholas by saying "Japanese catch you, he beat you. *More hard than your father when you naughty.* Maybe he kill you. You no more argue with me" (Booth 7, emphasis added). The threat of a British father's discipline towards his child can, in many ways, be associated to the normalization and general acceptance of forms of violence perpetrated by the British against Hong Kong Chinese. Another example of this occurs when, to protect Nicholas' identity, Tang lies to a Japanese officer saying, "No English, no Chinese. He name Wing-ming. He my wife son. *English master no good, make son with my wife*" (Booth 32, emphasis added). This cover story is shown to be believable enough for the Japanese officer to reply "English no good. Very bad to Asia people" (Booth 32). The

oppression of British rule, although not often referred to this explicitly in *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, is nonetheless present: in the abovementioned instances, as well as between the lines, particularly in the subtle signs of Hong Kong Chinese characters' resistance not only to Japanese occupation, but to *all* forms of colonial rule. Although the Japanese occupation threw together British and Hong Kong Chinese as never before, forcing the British into a subaltern position that made them regard the Hong Kong Chinese population with a newfound sympathy, the Hong Kong Chinese community also saw a rise in national pride and a growing anti-European sentiment after the Japanese surrendered in 1945 (Tsang 142). During pre-war times, the Chinese community was excluded from almost any significant political or administrative role in British Hong Kong: the British broadly occupied the commanding heights of the Hong Kong economy, owned the chief trading houses, as well as the three banks authorized to issue currency, and, before the Japanese invasion, members of the Chinese community filed regular complaints to the colonial government regarding poor work and social conditions (Tsang 109-11).

These examples also evoke what we have acknowledged throughout this article as the irony of colonial discourse, through which the coloniser claims to have a civilizing mission that justifies acts of violence, wishing, at an unconscious level, that the colonised recognizes the inherent "goodness" of these oppressive acts; yet, when the colonised refuses to satisfy this narrative demand by resisting the coloniser, the resulting frustration generates a sense of paranoia and uncertainty in the coloniser (Bhabha 98, 100). This can manifest, as we have previously ascertained, as a need for validation from the colonised, a phenomenon that can also be observed in *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, particularly when considering how most negative views about the Japanese (and, similarly, most positive statements about the British) are continuously uttered by Hong Kong Chinese characters. The novel oscillates between subtle allusions to the independence of Hong Kong, *i.e.* free from all kinds of foreign dominance, and more overt passages mentioning the return of the British to reinstate their dominance over the territory. In the novel, although Japanese characters clearly show disdain for the British, Hong Kong Chinese characters never openly criticise their former rulers, keeping to more matter-of-fact statements: a representative example is when Qing-Mai, a young Hong Kong Chinese girl, says to Nicholas: "If you live here for a long time, maybe you forget your own language. You must not. When the Japanese go, the British will return and you must be English once more" (Booth 22).

On the other hand, the novel portrays Nicholas not as a British child, but rather as a British national born and raised in Hong Kong, forced into hiding and pretending to

be half-Chinese in order to survive. Throughout the narrative, Nicholas' cultural identity becomes progressively more ambiguous, leading to feelings of displacement: he is given a Chinese name, taught to speak Cantonese and he even helps the local Communist guerrillas in their efforts to free Hong Kong from Japanese occupation. Nicholas, therefore, represents one of the many nuances of a burgeoning Hong Kong identity: that of a Hong Kong British, perhaps, in a more late-20th century perception, simply a Hongkonger, not entirely and homogeneously Chinese or British. In the protagonist's journey of self-discovery, he ends up finding "not Self or Other but the otherness of the Self inscribed in the perverse palimpsest of colonial identity" (Bhabha 28, 44).

The paradigm of physical dependence and inferiority associated to childhood is also inverted in *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, with Nicholas' age and status seen as an advantage, rather than a disadvantage. The narrative's turning point (that lends the novel its title) relates to Nicholas' involvement with the East River Column, highlighting how Nicholas' experiences and contribution require validation from Hong Kong Chinese and British characters alike, specifically adult characters. At this point in the novel, Nicholas is fourteen years old and has found his own place in the village of Sek Wan, tending to livestock, helping Tang with his fishing and even starting to forget his life prior to the Japanese invasion (Booth 98-9). One day, Nicholas is approached by a British Army Aid Group officer working with local guerrillas and helping war prisoners held in Japanese prison camps in Hong Kong (Booth 105): the officer's story is consistent with historical accounts of life in these prison camps, mentioning starvation, forced labour, and the withholding of medical supplies (Emerson 18; Chan n. p.). The officer then asks Nicholas to take Ah Kwan's place as messenger and bring a package to a prison camp in Kowloon, an operation British military called "playing music on the bamboo radio" since the supplies and information provided to the prisoners were like "music to their ears . . . , [boosting] their morale, [letting] them know they are not forgotten" (Booth 106). This short passage seems to allude to the widespread frustration and low morale felt by members of the British military deployed in East Asia during World War II, known in the British press as "the Forgotten Army", given that the war with Japan was "perceived widely as unfashionably colonial and an unwelcome diversion from the main effort of defeating Germany" (Dunlop 13).

Although the East River Column had used Nicholas for his size, for his interpreting skills and for his ability to pass by undetected, this episode represents the first instance in which Nicholas is deemed "useful" by British military, as well as the first time his Chinese and British identities are acknowledged as fully integrated, with

Nicholas having to explain himself to the British prisoners, who initially believe him to be a Chinese teenager: “I am English. My Chinese name is Wing-ming but my English name is Nicholas” (Booth 118). The transition from a fixed, unquestioned British identity to a more ambivalent and fragmented sense of “otherness” within the self, whose borders are in permanent state of flux and undergoing constant change (Bhabha 114), coincide with Nicholas’ transition from childhood to adulthood, his journey ending with Ah Kwan, the Chinese gardener and Communist guerrilla spy, complimenting him by saying “You are a very brave man” (Booth 111).

The handover of Hong Kong represented the last stage of the dissolution of the British Empire, consolidated after a transition period of 13 years. The drafting, negotiation and signing of a Joint Declaration between 1984 and 1985 determined the People’s Republic of China would resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong as a Special Administrative Region with effect from July 1st, 1997. This transition period was deemed necessary, among other reasons, to avoid negatively impacting its economic and business prosperity - by the late 1970s, Hong Kong had also become an important source of foreign exchange for the Chinese economy, due to international companies establishing their regional head offices in the territory (Hook and Neves 108, 121-122). The end of British rule in Hong Kong had been predicted since the signing of the ninety-nine-year lease in 1898: however, this outcome hadn’t always been perceived as being inevitable. In fact, it was only at the end of the 1950s that Hong Kong famously began to be perceived as a borrowed place on borrowed time: in other words, Hong Kong “was decolonised in substance, if not juridically, in the early 1950s at the same time as most of the remaining colonial territories in East and South East Asia” (Darwin 30). This sense of inevitability is can be directly correlated to the four-year Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, given that this was a moment of social, political and economic change when the British grip over the territory slipped irretrievably due to the increasing feeling of revolt and rising Chinese nationalism. The last chapter of *Music on the Bamboo Radio* is marked by Nicholas’ symbolic return to his past and his British roots, forcing him to fully acknowledge his position between two cultures. On the day of the Japanese invasion, Peony Villa is described as a “two storey, red-brick colonial-style house with a deep veranda running all round it”, mixed with East Asian influences in the furnishings and *décor*, including “rattan chairs” and “green glazed plant pots embossed with writhing golden dragons” (Booth 4), evoking an idyllic symbiosis between East and West. When Nicholas returns to his childhood home after four years, he is faced with a demoralising sight:

The window-sills were peeling. Several shutters were missing, showing jagged broken glass in the frames. There were dark holes in the roof where there should have been tiles. On the veranda, one of the plant pots remained but it was cracked open. *The earth had spilled out and was growing weeds.*

Nicholas did not want to go on. He could not account for it, but he was afraid, *as scared as he had been nearly four years before* when Ah Kwan had grabbed him from behind. (Booth 132-3, emphasis added).

The Japanese occupation of Hong Kong represented, in this sense, the beginning of the end of British rule over the territory, reinforcing the temporary nature of British reoccupation post-World War II. If, according to Bhabha, the highest historical and political potential for change resides in the space between Self and Other (28), then identities can only be truly negotiated in a “third space”, a meeting point between cultures where “we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves” (38-9). In its abandoned and decrepit state, Nicholas’ old home continues to represent the relationship between Britain and Hong Kong: not only would the local population be unable to “look on their former masters with the same eyes” (Snow xxv), but, politically, China would perceive the end of the Japanese occupation as an opportunity to retrieve Hong Kong, although not immediately - China’s primary concern at the end of World War II was in rebuilding its economy and in dealing with the civil war between Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party (Tsang 125, 148). This anticipatory feeling is present in Nicholas’ description of a decrepit Peony Villa, particularly in how Nicholas felt “afraid” despite there not being a threat to his safety any longer, as well as in the “spilled out” earth and “growing weeds” from the broken flowerpot (Booth 132).

The fact that the earth from the broken flower pot was fertile enough for new plant life to grow suggests a sense of hope for the future of Hong Kong - which, as we all know, turned out to be true, as Hong Kong emerged as a prosperous and thriving city after World War II (Hook and Neves 110-1). However, this passage in particular seems to correlate to the period in which the novel itself was written and published: namely, the years prior to the handover of Hong Kong back to China, and the anxiety over what this could mean for British and Hong Kong Chinese alike. The prosperity of post-war Hong Kong gave its residents a way of life different from that in the mainland, which is why the territory’s return to the People’s Republic of China was not perceived as an entirely positive outcome (Tsang 220). In choosing the Japanese occupation as the background for *Music on the Bamboo Radio*, Martin Booth presents the reader with an idealised image of British presence in Hong Kong, while

simultaneously evoking the ambivalence surrounding the inevitable end of a crumbling empire. As we have been able to ascertain throughout the present article, this idyllic image of Sino-British relations coexists with more ambivalent and disruptive elements, presented in two main ways: implicitly, through the alignment of Japanese and British symbols of oppression, and symbolically, through several metaphors of dissimulated resistance. By showing British and Hong Kong Chinese uniting forces against a common enemy, and using, to this effect, fixed dichotomies whereby British and Hong Kong Chinese represent the “good”, and Japanese and their Chinese allies represent “evil”, this novel is still imbued with an underlying sense of unease regarding not only Hong Kong post-Japanese occupation, but Hong Kong after its handover to China in 1997.

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¹ This article falls into the scope of my PhD research project, which aims to analyse representations of Macau and Hong Kong in Portuguese and British children's literature published in the late twentieth century and the early 21st century. It was also the subject of an essay written for a PhD seminar (taught by Professor Teresa Pinto Coelho) and a conference paper presented in the 40th APEAA (the Portuguese Association for Anglo-American Studies) conference, held on June 6th-8th, 2019.

² Prior to the Pacific War, the ethnic Chinese community in Hong Kong had not yet build a separate cultural identity from that of Mainland Chinese, and its non-Chinese community was mostly made up of expatriates from different countries, including the British community. Various authors consider the establishment of the People's Republic of China as the first stage of development of a specific, and complex, Hong Kong identity, after many Chinese refugees started settling in Hong Kong to escape the Communist regime from the 1940s onward (Tsang 180, 194-195). A distinct sense of community continued to grow with the rise of popular culture and the widespread use of Cantonese in the 1970s (Kam 16) and, after 1997, the people of Hong Kong increasingly saw themselves as "Hong Kongers" rather than "Chinese": according to different surveys done by the University of Hong Kong, "the proportion of residents who describe themselves as simply Chinese fell from a high 39 per cent in 2008 to just 16 per cent by the end of 2016", with those considering themselves as Hong Kongers rising "from 47 per cent to 64 per cent" (Bland 13). In that sense, "Hong Konger", "Hongkonger" and "Hong Kong Chinese" are terms that reflect changing perceptions of identity in Hong Kong throughout its history, and under the current political climate surrounding the Hong Kong protests, reflecting whether or not there is a cultural and/or political identification with mainland China (Kam 12; Chu 57). Given that the subject of the present article is a novel set in the 1940s, prior to the rise of a specific Hong Kong identity, and a time when the differentiation of Hong Kong identities was predominantly based on ethnicity and geographical factors, this article will be using the term "Hong Kong Chinese" rather than the current, most widely accepted term, "Hong Konger" or "Hongkonger".

The Policing of Private Conscience: Literary Interjections on Public Morals

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Abstract

The human experience is a complex and unique thing. Humankind's attempt to give shape to its own perception of existence goes to the heart of the aesthetic experience but faces obstacles to its realisation. This text seeks to explore the cultural currents that interact with literary works that act as a counterweight to censorial forces which manifest themselves in many forms throughout the ages.

Keywords: Ideology; Censorship; Dystopian literature; Freedom of expression

Resumo

A experiência humana é complexa e única. A tentativa de dar forma à percepção da existência está no centro da experiência estética mas enfrenta obstáculos à sua concretização. O presente artigo pretende explorar as correntes culturais que interagem com os textos literários, agindo como contrapeso às forças de censura que se manifestam de forma diversa em diferentes espaços temporais.

Palavras-chave: Ideologia; Censura; Literatura Distópica; Liberdade de Expressão

Human experience is complex and ever-evolving. Rarely can it be completely and wholly described or represented without some imperfection. Experience is different for each individual but there are universal bonds that stretch across temporal and cultural barriers. Accounting for this experience merits engagement and reflection on the artistic endeavours that have taken place and that have provided a strong impetus

to further writing. This text is concerned with examining select theory and literary forays into understanding the human experience and the cultural conditions in which certain aspects of it come to pass.

Certain constraints are in evidence when one examines how humankind reflects upon itself and this forms an important element of the discussion in this text in respect of how the contours of language are regulated and controlled. Bradbury's influential *Fahrenheit 451* is subject to analysis for the great value it brings to the reader in exposing the limits of the freedom of expression and how conscientious members of a community can become aware and seek to overcome such limitations. The experience of overcoming imposed restrictions also involves understanding the nature of the language appropriated to describe the environment in which one lives and how it affects mind-sets are issues also receives attention in the text that follows. The right to freely express oneself would seem to be a fundamental and inalienable right in the modern era. While no right is absolute, the relative strength of the right of freedom of expression is a powerful facility afforded to citizens in most advanced democracies and remains a bulwark against totalizing tendencies of absolutist ideologies. It also provides the conduit through which private musings can be shared with the wider community and thus begin conversations on matters of concern that go beyond the self and touch upon universal experiences that in turn can be fashioned into common trepidations.

Expression of thoughts and concerns forms a central part of being a perceptive human being and attests to our reflexive and curious nature. Doing so affirms our very existence and gives form to our experiences and reflects a person's unique ability to account for their own personal journey. In her book, *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt recognises the importance of self-expression:

But only man can express this distinction and distinguish himself, and only he can communicate himself and not merely something - thirst or hunger, affection or hostility or fear. In man, otherness, which he shares with everything that is, and distinctness, which he shares with everything alive, become uniqueness, and human plurality is the paradoxical plurality of unique beings. (Arendt 175)

It is a person's unique ability to speak (in contrast to other animals) which bestows this facility to sketch the contours of one's values and desires through a process of comparison and negotiation. As Arendt further remarks:

In acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world, while their physical identities appear without any activity of their own in the unique shape of the body and sound of the voice. This disclosure of “who” in contradistinction to “what” somebody is - his qualities, gifts, talents, and short-comings, which he may display or hide - is implicit in everything somebody says and does. (Arendt 179)

While much of this freedom that allows people to express themselves without inhibitions is often problematic and sometimes hazardous, it is a genuine desire and an ongoing struggle. Equally valid is the claim that identity is contested within the public sphere as varying cultural currents come into contact with one another by accident or design. In the case of the latter, artificial barriers have been an abiding feature of organised societies since early times. These barriers vary in form, but all have the objective of regulating or controlling the creation, debate and propagation of unfettered thought by means of which people can attain greater awareness of their own situations, needs and desires.

Inevitably, certain societal forces exercise control over the growth of awareness and of needs and desires within the nature of the narrative, in its formation and structure. This is a crucial site of representation and contestation since most if not all discourse provides the basis on which a social construction of reality can take place. Discourse is turn dependent on the character of our definitions which are themselves heavily influenced by cultural heritage and are reliant upon social interactions to legitimise their standing. Those individuals found to be part of such interactions exercise varying degrees of influence and prestige over the legitimacy and validity of definitions depending on their social standing (e.g. philosophers, scientists, legislators, political activists, etc.) who must also vie for their claims to be accepted as legitimate as modernising and evolutionary processes act upon existing concepts (Schiappa xi-xii).

Marshalling a constellation of what may be termed legitimate definitions facilitates the creation of a particular social knowledge that sustains a shared understanding within the community about peoples’ perception of their own reality and the manner in which they should describe it. It is at such a juncture of perception that “authoritative” versions of the recognised definition of words are deployed with particular potency (Schiappa 3). Moreover, as Quine observes: “Language is socially inculcated and controlled; the inculcation and control turn strictly on the keying of sentences to shared stimulation” (28). Fashioning an acceptable common vision of reality thus creates effective and lasting conditions to control thought and conduct.

Furthermore, an agreed position on descriptions ensures compliance with existing definitions whenever variations that may inspire doubt or sow the seeds of discord which would otherwise cause disharmony. Achieving this requires zealous respect for definitions so that a natural reaction part on the part of matured persons to ordinary linguistic terms is to acquiesce whenever experience diverges from accepted constructions so that a process of self-correction ensues that has the effect of forcing our linguistic behaviour to respect expected patterns.

Such is the power of accepted linguistic patterns that, as Cox has affirmed, it adds a layer of pragmatic control over our decision-making in the sense that it determines the delineation of decision-making grounds which can be regarded as acceptable in respect of what should be regarded as “rational, reasonable, or justified” (200-2). Once these grounds are established it also identifies the kind of information sought and advances approved modes of analysis to interpret them (*Ibid.*). The cumulative effect of the operation of these constraints on meanings has been sketched out in *Defining Reality: Definitions and the Politics of Meaning* by Edward Chiappa who asserts:

Definitions constitute a form of rhetorically induced social knowledge. That is, definitions are the result of a shared understanding of the world and are both the product of past persuasion and a resource for future persuasion. . . . In short, definitions *matter*. The “natural attitude” toward definitions are assumed to represent the way things “really are” (167)

Chiappa’s argument provides an instructive insight into the power of discourse in the formation of opinion and the application and reinforcement of accepted constructs. Other scholars have come to similar conclusions about the nature of argument formation in the public realm. Thus, a credible claim could be made to the effect that the process of opinion formation at the level of discourse and the standard of results therefrom within an oscillating level of rationality as information, ideas and reasons are exhaustively debated as part of the nature of public communication. Public opinion is thus conditioned by the philosophy and ideology that shape the criteria that govern how recognised public opinion emerges. The relevance of public opinion is that it provides a primary conduit for cultural activities and interactions in the public sphere and it is here that influence can be created and sustained through mutual understanding within the culture, this influence can be fashioned into a form of power that makes use of trust in beliefs that have yet to their authenticity and veracity confirmed. This facet of public opinion presents an opportunity to influence social

beliefs that can be later fashioned into political behaviour consistent with these beliefs that is then transformed into the political power to wield binding decisions by maximising recognised institutional procedures (Habermas 362-3).

Recognised institutional procedures are usually found to happen within the deliberative processes of legislative bodies, the courts, public debate, etc. Influence thus develops within the public sphere and becomes the focal point of contestation in that same venue. Varying degrees of success for different perspective can also be dependent on the reputation of the parties advancing their claims which may include religious figures, literary and artistic figures, scientists and popular public figures such as athletes and film stars. The moment the realm of debate expands beyond personal interactions into the public sphere, fragmentation and dispersal come to characterise the nature of the arguments advanced thereafter as different speakers and hearers compete for access to and control over different settings which Habermas refers to as “arenas and galleries; stage and viewing space” (364). These settings serve an important purpose in that they provide the location for the performance of communication of issues that exhibit both personal and public perspectives. Apart from religion, art and literature, only one’s private life sphere can serve as a source of existential language against which socially-generated experiences and challenges can be judged in conjunction with the life history of the individual. From that perspective, challenges communicated in the public sphere can trace their original acknowledgment to the personal account as soon as they are felt in the private life of the individual. Human experience is given a powerful articulation in the form in the expressive codes of religion, art and literature and it is within the literary sphere that one could argue the most powerful representation is to be witnessed. The literary context finds itself engaged in an age-old articulation of the struggles of values and representation of different world visions and it is for this reason closely interwoven with the (political) public sphere (Habermas 365).

Given the potency of the literary work, particularly when digested by a cultural-engaged audience with political awareness, this power can come to be checked by means of coercive policies which attempt to arrest its potential to inspire inquisitive attitudes and alternative visions. Enterprises of the kind that seek to regulate the power of literature frequently engage in coercive comprehension and censorial practices. However, the perceived necessity on the part of governing agencies to engage in such practices varies according to the level of awareness within a culture and the strength of free speech present within the wider community. Moreover, this would also depend on the level of adherence to ‘legitimate’ narratives.

In situations where there is increasing levels of anomie and apathy - a prominent feature of many industrial societies - acquiescence replaces resistance and it is at this point that the true extents of the success of censorship policies reveal themselves. This point is recognised by Pierre Bourdieu in his *Language and Symbolic Power* where he remarks:

Censorship is never quite as perfect or invisible as when each agent has nothing to say apart from what he is objectively authorized to say: in this case he does not even have to be his own censor because he is, in a way, censored once and for all, through the forms of perception and expression that he has internalized and which impose their form on all his expressions (138)

In cultural contexts where the interest in freedom of expression has suffered significant decay or has seen major curtailment, censorship gains a strong foothold and perpetuates restrictive practices in public communication. Certain forms of expression become the only authorised ones and thus thought itself becomes indistinguishable from the language it is expressed in. In turn this leads to a much reduced range of possible appropriate expressions and topics for debate whereby issues outside the approved range become impossible candidates and unviable topics of contestation (Bourdieu 139).

Living under a regime in which censorship is central tenet of control obviously imposes limitations on what the human being can achieve, particularly in the areas of expression and learning. Greater levels of knowledge tend to favour conditions of more acute awareness in the citizenry and foster a more critically reflective mind-set. Inevitably those who seek to defend and perpetuate restrictive conditions will seek to demonise any initiatives that are designed to increase access to learning and greater levels of critical self-awareness. These two factors empower individuals to find and utilise the means of self-realisation, and this by its nature, poses an existentialist threat to power systems based on the curtailment of freedoms. A struggle thus ensues between the oppressed and the oppressor for the control of agencies of power. One powerful instrument in this respect is the ability of education to empower citizens. This has long been recognised as a fundamental tool in the quest to deconstruct undesired power systems, although there have been thinkers who have encouraged intellectual temperance so as to avoid hegemonic tendencies overwhelming otherwise positively empowering projects of knowledge enhancement. In his *Advancement of Learning, Book One*, Sir Francis Bacon states his conviction that:

If then such be the capacity and receipt of the mind of man, it is manifest that there is no danger at all in the proportion or quantity of knowledge, how large soever, lest it should make it swell or out-compass itself; no, but it is merely the quality of knowledge, which be it in quantity more or less, if it be taken without the true corrective thereof, hat in it some nature of venom or malignity, and some effects of that venom, which is ventosity or swelling. This corrective spice, the mixture whereof maketh knowledge so sovereign, is Charity which the apostle immediately addeth to the former clause; for so he saith, 'knowledge bloweth up, but charity buildeth up'; not unlike unto that which he delivereth in another place . . . (124)

The alleged precise faults are set out in further remarks where Bacon says:

And as for that censure of Saloman concerning the excess of writing and reading books and the anxiety of spirit which redoundeth from knowledge and that admonition of St. Paul, that 'we be not seduced by vain philosophy', and they do indeed excellently set for the true bounds and limitations whereby human knowledge is confined and circumscribed; and yet without any such contracting or coarctation, but that it may comprehend all the universal nature of things. For these limitations are three. The first, that 'we do not so place our felicity in knowledge, as we forget our mortality.' The second, that 'we make application of our knowledge to give ourselves repose and contentment and not distaste or repining.' The third, that 'we do not presume by the contemplation of nature to attain to the mysteries of God.' For as touching the first of these, Saloman doth excellently expound himself in another place of the same book where he saith, 'I saw well that knowledge recedeth as far from ignorance as light doth from darkness, and that the wise man's eyes keep watch in his head, whereas the fool roundeth about in darkness: but withal I learned that the same mortality involveth them both.' (124)

Many issues of a multi-faceted nature are raised in the above excerpt, however, one issue that is exceedingly difficult to rebut is that additional knowledge alleviates the symptoms of ignorance: "knowledge recedeth as far from ignorance as light doth from darkness". The implication of this point leaves the reader in little doubt as to the enduring relevance of Bacon's remarks particularly in an era where there is a superabundance of information with ever-increasing forms of indoctrination as varied as the number of conduits of electronic communication that transmit the content.

Bacon's riposte to charges that greater levels of knowledge equate to higher levels of corruption in the nature of man and his ability to respect established societal norms is highly instructive in that it seeks (and largely succeeds) to acknowledge suspicions but not elevate them to the level of indisputable fact:

And as for those particular seducements or indispositions of the mind for policy and government, which learning is pretended to insinuate if it be granted that any such thing be, it must be remembered withal that learning ministreth in every of them greater strength of medicine or remedy, than it offereth cause of indisposition or infirmity. For it by a secret operation it make men perplexed and irresolute on the other side by plain precept it teacheth them when and upon what ground to resolve; yea, and how to carry things in suspense without prejudice till they resolve. If it make men positive and regular, it teacheth them what things are in their nature demonstrative, and what are conjectural; and as well the sure of distinctions and exceptions and as the latitude of principles and rules. If it mislead by disproportion or dissimilitude of examples, if teacheth men the force of circumstances the errors of comparisons, and all the cautions of applications; so that in all these it doth rectify more effectively than it can pervert. (128-9)

An analysis of these further remarks yields the realisation that while new knowledge can divert ones previous beliefs, or perhaps cancel them altogether, one could say that it is this knowledge that provides the greater awareness which is itself a necessary evil. Bacon's appeal to adopt a set of principles under which it becomes possible and desirable to establish principles and rules and the necessary attendant "distinctions and exceptions" attest to the complex nature of the pursuit of knowledge and the hope it brings of greater understanding of the human condition and the world we inhabit.

One could argue that acute awareness of oneself and the issues that affect the well-being of both body and mind can be achieved through free oneself as much as possible from constraints whether self-imposed, culturally-endorsed or officially authorised. If a high-degree of freedom can be achieved - suspending momentarily scales of probability of such a thing ever happening - a catalyst of some kind must be found to bring about what has been referred to as "the unencumbered-self" (Sandel 162). A self of this kind would be free to postulate, identify and pursue dreams and goals without experiencing excessive artificial barriers to reaching those objectives. However, a distinction can and should be made between the values held dear by the individual and the identity of each person as being part of the same person's identity but not fused as one. Reaching a position in which the individual can be described as enjoying the freedom granted by an unencumbered status means, according to Michael Joseph Sandel in his *Public Philosophy: Essays on Morality in Politics* that: "For the unencumbered self, what matters above all, what is most essential to our personhood, are not the ends we choose but our capacity to choose them. The original position

sums up this central claim about us . . .” (162). Closely mirroring the sentiments expressed by Sandel here is the position adopted by Joseph Rawls who defends that: “It is not our aims that primarily reveal our nature, but rather the principles under which these aims are to be formed. . .” (101-2).

Taken together these claims about the capacity to choose and the principles which guide those choices demonstrate the acute need to consider the central role played by the personal philosophy and conduct exhibited by each individual. Respecting individual choice can be challenging when values are in conflict, particular when they conflict with official doctrine. Resisting the destabilizing and disruptive forces encapsulated by conditions of modernity often labelled as “anomie”, “fragmentation” and “social disintegration” at individual level is a distinct product of modernizing societies. In the facing of ever-evolving environments, governing agencies - particularly states - have made full use of modern technology to arrogate and centralise power. Once this power reached a critical mass at levels on a scale never before seen, it has been used to penetrate previously restricted domains where ruling groups penetrate belief systems in civil society and deploy them to justify increasing fusion between social relationships and the industrial economy so as to bring state and society into union (Wolin 28-9).

Once this “fusion” of state and civil society has been achieved, the state comes to rely upon bureaucratic power to impose stability which in turn fosters greater levels of predictability through universal rules and regulations so that corporate bodies can apply the same rules so that long-term planning supports product consistency and thus uniformity in society. The ultimate goal of this bureaucratic power is the attainment of a mass market with near-uniform body of consumers with identical tastes. Passivity ensures long-term reliance on the same tastes and this depends upon a politics without memory driven by media-constituted politics. In that sense Sheldon Wolin sees media politics consisting of:

. . . a succession of images designed to make the present moment the definition of reality dissociated from the past and hence a reality dominated by the present. The present becomes merely an arbitrary arrest of sound, motion, and fashion while the future has no organic connection to past or present and is simply the next successful image (184)

These “succession of images” are deliberately designed to entertain and distract the public at large as way to distract from serious self-reflection and to discourse penetrating musings on the state of the world. Constant change gives the impression

of instability and that forces the individual and those close to them to preoccupy themselves with dealing with quotidian matters and thus expend their primary energies on survival rather than introspection and dreaming. Disjointed images are difficult to piece together and this further alienates the individual from their cultural heritage and the world at large thus further frustrating any designs to engage with society and affect changes to it. However, this does not mean that genuine engagement between individuals, groups with society and the wider world is entirely unfeasible.

Sense can be made of the world by doing certain things to engage with it and interpret it. Since culture itself is fundamentally characterised by the “intercourse of people” with objects of art that taken together work to mould the nature of authentic political experience. Genuine engagement depends on a person’s individual qualities and how they affect the perceived experience of being enlightened by works of art. In order to make the existence of a genuine politics real there must be an accommodating human world where humanly-created objects provide the material and aesthetic comforts necessary for making one’s home on earth (Hansen 97).

Making a home on earth requires creating the necessary conditions for people to inhabit a certain environment. Material comforts can be manufactured, but spiritual and intellectual ones must be created in the mind, be given form and sustained by works of art. Before this can happen, however, a hospitable environment for free-reflection and unrestricted writing must be capable of being created or at least be imaginable under the prevailing circumstances. Artistic endeavours such as literary activities can create positive conditions for the freedom of expression. In this respect Paul Hansen holds that: “Art makes thought real, fabricates thought things, transfigures our feelings and emotions in a way that manifests the creative but essentially inner world of thinking itself . . .’ (99-100). Private thinking in the mind of the artist can create a private world, a world apart which can be seen as characterising the universe of the literary work of art of an artist who directs his intellectual efforts endeavours to the creation of this semiotic object. Objects of this kind in textual form of sufficient length thus take on the character of universe in which alternative interpretations and the creation of different realities is possible (Coste 241). The creation of these alternative “universes” can be created for quite a number of reasons, which outlined by John McGahern, in his remarks on the occasion of writing “The Image” reveal his understanding of the purpose of art:

For art is, out of the failure of love, an attempt to create a world in which we can live: if not for long or forever, it is still a world of the imagination over which we can

reign, and to reign is to purely reflect on our situation through this created world of ours, this Medusa's mirror, which allows us to celebrate even the totally intolerable. And we absurdly reign over this imaginary world in the illusory permanence of false gods, and it may be this need of permanence that creates its turn the need for shape or form (5)

It is thus to the artist that the responsibility falls to create the means by which we can reign over an imaginary world that allows us to reflect on our situation with a penetrating gaze to reveal previously unrecognised forms of meaning. As noted above, the task of illuminating different conditions of unfulfilled personhood and the conditions which cause frequently falls to the artist. An artistic impetus to quantify experience by giving it some kind of shape or form can arguably make an otherwise futile experience bearable and produce something meaningful that enriches our understanding of our own existence. Gaining this greater understanding stands as symbol of hope that insight can lead to liberation from any number of predicaments or repressive yokes that impede a more complete attainment of self-realisation. One marking experience can inspire a spark of creativity in which the artist brings forth a talent that illuminates dark shadows of ignorance and which may also create the potential to identify the contours of a bewildered mind in search of an appropriate means of expression. At the same time, literary endeavours can finally map the presence of those so-called "false gods" reverence for or deference to whom could have and may continue to act as agents of oppression whether this is readily recognised or not.

A central part of the artistic endeavour to illuminate these situations comes in the form of the creation of the semiotic object and it is to one well-known and respected example of this that attention shall now be turned. Ray Bradbury's dystopia *Fahrenheit 451* stands as an enduring example of how literature can map the many complex contours of the struggle against state-sponsored mechanisms that impede meaningful awareness and critical reflection on the part of ordinary citizens in a fictional world that mirror the many challenges faced by those outside the artist-created world. It is primarily concerned with censorship. The reader is introduced to Guy Montag, a fireman employed by the state. He lives with his wife Mildred in rather dull-world. On a walk returning home from work one day teenaged neighbour Clarisse McClellan accompanies him for a few minutes on the street. She demonstrates her love of literature and culture in contrast to the vast majority of the other citizen of their dystopian world. Her conversational style and linguistic patterns force Montag to question his own conscience:

*'Are you happy? she said.
'Am I what?' he cried
But she was gone - running in the moonlight.
Her front door shut gently.
'Happy! Of all the nonsense.'
He stopped laughing...
Of course I'm happy. What does she think? I'm not? he asked the quiet rooms.
. . . (Fahrenheit¹ 17)*

Moments before these remarks Clarisse's cogitations had revealed her concern about what people really saw in the world about them:

*' . . . I sometimes think drivers don't know what grass is, or flowers, because they never see them slowly,' she said. 'If you showed a driver a green blur, Oh yes! He'd say that's grass! A pink blur? That's a rose-garden. While blurs are houses. Brown blurs are cows. My uncle drove slowly on a highway once. He drove forty miles an hour and they jailed him for two days. Isn't that funny, and sad too?'
'You think too many things,' said Montag uneasily . . .
'I rarely watch the "parlour walls" or go to the races or Fun Parks. So I've lots of time for crazy thoughts, I guess. (F 16)*

Here Clarisse alludes to the existence of large television screens present in every home in their country which serves as a permanent distraction² for the population which ensure they rarely ever think about nor even engage with meaningful musings about themselves. In comparison to other citizens and other families, she is an oddity in how she has the presence of mind and freedom to be different to wonder about the world at leisure. Her comportment jolts Montag and stirs something within him:

He glanced back at the wall. How like a mirror, too, her face. Impossible; for how many people did you know that refracted your own light to you? People were more often - he searched for a simile, found one in his work - torches, blazing away until they whiffed out. How rarely did other people's face take of you and throw back to you your own expression, your own innermost thought?' (F 18)

Montag is a fireman, but does not quench fires, rather the role of the institution he works for is to burn all books once their existence has been reported. Up until this

point, he does not question whether or not he is happy or whether or not what he is doing is actually morally acceptable. From this point forward, his conscience has been awakened and he begins soul-searching and questions begin to mount in his mind. One day, while at work in the fire station, Montag is occupying his time with his colleagues awaiting possible call outs. They are all sitting at a table, playing cards with their manager, Captain Beatty. It is at such a moment that he voices his growing doubts:

‘. . . I’ve been thinking. About the fire last week. About the man whose library we fixed. What happened to him?’

‘They took him screaming off to the asylum.’

‘He wasn’t insane.’

Beatty seeks to correct his subordinate by asserting:

‘Any man’s insane who thinks he can fool the Government and us.’

‘I’ve tried to imagine,’ said Montag, ‘just how it would feel. I mean to have firemen burn our houses and our books.’

‘We haven’t any books.’

‘But if we did have some?’

‘You got some?’

Beatty blinkered slowly.

‘No.’

Montag realises his discomfort but ventures further in his increasingly hazardous inquiries as he asks:

‘Was it always like this? The firehouse, our work? I mean, well, once upon a time . . .’

‘Once upon a time!’ Beatty said. ‘What kind of talk is that?’

‘Didn’t firemen prevent fires rather than stoke them up and get them going?’

‘That’s rich!’ Beatty responds. (F 47)

Montag’s crisis of conscience continues and this is further fuelled by a coalition of events that reinforce his doubts. A call comes through to the fire stations and the crew is deployed to burn down another house containing a large quantity of books. Mistakes are made by other on that evening and this forces Montag to seek further justification in his own mind for what he is now doing:

The police went first and adhesive-taped the victim’s mouth and bandaged him off into their glittering beetle cars, so when you arrived you found an empty house. You

weren't hurting anyone, you were only hurting *things* . . . there was nothing to tease your conscience later. You were simply cleaning up. Janitorial work, essentially. Everything to its proper place. Quick with the kerosene! Who's got a match!' (F 50)

His difficulties with an uneasy conscience are compounded when he discovers the victim has not been removed by the time his fire crew arrive to dispatch with the offending material of the collection of books in a woman's home:

This woman was spoiling the ritual. The men were making too much noise, laughing, joking to cover her terrible accusing silence below. She made the empty rooms roar with accusation and shake down a fine dust of guilt that was sucked in their nostrils as they plunged about. It was neither cricket nor correct. Montag felt an immense irritation. She shouldn't be here on top of everything . . . (F 50)

Such is the depth of his despair and the disintegration of his will to continue as before in the face of his strong disillusionment, he gradually takes ill and becomes increasingly alienated from his job and even his wife. He misses a day at work and discusses the possibility of resigning his position with his wife (F 67-8). This absence prompts a personal visit from Beatty to the Montag's home. This occasion becomes an opportunity for an exchange of views and Montag questions how Clarisse has come to vanish which invites a firm rebuttal from his captain: "She was simple-minded" (F 68). Beatty also takes the opportunity to firmly impress his vision of the order of things on his employee and attempts to disabuse him of any notion of free thinking:

Speed up the film, Montag, quick. Click? Pic? Look, Eye, Now, Flick, Here, Three, Swift, Pace, Up, Down, In Out, Why, How, Who, What, Where, Eh? Uh? Bang! Smack! Wallop, Bing, Bong, Boom! Digest-digests, digest-digests-digests. Politics. One column, two sentences, a headline! Then, in mid-air, all vanishes. Whirl man's mind around so fast under the pumping hands of publishers, exploiters, broadcasters, that the centrifuge flings off all unnecessary, time-wasting thought!' (F 73)

Beatty becomes the embodiment of public authority, of regime orthodoxy and impresses the necessity for absolute conformity that denies all deviations from the official narrative.

We must all be alike. Not everyone born free and equal, as the Constitution says, but everyone made equal. Each man the image of every other; then all are happy, for there are no mountains to make them cover, to judge themselves against. So! A book

is a loaded gun in the house next door. Burn it! Take the shot from the weapon. Breach man's mind. Who knows who might be the target of the well-read man? Me? I won't stomach them for a minute . . . (F 77)

Montag strips all pretence away with his revealing remarks and confirms what Montag had come to realise that he should have known all along: “...*there was no longer need of firemen for the old purposes. They were given the new job...official censors, judges and executors. That's you Montag, and that's me...*” (F 77).

Having finally had the truth laid bare before him by his own manager, Montag is left in absolutely no doubt whatsoever about the nature of thing in his new state of consciousness. Mulling over his new found realisation, he attempts to steady himself within his dizzied state of shock, revulsion and near-rebellious behaviour. His wanders through his thoughts and these in turn lead him to seek out other like-minded people and it is while in this state that he recalls a moment some time previous of having met a person in a public park who appeared to have a book on his person but made furtive moves the moment he realises this has been witnessed by Montag. Time and circumstances brings them together again and a plan is designed to affect change for the greater good. This character, Faber is revealed to be a retired Professor of English who shares Montag's revulsion for the current complexion of society (F 97).

Faber's ideas provide strong inspiration and a structure within which Montage can now project his future designs. Despite battling his own misgivings and a strong sense of fear, Faber and Montag find strength in one another to face the coming challenge since the latter has now firmly turned away from his former life and invites the full force of the state against him. In a sea of confusion and fear, the two friends seek to charter a way forward and it is Faber's insightful description of the current malaise that sets forth a clear picture of what actually face:

. . . Number one, as I said, quality of information. Number two: leisure to digest it. And number three: the right to carry out actions based on what we learn from the interaction of the first two. And I hardly think a very old man and a fireman turned sour could do much this late in the game . . . (F 110)

As Faber digests his own remarks to Montag, he comes to the further realisation that an immediate reestablishment of mass literacy would be wholly inadequate as the system is so thoroughly deformed and corrupt that it requires wholesale reformation. The deep-seated fear common throughout the population also ensures that there is steep mountain to climb before any realistic hopes of any significant reformation can

be hoped to be accomplished (F 113). However, the fact that it is now possible to discuss such things and some freedom exists to do something about it means that hope can propagate in greater quantities than ever before, regardless of the modest levels that persist in their jaded reality.

Montag eventually parts ways with his profession and is pursued by a regime-sponsored mechanical hound, a device specifically designed to execute dissents with an appalling spectre of terrible violence and deadly poison (F 171). Before Montag he makes his final break, Faber imparts a final piece of advice as a fateful warning:

But remember that the Captain (Beatty) belongs to the most dangerous enemy of truth and freedom, the solid unmoving cattle of the majority. Oh God, the terrible tyranny of the majority. We all have our harps to play. And it's up to you now to know with which ear you'll listen. (F 140)

The character of Faber represents an enlightened consciousness, but one that is relatively rare in the midst of the mass of men. What is accepted as 'right and proper' generally leads to acquiescence on the part of those who live under prevailing conditions, regardless of their nature or consequences. Stimulating interest in or drawing attention to perceived ills presents a challenging task and is not generally welcomed by those it affects the most. Competing narratives inevitably permeate the public consciousness and the struggle for supremacy is an ongoing battle which may see lulls and sudden changes of fortune over time with both wins and losses for each competing side.

An ear well in tune with the ills of the era would seem to be in good position to engage in extensive reflection on the nature of the problem and perhaps on charting its extent that may in turn lead to musings on a way forward. It is the view of the current writer that we must remain eternally vigilant to the great danger and prevalence of totalizing narratives and repressive philosophies that seek to denigrate reflective practices, freedom of thought and expressive introspection. Agents of inertia will naturally seek to adopt any effective strategy to preserve the foundation of their power including resorting to misrepresentation of otherwise clear expositions of dysfunctional cultural practices and corrupting power systems. It is on this note that this discussion concludes with remarks from John McGahern who also recognised these grave threats to genuine freedom of thought in a text titled "A Literature without Qualities":

A writer's work does not define itself but by results. I think that what is happening - for economic, political and social reasons - is that the reader is predetermined in advance and that the contents of literature are imposed on the reader by means of things outside literature. On book jackets, in newspaper articles, through publicity and blackmail of the bestsellers, one passes over the actual text; whatever value it might have is secondary. Consequently, the reader thinks he knows in advance what he must find in a book and whether or not he finds it has finally no importance whatsoever. In my opinion it has to do with a plan of a repressive nature, contrived to do away with the aesthetic experience, which is after all an extreme form of liberty (*Love of the World* 181-2)

Thus it could be said that every effort must be made to nurture and protect environments hospitable to the creation of works that honour the aesthetic experience. Written works of literature stand out as a powerful tool in this respect and deserve our care and attention if we wish to protect our fundamental liberties into the future.

Conclusion

While it would be naïve to hold the expectation that greater awareness would instantly provoke the crystallization of underlying discontent into concrete opposition - it does hold out the possibility that the well-nourished imagination is a powerful agent of resistance against totalizing ideologies. Cultural conditions are inextricably linked to political circumstances and these circumstances change from time to time. A docile community is more easily dominated, but there is less likelihood of this happening once this community has been “awakened” in some way. Bacon’s timeless reminder that education “doth rectify more effectively than it can pervert” stands as a testament to the power of literature to fertilize and nurture the minds of men, young and old. While perfection is unobtainable, the act of enquiry, of entertaining curiosity expands the envelope of freedom as it deflates the envelope of ignorance. Thus, reaching Sandel’s “unencumbered self” is an important goal, but it cannot be the only one. Canvassing the cultural spectrum for a genuine “aesthetic experience” requires active engagement from those motivated and suitably-equipped to do so and it is the cause of freedom that must continue to motivate the desire to represent the human condition.

Measure for measure, Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* offers the discerning reader a valuable lesson: freedom, particularly, the freedom of expression is a delicate quill and is only as strong as the hand that wields it. It can be blown in the wind, yet its

sharpened point has the power to penetrate even the most impervious fortresses - both of mind and men. Depictions of alternative realities present a detached perspective which grants distracted denizens fresh opportunities to recognize and renew their own circumstances lest they lose all notion of the currents that both shape and govern their lived experience.

It could be argued that in order to protect artistic freedoms and our right to freedom of expression, we must continue to vigorously exercise those freedoms. In so doing, these freedoms remain on display and renew themselves with each act of their affirmation. Despite the challenges that may come to challenge and perhaps even attempt to demolish these privileges, they are worth every effort to defend them.

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¹ Henceforth identified in quotes by its initial: *F*.

² This aligns closely with Wolin's "succession of media images . . . dominated by the present" mentioned above.

John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley*: In Search of What Kind of America?

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Abstract

The American road narrative as a genre has had little consideration in the academic context. Those narratives were most of the time studied in a fixed way, linked to spiritual and internal journeys rather than actually analyzing the relationship between humans and the space they were travelling on. Similarly, the environment had scant consideration in literary works as well as in the academic debate at least until the nineties. The aim of this article is to provide an analysis of an American road narrative through an ecocritical and space-oriented approach, trying thus to display what is the relationship between humans and the environment within this specific American genre. This will lead to new insights on aspects of mobility/movement and place/space, being the latter not only strongly linked to the American road trip, but also representing important features in American history and culture. The American road narrative chosen for this analysis is John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley: In Search of America* (1962), the result of the author's travels in his own country.

Keywords: American road narrative; Mobility/Movement; Space/Place; Ecocriticism

Resumo

A narrativa de estrada americana como género literário tem tido pouca relevância em contexto académico. Essas narrativas têm sido estudadas quase sempre de uma forma fixa, ligadas a viagens interiores e espirituais, ao invés de analisar a relação entre os humanos e o espaço onde a viagem era realizada. De forma semelhante, os estudos sobre o espaço e o ambiente têm tido poucas considerações em obras literárias assim como no debate académico, pelo menos até aos anos noventa. O objetivo deste artigo é analisar uma narrativa de estrada americana através de uma perspetiva ecocrítica e focada no espaço, tentando deste modo mostrar a relação entre o ser humano e o espaço/ambiente circundante dentro deste género literário especificamente americano. Isto levará a novas perspetivas sobre os aspetos de mobilidade/movimento e espaço/lugar, sendo estes elementos importantes, não só para a narrativa de estrada americana, mas também para a história e cultura americana. A narrativa

de estrada escolhida para este artigo é *Travels with Charley: In Search of America* (1962) de John Steinbeck, obra resultante da viagem do autor no seu próprio país.

Palavras-chave: Narrativa de estrada americana; Mobilidade/Movimento; Lugar/Espaço; Ecocrítica

Introduction

Mobility/movement as well as place/space have always been pivotal and strongly interconnected features in American history and culture. In fact, as John Opie argues in *Virtual America: Sleepwalking through Paradise* (2008): “Space, more than time, roots the American experience; space is the central fact of American history” (45). To this statement, I would also add movement as a central fact to American history. From the “First West” (the settlements in the East coast) to the progressive conquest of successive “frontiers”, America is based on movement and space. Movement meant the possibility of conquering new places, expanding and progressing both physically and socially in space. America was seen as a Garden of Eden, in which Man could start over again as well as a pastoral place where Man could be regenerated. There was (and to a certain extent still is) the idea that through the contact between Man and the landscape/wilderness a new character could arise: the American character. Thus, this connection between man and nature was and still is among the significant elements of the American psyche.

Nature has always played an important role for the American experience. Long is the tradition of accounts and writings concerning nature and the American landscape: from the early depictions of John Smith to what is known as “nature writing”, strongly influenced by romanticism and transcendentalism. Just to mention some important writers, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau devoted some of their writings to the important role of nature, almost always represented in pastoral terms. However, American reality at that time was becoming more and more industrialized and urbanized; the American pastoral was vanishing and proving to be just an ideal, but one which still held a great power. In fact, the idea of America as a Garden of Eden, as a place in which Man can find regeneration through the contact with Nature, is still very much present. Moreover, the recurrent accounts about travels westward, the conquest of the frontiers, the trope of the errand into the wilderness, among others, do no more than reinforce the concept of movement, as it

is stressed in *The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing* (2009) edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera:

Travel and the construction of American identity are intimately linked. This connection undergirds commonplace descriptions of America as a . . . restless populace on the move. It lies at the heart of the politics of Manifest Destiny, in complex relationships between the technology, commerce, and aesthetics of the car culture, and in migration narratives from those of the Hopis and Zunis to those of the Beats. . . . It creates American “selves” and American landscapes through affirmation, exclusion, and negation of others, and interpellates readers into these selves and landscapes through specific rhetorical and genre conventions. (l)

With the pressing and almost anarchic advance of technology and progress, especially with the appearance of the car and with the massive construction of road networks,¹ the concept of movement acquired even more appeal. The road gave to Americans the chance to move through the vast continent, but also gave them the belief that, through the road, a certain kind of reconnection with Nature and with the American landscape could be found. Travelling American roads by car gained different symbolic meanings, such as those of freedom, speed, independence, escape, and, as already mentioned, the possibility to be immersed into the American landscape, so much praised by Americans. Hence, the road turned into an American icon, and, consequently, road narratives became one of the most important expressions of that iconic symbol. Nevertheless, we should stress the contradiction and ambivalence of this significant icon: that very same road has contributed to significant changes and to the damage of the American landscape and environment.

What I intend to do in this essay is to analyze an American road narrative through an ecocritical perspective, and, thus, to study the relationship between human beings and the environment in the American road narrative. Already many literary texts have been studied through an ecocritical approach, but this specific American genre appears not to have been investigated through that filter.

The idea of the road mainly as a getaway from “something” is well stressed and explained in Ronald Primeau’s seminal work *Romance of the Road: The Literature of the American Highway* (1996). Previously to Primeau, there were no critique accounts of the road narrative as a genre; there had been a substantial amount of critical studies on Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road* (1957), but not on the American road narrative as a genre. In this respect, Primeau’s work reveals to be useful, considering that he provides a retrospective study on the long tradition of travels on the road. The

American road tradition encompasses several types of travels: just to give some examples, Henry David Thoreau's walking road trip (*Walking*) or Walt Whitman's "Song of the Open Road", and Mark Twain's river and stagecoach journeys. However, the road that I am considering in this essay is the modern Macadam road, thus a paved road, which allows traffic of motorized vehicles, and mainly the car. Paved roads, highways, back roads, and the car represent an intrusion in the so praised American landscape, but, at the same time, they are symbols of the American spirit of restlessness and movement.

American road narratives were most of the time associated with certain issues, such as a way to flee from a consumerist and conformist society, or as the possibility to reinvent one's identity. The hope was to find, at the end of the road, some kind of purpose or meaning. However, in *American Road Narratives* (2015), Ann Brigham argues:

. . . the road represents not a flight from opposition but a meeting place of clashing or contradictory elements. . . . Mobility does not function as an exit from society/home/the familiar, but instead emerges as a dynamic process for engaging with social conflicts. This makes sense because road stories themselves are plotted around unsettling processes: the crossing of borders, the courting and conquering of distance, the reinvention of identity, and the access, negotiation, and disruption of spaces. The road introduces an otherness that is both spatial and social, and so mobility becomes a process for working out the fact of difference. (8)

This is the sense in which my analysis of the American road narrative will proceed, and, especially, the above-mentioned aspects of "courting and conquering of distance . . . the access, negotiation, and disruption of spaces" will be relevant for the ecocritical approach. It will be analyzed whether or not it is given prominence and voice to the role of environment and space, and to the destruction of certain landscapes (particularly the natural ones). Moreover, attention will be also given to urban spaces, thus considering the environment in its entirety.

Ann Brigham's approach to concepts of mobility and movement seems to be the most appropriate, given the fact that the road trip appears as a way to engage with social conflicts and not as a flight from them. Furthermore, Brigham underlines in her introduction the importance of the road trip to Americans still in contemporary times, emphasizing its connection to the "pleasures of seeing America" and to the natural environment (2). And here ecocriticism seems to properly blend with the American road narrative's definition previously provided. In *The Future of Environmental*

Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination (2005), Lawrence Buell argues that nature and environmental issues were for a long time excluded from literary and cultural studies, pointing also to the fact that race, gender, and postcolonial studies have already gained a noticeable status, whereas environmental and ecocritical studies are still in expansion (1). This is also very apt to American road narratives which apparently were never considered through an ecocritical approach. Using Cheryll Glotfelty's words:

Simply put, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies. (xix)

Therefore, as it has become relevant to focus on gender, class, and race, ecocriticism emphasizes the significance of focusing on nature, environmental issues, and on the importance of place and landscape in literature. It is only since the nineties that ecocriticism has become a field of interest within the field of literary studies, and it is from then on that, slowly, there have been more and more attempts to give voice to those relationships.

Nature has most of the time been considered just through an anthropocentric perspective, in which human beings are always at the center, whereas Nature is placed at the periphery, mostly in a submissive position. Nature seems to have no agency at all and to exist just to serve humans' purposes. This is, in fact, what is known as the Anthropocene: "The name emphasizes "the central role of mankind in geology and ecology" and the impact of human activities on the planet" (Crutzen and Stoermer qtd. in Mertens and Craps 134). In *Ecocriticism: The New Critical Idiom* (2004), Greg Garrard sheds light on different aspects ecocriticism deals with, such as the pastoral, the concept of wilderness, and of deep ecology, among others. The latter seems to be especially relevant:

. . . deep ecology demands recognition of intrinsic value in nature. It identifies the dualistic separation of humans from nature promoted by Western philosophy and culture as the origin of environmental crisis, and demands a return to a monistic, primal identification of humans and the ecosphere. The shift from a human-centred to a nature-centred system of values is the core of the radicalism attributed to deep ecology, bringing it into opposition with almost the entirety of Western philosophy and religion. (21)

As it was already pinpointed previously, the American road narrative is strongly linked to the idea of an immersion and a reconnection with the American environment. The road and the car allowed this reconnection, but at what cost?

John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley: In Search of America*

The American road narrative that I have decided to analyze through an ecocritical lens is John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley: In Search of America* (1962), the result of the author's travels in his own country.² He departed from Sag Harbor, Long Island (New York), with his camper, named Rocinante, after Don Quixote's horse, and his American poodle Charley. He traveled 10.000 miles across America, passing through thirty-four states. To my knowledge, Steinbeck's road trip is not recognized as an environmental or ecocritical work; he did not make the journey to raise awareness of environmental issues or damages, or to show the consequences of human actions upon the landscape. He made the road trip in 1960, a year in which environmental concerns and earth-centered perspectives were not yet taken into account, at least in literary works. The term "ecocriticism" was only used for the first time with the publication of William Rueckert's essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" (1978), turning into a trend in literary criticism in the 1990s. This is the reason why I think that John Steinbeck's road trip's aim was not about creating environmental consciousness. Notwithstanding this, there is a kind of implicit and latent ecocritical approach clearly visible through Steinbeck's comments during his trip. Therefore, this essay will attempt to find if there is a certain kind of awareness toward environmental changes and damages, and to see how the environment is dealt with in this specific American genre.

First of all, it has to be clarified why John Steinbeck decided to undertake the trip:

My plan was clear, concise, and reasonable, I think. For many years I have traveled in many parts of the world. In America I live in New York, or dip into Chicago or San Francisco. But New York is no more America than Paris is France or London is England. Thus I discovered that I did not know my own country. I, an American writer, writing about America, was working from memory, and memory is at best a faulty, warpy reservoir. I had not heard the speech of America, *smelled the grass and trees and sewage, seen its hills and water, its color and quality of light*. I knew the changes only from books and newspapers. But more than this, I had not felt the country for twenty-five years. In short, I was writing of something I did not know about, and it

seems to me that in a so-called writer this is criminal. My memories were distorted by twenty-five intervening years. (5, my italics)³

His road trip is, thus, a way to discover and to reconnect with his own country, twenty-five years having passed since he had last done that. Nostalgia and a profound desire of reconnection are what lead Steinbeck to road tripping America. Steinbeck is in “search of America” and probably still attached to a certain idea of his native country, since the term “America” makes reference to a set of mythical features, typical of the United States of America. Likely, Steinbeck is thinking of America as the idealized space. He had an idea of America, but, through the road trip, he wants to see how America really is. And it appears quite clear that the reconnection with America means also to reconnect with Nature: there is this explicit need to smell and see the American landscape, and to learn about the changes. Thus, it seems Steinbeck was also aware that something had changed in his country, and he was not wrong.

Twenty-five years before Steinbeck’s travels, nearly at the end of the 1930s, the massive construction of road networks, the Interstate Highway System, was yet to start. In *Interstate: Highway Politics and Policy since 1939* (2012), it is explained that already with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, there was the idea of creating a national freeway system. However, it was only in June 1956 with the Federal Aid Highway Act, during Dwight D. Eisenhower’s presidency, that the construction of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways was approved. Clearly, this project of roads’ construction represented an advance for the country, enabling an easier and faster movement throughout the vast territory. However, as it is argued in the preface to *Interstate*’s third edition: “. . . authors of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 made no provision for cities, the environment, housing for those displaced by construction, or for any consideration other than traffic flow” (x). The Interstate Highway System brought irreversible changes and consequences: destruction of natural and open spaces, progressive constructions of motels, gas stations, diners, malls, a high amount of traffic, of pollution, and the gallop, almost scary, advancement of urban centers, among other aspects. Steinbeck mentions some of these when he talks about cities such as Hartford and Providence (26). Manufacturing and traffic seem to be dominant in Hartford and Providence, and, specifically, traffic prevents people from enjoying the cityscape. Furthermore, Steinbeck’s judgement about those two cities is extended to all American cities. In fact, he adds: “American cities are like badger holes, ringed with trash - all of them - surrounded by piles of wrecked and rusting automobiles, and almost smothered with rubbish” (26). American cities appear as cramped places, adorned with a great deal of trash, waste and automobiles. There

is no trace of beauty or of human existence, but just the result of what might be seen as human progress and consumerism, “the wild and reckless exuberance of our production” (26). Steinbeck seems to be aware of the consequences of progress and of the danger of the much praised American icon - the car - which seems to be invading American cities. A little bit further, he claims: “. . . I do wonder whether there will come a time when we can no longer afford our wastefulness - chemical wastes in the rivers, metal wastes everywhere, and atomic wastes buried deep in the earth or sunk in sea. When an Indian village became too deep in its own filth, the inhabitants moved. And we have no place to which to move” (27). All that wastefulness is having (and will have even more) harmful consequences; it is affecting two important aspects of the American experience: nature and movement. Wastefulness is not merely subjugating the urban parts of America, but also adulterating American nature. Moreover, as it was clarified at the beginning of the essay, movement is one of the central aspects of American history and culture. The so praised possibility to move was, already at that time, being ruined by Americans themselves. Not only were cities becoming increasingly gloomy and industrialized, but natural spaces were also turning into places full of filth and waste, hindering the chance to move over there or even the idea of merely enjoying those spaces.

Further ahead, Steinbeck addresses not only the waste and filth, but also what consumerism has done to most rural parts of America:

The big towns are getting bigger and the villages smaller. The hamlet store, whether grocery, general, hardware, clothing, cannot compete with the supermarket and the chain organization. Our treasured and nostalgic picture of the village store, the cracker-barrel store where an informed yeomanry gather to express opinion and formulate the national character, is very rapidly disappearing. People who once held fortresses against wind and weather, against scourges of frost and drought and insect enemies, now cluster against the busy breast of the big town. (71-2)

The big towns and the increasing consumerism are killing American small villages because they are not able to sustain themselves anymore, especially due to the fact that big malls and chain organizations are taking over. The global/national is suppressing the local, the place where national character actually lies. In the introduction to *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global* (2008), Ursula K. Heise argues that:

The marked emphasis in American environmentalist thought on the local as the ground for individual and communal identity and as the site of connections to nature

that modern society is perceived to have undone certainly fits broadly into a pattern of critique of modernity that has repeatedly articulated in Western Europe and North America for at least two centuries. But many of the specifics of this critique draw their strength from cultural and rhetorical traditions particular to the United States, where rootedness in place has long been valued as an ideal counterweight to the mobility, restlessness, rootlessness, and nomadism that Americans themselves as well as observers from outside have often construed as paradigmatic of American national character. (9)

These concepts of rootedness and mobility appear to be in an ambiguous and continuous clash between them. On the one hand, there is still a longing for rurality and small-sized communities, to go back to the husbandmen state so praised at the end of the eighteenth century by President Thomas Jefferson. On the other hand, there is the unstoppable thirst for progress, which has contributed to crush small rural communities. America is based on this enigmatic conflict between ideal and reality. For Steinbeck, the ideal is linked to localness, to a national character which is disappearing, as in fact he claims in the following instance:

The idioms, the figures of speech that make language rich and full of the poetry of place and time must go. And in their place will be a national speech, wrapped and packaged, standard and tasteless. Localness is not gone but it is going. In the many years since I have listened to the land the change is very great. Traveling west along the northern routes I did not hear a truly local speech until I reached Montana. That is one of the reasons I fell in love again with Montana. The West Coast went back to packaged English. The Southwest kept a grasp but a slipping grasp on localness. Of course the deep south holds on by main strength to its regional expressions, just as it holds and treasures some other anachronisms, but no region can hold out for long against the highway, the high-tension line, and the national television. What I am mourning is perhaps not worth saving, but I regret its loss nevertheless. (106, 107)

Steinbeck is traveling not only to reconnect to a certain idea of America, in terms of place, but he also travels in time. At certain moments and in some places, there was localness marked by the presence of local accents, but these aspects are fading away. Everything, even the language, seems standardized; the American individuality is vanishing and is being replaced by globalization and standardization. Steinbeck stresses the fact that even the most resistant rural regions will cease under the construction of the highway, the intrusion of progress.

Later in the book, Steinbeck travels to Seattle. He had been there before, but the Seattle he is now seeing is completely different:

I remembered Seattle as a town sitting on hills beside a matchless harborage - a little city of space and trees and gardens, its houses matched to such a background. It is no longer so. . . . The highways eight lanes wide cut like glaciers through the uneasy land. This Seattle had no relation to the one I remembered. The traffic rushed with murderous intensity. On the outskirts of this place I once knew well I could not find my way. Along what had been country lanes rich with berries, high wire fences and mile-long factories stretched, and the yellow smoke of progress hung over all, fighting the sea winds' efforts to drive them off. (181)

This is a good example of the rapid transformation of cities. Seattle was once a pleasant town; in the sixties, the change for the worse is explicit: Seattle is dominated and overwhelmed by traffic, depicted as murderous, by the highways and by the dirty smoke of progress, in stark contrast and continuous fight with the natural sea winds. Steinbeck appears to be aware of the consequences of progress on the environment, as in fact he stresses a little bit further: "Everywhere frantic growth, a carcinomatous growth. . . . I wonder why progress looks so much like destruction" (181). Steinbeck also witnesses this carcinomatous growth and change in his native town, Salinas (California). First, he claims that maybe the changes we witness are led by our own personal change. However, he has to debunk his claim. Salinas really appears to be totally different:

I remember Salinas, the town of my birth, when it proudly announced four thousand citizens. Now it is eighty thousand and leaping pell mell on in a mathematical progression - a hundred thousand in three years and perhaps two hundred thousand in ten, with no end in sight. Even those people who joy in numbers and are impressed with bigness are beginning to worry, gradually becoming aware that there must be a saturation point and the progress may be a progression toward strangulation. (195-6)

This rapid and rampant growth does not look very promising: here progress and increasing expansion will lead to a point of no return. The area and city of Salinas underwent several environmental changes and massive industrial intrusions. As it is reported in the webpage "Salinas Public Library,"⁴ between 1960 and 1969 Salinas was overwhelmed by many industrial companies and by changes in its cityscape.

Progress is a process which appears unavoidable, and Steinbeck feels already the loss of a place and of a time which are almost gone forever; in a certain way, he foresees what will happen to America. He is aware of the great changes and of the fact that the past is irretrievable. Furthermore, Steinbeck observes that out of this America in progress, a new American, with new challenges, is born (72). Once, the

American challenge was in taming the wilderness; as previously mentioned, from the contact with nature and wilderness the American character was believed to be born. In the sixties, there is a new American character who loves progress and consumerism, in all their aspects. This American romance with progress and technology can be found in the most varied parts of America; it almost seems that there are no differences anymore from one region to another, the polluted air and rivers of Texas are more or less the same of Maine. Therefore, the rural, local, and natural appear to be just an ideal, but not the reality. Steinbeck himself is dominated by this clash between ideal and reality, as it can be seen from the idea he has about the city of Fargo, North Dakota:

Curious how a place unvisited can take such hold on the mind so that the very name sets up a ringing. To me such a place was Fargo. . . . Fargo to me is brother to the fabulous places of the earth, kin to those magically remote spots mentioned by Herodotus and Marco Polo and Mandeville. . . . As a sop to hurt feelings, I must admit that when I passed through Moorhead, Minnesota, and rattled across the Red River into Fargo on the other side, it was a golden autumn day, the town as traffic-troubled, as neon-plastered, as cluttered and milling with activity as any other up-and-coming town of forty-six thousand souls. (135)

Fargo is a disappointment for Steinbeck. It might be that he was looking for an idyllic and still rural Fargo, but the image he has in mind belongs to the past. Fargo has become a town full of traffic and of increasing industrialization. In the official webpage of the city of Fargo,⁵ there is a part devoted to Fargo's history where it is explained how progress was already present in Fargo, since nearly its inception. Fargo as a frontier and rural town lasted for a short time. In 1905, the *Pence Automobile Company* was founded in Fargo, thus initiating its automobile industry flourishing. The town grew progressively and, in the late fifties, witnessed the construction of two Interstates: I-29 and I-94. Nevertheless, Steinbeck has an idea of Fargo as a fabulous and enchanting place, perhaps because he still links that place to certain myths. To a certain extent, Fargo still clings to ideals which have to do with rurality and nature. Its motto is "Gateway to the West" and its welcome sign is "City of Parks". Regarding the motto, Fargo is seen as an access road to the West, to what was considered the second Garden of Eden, a bucolic, regenerative and natural place, where rural values were still alive. The welcome sign, "City of Parks", points to the fact that Fargo is a city, but still has natural areas. The Fargo Park District counts about 2100 acres of land, in which recreation facilities, trails, camping, and other activities can be found. This represents an attempt to maintain the natural parts, and to provide Americans with

the chance to experience Nature. However, this is a (re)construction of nature, with the purpose to satisfy humans' desires. This digression about Fargo was, in my opinion, useful to underline that even if reality proves to be totally different from the idea, still the latter keeps on holding a great power, as in fact Steinbeck claims a little bit further, when he stops on the Maple River:

Anyway, on the Maple River I . . . paused to lick my mythological wounds. And I found with joy that the fact of Fargo had in no way disturbed my mind's picture of it. I could still think of Fargo as I always had . . . I am happy to report that in the war between reality and romance, reality is not the stronger. (136)

Bucolic and natural places seem to be vanishing, but the ideal of an imagined natural space still remains.

As mentioned above, after Fargo, Steinbeck stops on the Maple River, in a delightful place close to a little town called Alice. He quickly gives information about Alice's population, reporting that in 1950 there were 162 inhabitants, whereas the last census showed a decrease in population, counting 124 inhabitants. This stresses what was said before about big cities and small villages. Villages are disappearing, while towns, like Fargo, are progressively growing. Likely, people are more and more frequently attracted to progress and technology: it is the new American character. Nevertheless, this beautiful spot on the Maple River seems to be regenerative for Steinbeck, although the intrusion of the machine/progress is always there:

. . . there on the Maple River, not far from Alice, the gift of it was coming back. . . . The pull-out place beside the water was pleasant. I brought out my garbage can washing machine and rinsed clothes that had been jiggling in detergent for two days. And then, because a pleasant breeze was blowing, I spread my sheets to dry on some low bushes. I don't know what kind of bushes they were, but the leaves had a rich smell like sandalwood, and there's nothing I like better than scented sheets. (136, 137)

The regenerative power through the contact with nature seems to be at work. In Maple River, Steinbeck finds peace and reconciliation with himself. However, as suggested before, the machine and progress are present. Steinbeck is enjoying the beauty of being in nature, but he is also using the resources of technology in nature, like, for instance, the garbage can he uses as a washing machine or the detergent. It is a semi-immersion into nature, taking benefit of technology. It is as if there were a

blend between nature and technology, perceived, for instance, from the natural smell on the sheets washed by Steinbeck's "washing machine".⁶

This blend between nature and technology can also be seen in the presence of the mobile homes in different parts of America. Steinbeck mentions them for the first time after driving U.S. 90 and U.S. 20: "Early in my travels I had become aware of these new things under the sun, of their great numbers, and since they occur in increasing numbers all over the nation, observation of them and perhaps some speculation is in order" (95). The automobile has evolved into a more industrial vehicle. It seems to me that these mobile homes comprise two clashing ideas: mobility and rootedness/place. As previously mentioned, the car provides Americans with the possibility to crisscross their vast country more rapidly and autonomously. However, these mobile homes own even more qualities, "they are wonderfully built homes" (96), they have every kind of facility and comfort, such as bedrooms, air-conditioners, toilets and televisions. Americans can have their homes wherever they wish and they can try to put down roots wherever they want. Movement and place are once more enhanced with this new technological advance. In addition, Steinbeck adds that sometimes the parks in which these mobile homes stop are landscaped, so probably closer to natural areas. Thus, it might be that these mobile homes offer not just the chance to move to different places (or to choose to stay in one) with every kind of comfort, but also to have a contact with nature, or at least to reenact the ideal of living in nature. However, this is merely a reenactment. These mobile homes are the result of progress and technology, and with no doubt they contributed to changing and destroying the landscape, as Steinbeck points out: "I had thought there were many of them in the East and in the Middle West, but California spawns them like herrings. The trailer courts are everywhere, lapping up the sides of hills, spilling into river beds" (196). This shows that the experience of the mobile home is becoming a problem, increasingly flooding into nature. Mobility is in the garden.

The idea of a reenactment of life in nature can also be found in the creation of National Parks, and I believe a short discussion of this topic is important. Steinbeck claims the following in relation to National Parks:

I must confess to a laxness in the matter of National Parks. I haven't visited many of them. Perhaps this is because they enclose the unique, the spectacular, the astounding - the greatest waterfall, the deepest canyon, the highest cliff, *the most stupendous works of man or nature*. . . . For it is my opinion that we enclose and celebrate the freaks of our nation and of our civilization. Yellowstone National Park is no more representative of America than is Disneyland. (161, my italics)

Yellowstone and Disneyland are both symbols of America. Even if they are different, they have complementary aspects, such as the fact that, in the end, they were built in order to satisfy humans' pleasures. However, Yellowstone was constructed with the aim of preserving nature (or attempting to do that), whereas Disneyland was built on 160 acres of orange groves in Anaheim, California.⁷ Therefore, Disneyland was built by sacrificing nature. The rarities of America imply that, on the one hand nature must be preserved, on the other hand it can be destroyed to, in the end, make profits and, therefore, to enhance progress. Yet, I would suggest that National Parks are a reenactment of the American wilderness, more than Nature's safeguarding. Steinbeck classifies National Parks as "the most stupendous works of man or nature". However, I would call them as "the most stupendous works of man *on* nature". Nature is remodeled and reshaped in order to serve human beings. The idea of National Parks as wilderness areas are thus quite paradoxical as Byerly argues in "The Uses of Landscape: The Picturesque Aesthetic and the National Park System":

. . . national parks can approximate the wilderness experience for a larger audience by presenting a landscape that reproduces a scenic *facsimile* of wilderness, a mythologized image of what we would like the wilderness to be. Evidence of human activity is carefully erased, but humans themselves are not excluded. On the contrary, their spectatorial presence is essential to the idea of wilderness. (58)

What seems to be important is framing beauty and comfort, considering that these look to be what humans seek. Therefore, what is provided is a beautiful image of the idea/myth of the American wilderness. Preservation is important but humans' safety and enjoyment come first. As a consequence, national parks' policies had to reflect what tourists longed for in the wilderness, and, at times, to attain that, wild animals were killed, as the case of elks, bears and bison in Yellowstone. Furthermore, it seems that National Parks are dominated by business interests, as it is suggested in Michael Lewis' *American Wilderness: A New History* (2007), in which he mentions, for instance, the operation of drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska (4). Besides, Lewis also remarks on the intrusive and destructive presence of the car around National Parks: "We show our love for our national parks by driving hundreds of miles to see them in RVs and SUVs that, at their best, travel fifteen miles per gallon of gas" (4).

Here we go back to the main aspects stressed previously, particularly the unsolvable and clashing relationship between mobility/movement/progress and

space/place/nature. The possibility of going into the wilderness is still important for the American framework of mind, given the fact that, as Frederick Jackson Turner argued in his pivotal essay “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (1893), it was from the contact with the frontier, with the untamed space that apparently Man underwent a process of “perennial rebirth” which led to the creation of an idealized American character. That is the reason why the American wilderness but also movement are representative of the American national character even if this has never corresponded to reality.

Conclusion

After driving 10.000 miles throughout America, Steinbeck returns to New York: ““Officer, I’ve driven this thing all over the country - mountains, plains, deserts. And now I’m back in my own town, where I live - and I’m lost”” (277). Steinbeck wanted “to look again, to try to rediscover this monster land” (6). After twenty-five years without looking at his country, what does he expect from it? He calls his country “monster land”: besides providing the feeling of something enormous, it also holds a kind of negative connotation.

In the end, what remains is a sense of loss. What is also curious is that, before affirming that he is (literally) lost after his road trip, he says that with Rocinante he has traveled throughout America, but he just mentions the natural parts (mountains, plains, and deserts); he does not mention the cities which, as it was shown, were also part of his narrative. This seems to underline that what was more important for Steinbeck in his road trip was the reconnection with nature. However, this attempt to reconnect led him to feeling lost. Maybe because he did not recognize his country, or maybe because, as in the case of Fargo, his idealization did not correspond to reality.

In fact, as it was previously stated, Steinbeck himself recognizes that in the conflict between romance and reality, romance is always the stronger, and here romance stands for ideals. As William Barillas points out: “Americans, in other words, have not yet modified myth to meet changing realities. [W]e have not reconciled the machine and the garden, but have maintained a certain falsehood in our pastoralism, a sentimentality that belies social and environmental complexities” (23). And here it must be added mobility/movement and the garden, as this essay dealt with the American road narrative and ecocriticism. The American road trip is dichotomous: it stands for speed, fastness, independence, representing also a way to reconnect with Nature. It allows reconnection with Nature through a massive use of mobility, which proves to be destructive for the environment.

Furthermore, it seems that in *Travels with Charley*, even if there is a longing for rurality and localness, progress is shown to be unstoppable and invading everything and every part of America, even the so praised Middle West, considered as the heart of the American character. The Middle West is described as full of traffic roads and as a region with a boom in population density. Moreover, Steinbeck observes the presence of a force, of an electric energy: “No matter what the direction, whether for good or for bad, the vitality was everywhere” (105). Vitality meaning progress, and Steinbeck seems to be aware of its persistent existence, to which he is not totally adverse. In fact, Steinbeck claims: “I have never resisted change, even when it has been called progress, and yet I felt resentment toward the strangers swamping what I thought of as my country with noise and clutter and the inevitable rings of junk” (203). Strangers, but also Americans themselves are destroying the environment. Steinbeck seems to be partially aware of what is happening. The noun “environment” or the adjective “environmental” do not appear even once in his road narrative, and, what is more, he himself is driving with his camper throughout America. He is polluting, he is causing traffic as well. He was searching for a certain idealized America, and in the end, he did not find it, since the America he was looking for is an imagined one, localized in an imagined past and that is irretrievable except in the imagination. He reminds Gatsby and his belief in repeating the past, which shows that looking back is in itself a way of avoiding the present and particularly the problems of that same present. In other words, while in fact looking back even when facing the actual situation, Steinbeck is unable to really address the implications of the machine in the garden.

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¹ Specifically, with the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, commonly known as the Interstate Highway System (1956 - 1992).

² *Travels with Charley* is a non-fiction book. There have been varied debates about the nature of the book, being, at times, considered by some to be fiction, mainly for the fact that some critics supported the idea that Steinbeck's dialogues/encounters with people were fictionalized. Others focused on the veracity of the travel itself through the thirty-four American states. Steinbeck's *Travels* have been retraced by other writers and critics; for instance, Bill Barich's *Long Way Home: On the Trail of Steinbeck's America* (2010), John R. Olson's *Down John's Road: Recreating John Steinbeck's 1960 American Road Trip* (2011), Bill Steigerwald's *Dogging Steinbeck: Discovering America and Exposing the Truth about 'Travels with Charley'* (2012), and Geert Mak's *In America: Travels with John Steinbeck* (2012).

³ I am using the 1980 edition.

⁴ <https://salinaspubliclibrary.org/learn-explore/local-history/city-salinas-history>. Accessed 15 January 2020.

⁵ <https://fargond.gov/explore/about-fargo/city-history>. Accessed 16 January 2020.

⁶ Steinbeck's washing machine is an ingenious process he came up with. It is simply made of a large plastic bucket with cover and bail, in which he would put hot water (heated in a tea kettle), the clothes and some detergent. The bucket was tethered "with a length of strong elastic rope of cotton-covered rubber to the clothes pole in [his] little closet" (45), where it would jiggle without spilling, thus reproducing a washing machine cycle.

⁷ See <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/disneyland-opens>. Accessed on 16 January 2020.

Alegoria Distópica da Contemporaneidade e Biopolítica em *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013), de J.M. Coetzee

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Abstract

The first novel *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013) from the last trilogy published by JM Coetzee, followed by *The Schooldays of Jesus* (2016) and *The Death of Jesus* (2019), inaugurates a dystopian and purposefully organized “New World” by creating an atmosphere of control from government institutions in this country. As a result, the narrative suggests a democracy that functions in a regulated manner and which relates in a similar way to contemporary times. The purpose of this article is to analyze how dystopia and biopolitics are present in the novel and how, based on these concepts, an allegory is made in relation to contemporaneity. It follows closely the definitions of “dystopia” and “ustopia” through Jacoby (2000) and Atwood (2011) and of “biopolitics” through Foucault (1979).

Keywords: Dystopia; Biopolitics; Contemporaneity; Coetzee

Resumo

O primeiro romance *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013) da última trilogia publicada por J. M. Coetzee, seguido por *The Schooldays of Jesus* (2016) e *The Death of Jesus* (2019), inaugura um “Novo Mundo” distópico e propositadamente organizado ao criar uma atmosfera de controlo a partir das instituições governamentais deste país. Em virtude disso, a narrativa sugere uma democracia que funciona de maneira regulada e a qual se relaciona de forma análoga à contemporaneidade. O objetivo deste artigo é analisar de que forma a distopia e a biopolítica estão presentes no romance e como, a partir destes conceitos, é feita uma alegoria em relação à contemporaneidade. Segue-se de perto as definições de “distopia” e também “ustopia” através de Jacoby (2000) e Atwood (2011) e de “biopolítica” através de Foucault (1979).

Palavras-chave: Distopia; Biopolítica; Contemporaneidade; Coetzee

Introdução

A narrativa de *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013), o livro que inaugura a última trilogia publicado por Coetzee, inicia-se com a chegada de Simón e David à Novilla, vindos de navio e oriundos de um campo de refugiados. Assim que desembarcam no novo país, são imediatamente encaminhados ao Centro de Reabilitação onde recebem os seus novos nomes, idade aproximada e um local para viver e trabalhar. Neste país fala-se em espanhol, língua que lhes é também imposta, assim como os costumes e o modo de viver. Trata-se de uma vida simples, sem muitos acontecimentos e com falta de emoções, mas imbuído de um ambiente em que toda a população possui grande boa vontade. Há sobretudo a salientar o facto de todas as pessoas que chegam a este país estarem isentos de memórias e qualquer outra relação com o passado. Simón assume como missão encontrar a mãe de David. Apesar de o rapaz não ter qualquer memória, acredita que a sua mãe possa ser uma mulher chamada Inés e esta, por sua vez, acaba por aceitar desempenhar esse papel. A narrativa intensifica-se a partir do momento em que David vai para a escola, mas não se encaixa no formato de ensino tradicional. À medida em que o tempo passa, o menino aprende a ler e escrever sozinho, desenvolvendo uma forma própria para o fazer. Todavia, devido à atmosfera de controlo e de vigilância exercida pelo governo de Novilla, David é atribuído a uma escola *especial*, mas recusa-se a ir. Para tentar contornar esta situação, no final do romance, Simón e Inés planeiam fugir com a criança para a cidade de Estrella.

A narrativa não avança, assim como a vida das personagens e o contexto morno que as envolve. A harmonia suspeita que caracteriza o país está sustentada pelo facto das personagens chegarem a este espaço sem memória e portanto, sem identidade. Apenas Simón e mais tarde David provocam alguns questionamentos devido ao desconforto que sentem em relação ao modo como Novilla funciona e devido às sombras do passado que ainda perduram de forma vaga nas suas memórias. A referência a Jesus estabelecida no título não se concretiza durante a narrativa, uma vez que não existe nenhuma personagem com o nome Jesus, mas sim a criança David que tem comportamentos semelhantes ao mesmo, como querer ressuscitar animais, salvar pessoas, destacando-se dos outros pelo seu comportamento.

O romance é predominantemente construído por falas e pouca intervenção do narrador, que por sua vez funciona como um mediador das intervenções e dos diálogos de carácter filosófico que compõem a narrativa. Esta estrutura sugere ao leitor uma atmosfera teatral a qual está relacionada a postura "ensaiada" das personagens. Numa recessão crítica do livro publicada no *The Guardian*, Benjamin Markovits afirma que:

The setting is like a theatre stage. Because it's not a real place, the only parts of it we can imagine are the ones he mentions. Little details have to stand in for much larger arrangements. But the bareness of the stage suits Coetzee's prose and gives just enough unreality to his characters to permit them to engage in inscrutably simple philosophical arguments. (n.p.)

Esta “nudez” mencionada por Markovits refere-se ao facto do enredo não proporcionar ao leitor respostas aos enigmas que a narrativa provoca, bem como a simplicidade que configura esta realidade e a aproxima de uma distopia. A dimensão distópica da obra desdobra-se na tentativa de uma sociedade utópica que falha e se articula sobretudo a partir do controlo social e das emoções, estilo de vida primitivo, exploração laboral e artificialidade nas relações interpessoais. O género distópico procura, de um modo global, discutir e problematizar questões sociais que ameaçam a liberdade e a democracia política. A utopia faz-se presente como um simulacro a fim de mascarar o controlo exercido através da distopia. Logo, utopia e distopia assumem um lugar comum na mesma construção de um espaço, muito embora sejam conceitos distintos. Margaret Atwood, no estudo *In Other Worlds: SF and The Human Imagination* (2011), nomeia esta ocupação comum entre utopia e distopia na mesma dinâmica espacial, dando-se assim origem ao termo “ustopia”: “Utopia is a word I made up by combining utopia and dystopia - the imagined perfect society and its opposite - because, in my view, each contains a latent version of the other” (65). A autora considera, portanto, que as utopias e distopias conquanto sejam diferentes, pertencem ao mesmo universo. Em virtude disso, a “ustopia” surge da interação destes dois géneros literários num mesmo romance.

O controle estabelecido neste romance e no contexto distópico evoca o conceito de “biopolítica” de Foucault, termo que foi citado pelo autor pela primeira vez em 1976 nas obras *Em Defesa da Sociedade* e no primeiro volume de *A História da Sexualidade*, mas que vai desenvolver-se por completo em *Segurança, Território e População* (1978) e por fim em *Nascimento da Biopolítica* (1979) em que Foucault define o conceito como:

Biopolítica: eu entendia por isso a maneira como se procurou, desde o século XVIII, racionalizar os problemas postos à prática governamental pelos fenômenos próprios de um conjunto de viventes constituídos em população: saúde, higiene, natalidade, longevidade, raças (431)

Ou seja, o controlo do indivíduo através do corpo é exercido a partir do que Foucault chama de “fenômenos próprios” que constituem a sociedade, a fim de assegurar o

domínio das práticas governamentais, independentemente do contexto democrático, já que esta democracia é exercida de forma simulada.

Alguns temas em *The Childhood of Jesus* que sugerem o romance como uma obra distópica e biopolítica irão nortear a análise deste trabalho, sendo eles a hospitalidade artificial a partir dos órgãos governamentais de Novilla, o estilo de vida primitivo que alimenta a apatia social e uma certa “acomodação” das personagens àquela realidade. A discussão entre memória e esquecimento torna-se fundamental na análise da obra assim como a exploração laboral e controlo das atividades que os indivíduos exercem na cidade, como ir ao Instituto (uma espécie de faculdade) estudar filosofia, e ter um espaço apenas para o alívio sexual, situação que impulsiona a falta de relação e sentimento naquela sociedade. O autoritarismo subvertido em boa vontade, senso de dever e organização reflete-se sobretudo nas instituições que compõem a cidade de Novilla e o modo de viver da sociedade: o centro de reabilitação, os blocos em que os refugiados vão morar, as oportunidades de trabalho, a instituição de cursos, as relações interpessoais e até a comida e o vestuário. Todos eles são, por sua vez, instrumentos de controlo utilizados pelo governo e caracterizam um contexto distópico. Face ao exposto, poder-se-á dizer que Novilla é uma ilha neocolonial? As instituições deste “novo mundo” são programadas para o controlo social através da fixação dos indivíduos. A apatia social, falsa benevolência e estilo de vida primitivo caracterizam esta sociedade como um cenário distópico espelhando a contemporaneidade.

The Childhood of Jesus: uma alegoria do controlo social

A narrativa de *The Childhood of Jesus*, construída a partir de uma alegoria contemporânea acerca dos limites e regras impostos à vida social, problematiza também a alienação da sociedade sobretudo em relação à democracia vivida em forma de simulacro. O plano de fundo distópico opera como um instrumento crítico deste governo que exerce o seu poder através do controlo dos indivíduos de modo tão subtil que quase não é percebido, mas que denuncia também a falha deste sistema governamental. O que refere Hilário sobre a “distopia” - “o gênero literário conhecido como distopia nos fornece elementos para pensar criticamente a contemporaneidade, sobretudo com relação à segunda metade do século XX e início do século XXI” (202) - também pode ser dito do romance de Coetzee, já que o texto dá ao leitor ferramentas para questionar a contemporaneidade, através das duas personagens centrais: primeiramente, Simón, e, do meio para o fim da narrativa, David.

A desconstrução ou até o desmascarar do contexto político no geral simboliza na realidade uma proposta de reconstrução destes conceitos através da narrativa coetzeeana. O que se chama de real e cotidiano é colocado em questionamento na busca de uma transcendência daquela maneira primitiva de viver. Simón é a personagem que começa por problematizar o dia a dia de Novilla:

‘Do you know what surprises me most about this country?’ A reckless tone is creeping into his voice; it would be wiser to stop, but he does not. ‘That it is so bloodless. Everyone I meet is so decent, so kindly, so well intentioned. No one swears or gets angry. No one gets drunk. No one even raises his voice. You live on a diet of bread and water and bean paste and you claim to be filled. How can that be, humanly speaking? Are you lying, even to yourselves?’ (Coetzee 45)

No excerto supracitado transparece o comportamento anémico dos sujeitos, transvestido de placidez e boa vontade. A própria dieta alimentar, predominantemente composta por pão, água e legumes (com a exceção de quem come ratos), reflete uma escassez de recursos que, por sua vez, se relaciona intimamente com a falta de emoção e os excessos típicos da humanidade. A alimentação, por sua vez, é um ato simbólico que revela as práticas culturais de um povo. No caso de Novilla que aparentemente demonstra ser um espaço utópico onde tudo funciona em prol da sobrevivência mas que na verdade é um lugar de controlo, remete-se para o conceito de “Distopia Crítica”, definido por Lyman Tower Sargent como:

A non-existent company described in detail and usually located in the time and space that the author wanted to show to a readership contemporary as worse than contemporary society, but that generally includes at least one eutopic enclave or presents the hope that dystopia can be overcome and replaced by a eutopia. (222)

De acordo com essa definição de Sargent, o papel que David representa na narrativa sugere a esperança de se superar a dimensão distópica apresentada por Novilla, sobretudo após os questionamentos que faz baseado na leitura de Dom Quixote e na forma fantasiosa de se manifestar no mundo, excluindo o ensino convencional e propondo uma aprendizagem crítica da leitura e não apenas de reproduzir o que foi lido.

A apatia e a falsa benevolência que se encontra em Novilla é denunciada por Simón também num diálogo com Elena (momento que denota uma tentativa de romance). Segundo Simón, a apatia e a falsidade são especialmente visíveis no sentido de dever exercido pelas autoridades que não faz mais do que mascarar o controlo do

estado em relação aos refugiados que chegam ao país e imediatamente assumem um lugar de vulnerabilidade ao lhes ser imposto uma nova língua, identidade e cultura, sem nenhum direito ao passado:

‘Benevolence, I must tell you, is what we keep encountering here. Everyone wishes us well, everyone is ready to be kind to us. We are positively borne along on a cloud of goodwill. But it all remains a bit abstract. Can good will by itself satisfy our needs? Is it not in our nature to crave something more tangible?’ Deliberately Elena extracts her hand from his. ‘You may want more than goodwill; but is what you want better than goodwill? That is what you should be asking yourself. (Coetzee 74)

Simón incomoda-se ao facto de ninguém naquele país sentir necessidade de “algo mais” do que aquilo que lhes é oferecido. A função que a boa vontade e a benevolência assumem é sobretudo de controlo, pois se a população tem as suas necessidades básicas minimamente atendidas não há necessidade de protestos e desarmonia social. Em contrapartida, e assim como refere Jacoby, as distopias, “buscam o assombro, ao acentuar tendências contemporâneas que ameaçam a liberdade” (40). Por conseguinte, todo o clima de simulacro de uma harmonia social controlada através da biopolítica configura-se numa chamada de atenção do autor à tendências também semelhantes a estas na contemporaneidade que funcionam como ameaças à liberdade social e à democracia.

Deleuze em conformidade com o conceito de biopolítica de Foucault evidencia os espaços sociais que funcionam como órgãos de controle dos indivíduos:

O indivíduo não cessa de passar de um espaço fechado a outro, cada um com suas leis: primeiro a família, depois a escola (“você não está mais na sua família”), depois a caserna (“você não está mais na escola”), depois a fábrica, de vez em quando o hospital, eventualmente a prisão, que é o meio de confinamento por excelência”. (Deleuze 219)

Estes espaços - família, escola, caserna, fábrica e prisão - são operadores de controlo e normatização do indivíduo. Em *The Childhood of Jesus* tanto a família como a escola e o trabalho são instituições sociais que serão questionadas e subvertidas. Simón, Inés e David formam uma família sem laços afetivos entre quem seria o pai e a mãe; e David questiona o sistema de ensino tradicional ao criar uma forma própria de lidar com a leitura e a escrita, sendo por causa disso forçado pelo governo a ser levado para uma “escola especial”, sob pena de serem indiciados e levados a julgamento. Tal só não acontece porque a família foge de Novilla no final do romance.

Em relação ao trabalho, Simón é estivador nas docas e passa o dia a carregar sacos de trigo para fazer pão e alimentar a população. Ele não aceita o facto de não usarem um guindaste para este serviço e a forma como é justificada esta exploração laboral indigna-o profundamente:

‘You could,’ agrees the foreman. ‘But what would be the point? What would be the point of getting things done in a tenth of the time? It is not as if there is an emergency, a food short age, for example. ‘What would be the point? It sounds like a genuine question, not a slap in the face. ‘So that we could devote our energies to some better task,’ he suggests. ‘Better than what? Better than supplying our fellow man with bread?’ He shrugs. He should have kept his mouth shut. He is certainly not going to say: Better than lugging heavy loads like beasts of burden. (Coetzee 25)

Esta exploração não é somente justificada de forma manipuladora com vestígios nacionalistas mas também reflete uma característica biopolítica pois através do cansaço físico o sujeito não tem tempo nem disposição para desenvolver o conhecimento e, por conseguinte, o questionamento da sua situação. Também num outro diálogo Simón questiona a falta de propósito daquele trabalho, o primitivismo que permeia e a forma como Álvaro - o seu chefe - o justifica baseado na ideia de que deveria sentir-se bem por servir as pessoas e providenciar com o pão a comida que sustenta a vida em Novilla:

‘It’s food. We can’t do without food. And it’s not just for Novilla. It’s for the hinterland too. That’s what it means to be a port: you have a hinterland to serve.’ ‘Still, what is it all for, in the end? The ships bring the grain from across the seas and we haul it off the ships and someone else mills it and bakes it, and eventually it gets eat en and turned into—what shall I call it?—waste, and the waste flows back into the sea. What is there to feel good about in that? How does it fit into a larger picture? I don’t see any larger picture, any loftier design. It’s just consumption.’ (Coetzee 57)

Simón não atribui este significado de dever social ao seu trabalho e considera que tudo se resume ao consumo. É um trabalho repetitivo e de exaustão física. No decorrer da obra, ele precisa de ir ao médico que afirma estar tudo bem com Simón, sugerindo, todavia, uma ida ao psicólogo. Os serviços de psicologia em Novilla funcionam também como um espaço de controlo para verificar se indivíduos estão em risco de causar uma desordem social, não se verificando uma preocupação efetiva com a saúde psicológica dos sujeitos.

O comportamento problematizador da personagem Simón dialoga com a caracterização que Jacoby faz da narrativa distópica ao referi-la como “antiautoritária, insubmissa e radicalmente crítica” (141). No entanto, não deixam de ser utópicas no sentido que ao questionar o presente, ao analisá-lo de forma crítica e ao refletir acerca da realidade, possui em si a visão de uma sociedade futura melhor do que a que se apresenta até então. Esta crítica frequente a Novilla marca todo o enredo do romance e é definida de acordo com o que Lowy vai chamar de “pessimismo ativo” (24), detendo o propósito de impedir a alienação e o controlo social. Assim, o género distópico vai então ser concebido como um “aviso de incêndio” (Hilário 202), um alerta social sobre um futuro próximo.

A ideia de tempo na obra é fragmentada devido a todas as personagens terem o seu passado apagado, e com isto, “livres” de memória. Neste contexto, apenas Simón e David assumem lembrar apenas de algumas sombras, as quais viabilizam o desconforto que sentem em relação à forma como aquela sociedade funciona. Assim, o tempo em Novilla é composto por um passado desconhecido e um futuro incerto:

None of us has a past. We start a new here. We start with a blank slate, a virgin slate. And Inés is not a stranger. I recognized her as soon as I set eyes on her, which means I must have some kind of prior know ledge. 'You arrive here with no memories, with a blank slate, yet you claim to recognize faces from the past. It makes no sense. 'It is true: I have no memories. But images still persist, shades of images. How that is I can't explain. Something deeper persists too, which I call the memory of having a memory. It is not from the past that I recognize Inés but from else where. It is as if the image of her were embedded in me. (Coetzee 123)

O que vai existir, portanto, é um indivíduo dividido entre uma vida anterior misteriosa e uma futura indeterminada, mas que é controlada e determinada pela vigilância político dos órgãos governamentais que operam naquele país e que neste caso, se utilizam da vulnerabilidade que representa ser um sujeito sem memória. A partir daí torna-se também um sujeito sem identidade, sem cultura, sem língua e apenas com uma falsa noção de escolha através da sobrevivência.

De acordo com Vieira, o tempo na narrativa distópica trabalha com a noção de eucronia, a qual é definida como: “mais do que a ideia superficial de que o futuro-enquanto-presente seja sombrio, há a ideia latente de que a realização utópica só pode realizar-se completamente no futuro-enquanto-futuro e, portanto, o não-lugar ideal não existe no presente da narrativa” (9). Por conseguinte, este não-lugar ideal que não existe no momento presente da narrativa define o sentimento de Simón

durante todo o romance. E é necessário este desconforto para a realização utópica, que, nos próximos romances, é representada pelas ações de David.

A ação inicial feita pelo governo de Novilla assim que os migrantes chegam ao país, é de, além de nomeá-los, estabelecer idades e a língua que é falada - neste caso, o espanhol. Isto sugere uma alegoria ao colonialismo espanhol na América Latina. O passo seguinte é fixar estes sujeitos em espaços de habitação e de trabalho. Esta fixação representa não uma exclusão, de maneira que todos os que chegam passam pelo mesmo processo, mas sim um exercício de controlo. Foucault ao pensar o conceito de biopolítica reflete também acerca de como este opera na sociedade:

Na época atual, todas essas instituições - fábrica, escola, hospital psiquiátrico, hospital, prisão - têm por finalidade não excluir, mas ao contrário, fixar os indivíduos. A fábrica não exclui os indivíduos, liga-os a um aparelho de produção. A escola não exclui os indivíduos; ela os fixa a um aparelho de transmissão de saber. O hospital psiquiátrico não exclui os indivíduos; liga-os a um aparelho de correção, a um aparelho de normalização dos indivíduos. O mesmo acontece com a casa de correção ou com a prisão. Mesmo se os efeitos dessas instituições são a exclusão do indivíduo, elas têm como finalidade primeira fixar os indivíduos em um aparelho de normalização dos homens. (114)

Foucault elenca algumas instituições sociais que fazem parte da vida dos sujeitos (fábrica, escola, hospital) e operam como instrumentos de controlo ao fixá-los e normalizá-los, seja como uma correção, produtividade ou transmissão de saber.

As personagens do romance são fixadas no trabalho, na habitação (que se organiza separada por blocos - orientais e ocidentais - e algumas casas mais luxuosas, facto que se apresenta como metáfora para a desigualdade social e divisão dos sujeitos), e sobretudo na educação. Tanto o Instituto que funciona como uma espécie de universidade, quanto a escola, evidenciam um sistema de ensino tradicional e não reflexivo. Em virtude disso, David é “convidado” a ir para uma escola “especial” devido à sua insubordinação na escola, insubordinação esta definida pelos questionamentos de David e pela recusa de ler e escrever de uma forma standardizada por oposição à forma autodidata como aprendeu a fazê-lo:

‘We come now,’ she says, laying down her pen, ‘to the practical problem of David’s comportment in the classroom. His insubordination. His failure to make progress. The consequences of that lack of progress, and that insubordination, for señor León and the other children in the class.’ (Coetzee 250)

Este acontecimento no final do romance desencadeia um dos primeiros atos de combate a este sistema acarretado por David. Pois a partir daí, Simón, Inés e a criança fogem para Estrella, pois o governo de Novilla afinal não estava a sugerir a mudança de David para outra escola. Estava a impor, já que antes da fuga foram denunciados e convidados a aparecerem em um julgamento.

Considerações finais

A obra de Coetzee situa-se claramente no âmbito do género distópico que representa não um futuro tecnológico ou pós-apocalíptico, mas sim um cenário primitivo, baseado em sucessivas referências ao Antigo Testamento a fim de chamar a atenção do leitor para a forma como o controlo biopolítico é exercido tanto no contexto mais primitivo representado na obra quanto na contemporaneidade tecnologicamente evoluída. Ou seja, independentemente das circunstâncias, a finalidade é sempre o controlo do indivíduo, tal como refere Lowy:

Toda sua obra pode ser compreendida como uma espécie de “aviso de incêndio” dirigido a seus contemporâneos, um sino que repica e busca chamar a atenção sobre os perigos iminentes que os ameaçam, sobre as novas catástrofes que se perfilam no horizonte. (32)

Coetzee denuncia igualmente os limites das regulações que a política e a burocracia impõem à sociedade, regulações essas que, sendo sistematicamente repetidas e enraizadas no inconsciente coletivo, passam a ser naturalizadas, transformando-se em modos de agir e formas de viver. A presença dos diálogos filosóficos que Simón evoca (e provoca) são exercícios críticos que abalam as convicções mais básicas de Novilla como a boa vontade, o sentido do dever, a compaixão, o propósito do trabalho, a vivência (ou a ausência) de emoções, entre outros temas que são suscitados durante a narrativa. Todo este debate é sustentado pela ideia de uma nova vida “oferecida” aos indivíduos oriundos de um campo de refugiados. Não obstante para viver esta nova realidade é preciso abdicar do passado, das memórias, da identidade, da cultura, da língua materna e até de uma determinada ideia do “eu”. Assim, estes migrantes submetem-se a uma vida “morna”, sem grandes emoções e acontecimentos, mas com a sobrevivência assegurada. É esta perspectiva redutora do que significa uma vida plena que Simón questiona constantemente: “‘A new life is a new life,’ says Elena, ‘not an old life all over again in new surroundings. Look at Fidel -’ ‘But what is the good of a new life,’ he interrupts her, ‘if we are not transformed by it, transfigured, as I

certainly am not?” (Coetzee 175). Na medida em que esta “nova vida” não os provoca nem os leva a transformarem-se em seres críticos e problematizadores, exatamente aquilo o sistema não quer, não pode ser considerada uma vida de facto.

Deste modo, *The Childhood of Jesus* problematiza e oferece-se como alegoria da situação contemporânea dos migrantes ao chegarem a um novo país, vindos de campos de refugiados, tal como Simón, David e as restantes personagens que povoam Novilla - com exceção do governo - compondo a realidade deste novo país. A narrativa coetzeeana espelha também outros “avisos de incêndios” que ameaçam a liberdade, sobretudo no âmbito político. Como bem explica Foucault, “o indivíduo é o produto do poder” (106), ou seja, o controlo social alimenta o poder político. Logo, Novilla pode ser considerada uma espécie de ilha neocolonial que usa o estado de vulnerabilidade dos refugiados e possui um sistema de governo controlador que simula uma falsa democracia para que os indivíduos não se revoltam. As instituições que compõem este país são utilizadas sobretudo para a fixação destes indivíduos e a padronização comportamental através do controlo do corpo no trabalho e da alienação do conhecimento na escola. Todo este contexto é visualizado através do plano de fundo distópico que, por sua vez, reflete a apatia social da contemporaneidade.

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Refracted: *Alias Grace* Series Through a Freudian Perspective

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Abstract

From 1843 to 1872, Grace Marks (Sarah Gadon) served time, at the Kingston Penitentiary, for murdering her employer Thomas Kinnear (Paul Gross), and his housekeeper/lover, Nancy Montgomery (Anna Paquin). In 1859, a young American psychiatric doctor, Dr. Simon Jordan (Edward Holcroft), travels to Kingston, under the request of a clemency committee, to study Grace, helping her restore her lost memory of the crimes, with the purpose of writing a favourable report which would concede Grace's pardon. This article undertakes the examination of the television miniseries *Alias Grace*, based on the 1996 homonymous novel by Canadian author Margaret Atwood, by focusing on the analyses of the overall series through a Freudian perspective. It will be argued that each episode is imbued of symbolism that normally escapes the understanding of the viewer. Therefore, I shall illustrate certain aspects connected with Freudian symbolism, according to film studies language, while establishing other important connections to prove the profuse presence of the male gaze and how Grace Marks, an ambivalent protagonist with a fluid personality, navigates this stereotyped 19th society dominated by patriarchal values and invested in the annihilation of the female subject.

Keywords: Film Studies; Feminist Criticism; Male Gaze; Identity; Uncanny

Resumo

De 1843 a 1872 Grace Marks (Sarah Gadon) cumpriu pena, na Penitenciária de Kingston, por assassinar o seu empregador Thomas Kinnear (Paul Gross) e a sua governanta/amante, Nancy Montgomery (Anna Paquin). Em 1859, um jovem médico psiquiatra americano, Dr. Simon Jordan (Edward Holcroft), viaja até Kingston, a pedido de um comité de clemência, para estudar o caso de Grace, auxiliando-a a restaurar a sua memória perdida dos crimes, com o propósito de compor um relatório favorável que concedesse o perdão a Grace. O presente artigo examina a minissérie televisiva *Alias Grace*, baseada no romance homónimo, de 1996, de Margaret Atwood, ao focar-se na análise da série por inteiro a partir de uma perspetiva Freudiana. Cada episódio é imbuído de simbolismo, que normalmente escapa à compreensão do espectador. Serão portanto abordados certos aspetos ligados ao simbolismo Freudiano, de acordo com a linguagem dos estudos cinematográficos, enquanto se estabelecem outras conexões relevantes para comprovar a presença profusa do "male gaze" e a forma como Grace

Marks, a ambivalente protagonista detentora de uma personalidade fluida, navega nesta sociedade estereotipada do século XIX, dominada por valores patriarcais e investida no aniquilamento do sujeito feminino.

Palavras-chave: Estudos Cinematográficos; Crítica Feminista; *Male Gaze*; Identidade; o Estranho

In 1915, Sigmund Freud's book *The Unconscious* was published to great success. However, some of the issues addressed in the book had already been anticipated by Emily Dickinson's poetry. In her following poem, which served as an epigraph to the first episode of the series *Alias Grace*, based on the 1996 homonymous novel by Canadian author Margaret Atwood, her awareness of the existence of multiple selves within ourselves and how some parts of the human mind are scarcely understood capture a concept that Freud would later theorize:

One need not to be a Chamber - to be Haunted -
One need not to be a House -
The brain has Corridors - surpassing
Material Place -
. . . Ourselves behind ourselves, concealed -
Should startle most -
Assassin hid in our Apartment
Be Horror's least. (Dickinson 333)

For Dickinson, the true element of horror lies in the self-hidden behind the self, not the murderer that might have "hid in our Apartment".

To establish a clear line of thought throughout the series, each episode opens with a quote from a celebrated Gothic author, which is explicitly related with the content of the episode that follows. Hence, in line with Emily Dickinson's quote, the opening shot of the series is of the "celebrated murderess" (*Alias Grace: Miniseries*, episode 1; 02,54'-02,56') looking herself in a mirror. In a psychological sense, mirrors symbolize the verge between the conscious and the unconscious mind. By looking herself in a mirror, Grace is looking towards the depths of her mind, the unconsciousness. In fact, while Grace is looking in the mirror, she is doing different facial expressions to convey what people say about her:

. . . that I am an inhuman female demon, that I am an innocent victim of a blackguard . . . that I was too ignorant to know how to act and that to hang me would be judicial murder . . . that I am of a sullen disposition with a quarrelsome temper...that I am a good girl with a pliable nature and no harm is told of me, that I am cunning and devious, that I am soft in the head and little better than an idiot. And I wonder, how can I be all these different things at once? (*Alias Grace: Miniseries*, episode 1; 00,30'-01,20').

Each facial expression represents a self, a different facet of Grace. Within herself there is an amalgam of different voices which translates her inherent ambivalence essential to the story.

The miniseries follows the narrative of the novel faithfully. After committing the murders, the sixteen-year-old Irish servant girl was arrested fleeing Canada with James McDermott (Kerr Logan), Kinnear's stable boy. Following a notorious trial James McDermott was convicted of first-degree murder and hanged while Grace Marks, although initially sentenced to death, was later convicted as an accessory to the crime and was instead imprisoned. Approximately eight and one-half years into her sentence, Grace began exhibiting signs of insanity being, therefore, incarcerated for a period of time in the Toronto Lunatic Asylum.

Accordingly, Grace is a frankly puzzling character, as she oscillates among the stereotypes typically attributed to 19th century women which consisted in binary roles of either angels or demons. Indeed, such a highly speculated case as hers, which received a prolific coverage from not only Canadian newspapers but also those of the United States and Britain, facilitated an extensive manipulation of her figure, causing her words, her image, and her actions to be distorted, consequently beyond her control. Grace claimed, at a certain point of the series: "You should never let your picture be in a magazine or newspaper if you can help it, as you never know what ends your face may be made to serve by others once it has got out of your control" (*Alias Grace: Miniseries*, episode 3; 25,59'-26,07').

Moreover, through our millennial eyes, we can denote a certain parallelism with the use of Grace's image on magazines and newspapers with the use of images on the Internet, serving as a 21st century social comment. Even so, she was acutely aware that her identity known to the public is a fabrication of others: ". . . ask lawyers and judges and the newspaper men, they seem to know my story better than I do myself" (*Alias Grace: Miniseries*, episode 1; 07,47'-07,51').

The presentation of Grace's story in historical documents, ballads and newspaper cuttings reflect a stereotyped image about contemporary Victorian women;

thus Grace perfectly embodies the contradictions that shaped Victorian culture. She is simultaneously the image of the ideal, demure, subservient woman and the unscrupulous murderess. As Kathleen Kendall stated: “Female criminals paradoxically appeared to embody both innocence and guilt, good and evil” (3). Grace’s identity is deconstructed, opening a way for her to be associated with criminal events, something which remains doubtful throughout the series. This culminates, ultimately, in the construction of a character with uncertain and conflicting traits, as they are fragmented.

According to Coral Ann Howells: “The fascination of a character like Grace is intimately bound up with nineteenth-century anxieties about women and their true nature: are they angels in the house or are they lying devils, and which is Grace?” (30). This is precisely the question Dr. Simon Jordan will seek an answer for. With newly developed techniques, Dr. Jordan is committed to studying Grace and help her restore her memory, which would lead to solving the mystery of Grace’s guilt or innocence. Dr. Jordan attempts to do so by introducing a different image from traditional psychiatry treatments, which still had a kind of medieval system, as is exemplified in the series: torture, physical restraint and punishments, and abuses of all sorts were frequent. So Dr. Jordan proposes an innovative approach, that closely resembles Freud’s psychoanalyse, the “talking cure”, consisting in the search for free associations. As Alison Toron noted,

. . . the “talking cure”, therapy is based upon a clearly defined power relationship: Dr. Jordan asks questions; Grace responds; Dr. Jordan records information and draws conclusions from it. Grace becomes a “case” for Dr. Jordan to study . . . The analyst is supposed to move the patient from a state of amnesia to traumatic revelation (8).

This is explicitly showcased on the series, as the power relationship between Dr. Jordan and Grace is displayed. When Dr. Jordan visits Grace at the penitentiary, he is standing while Grace sits inside the cell with a darker atmosphere eclipsing her and this creates the contrast between the authoritarian figure of the male doctor and the marginalised figure of the female patient and criminal: “Dr. Jordan already has an ‘edge’ over Grace not only because he is educated, but also because he is a man (‘In Search’ 1515). Moreover, he is free, and Grace is not. These inequalities lead to misunderstandings and frustration on both sides” (Toron 4).

An apple is the first item Dr. Jordan brings to start his therapy of word association. Grace, however, deliberately fails to meet Dr. Jordan expectations, by not demonstrating the “type of abstract thinking” he is looking for, instead she gives

“materially-grounded answers” (Toron 4). Nevertheless, not by chance is the first object handed to Grace an apple. In the Christian tradition, the apple stands as the biblical symbol for temptation, the fall of man and the loss of innocence. In the book of Genesis, the forbidden fruit is picked by Eve from the Tree of Knowledge, and consequently Eve is cast out from the garden of Eden.¹ Just like Grace is cast out from society.

Evidently, Dr. Jordan is testing Grace, just as God tested Adam and Eve, but unlike the biblical figures, Grace knows better, to conceal herself as innocent waiting patiently for Dr. Jordan to leave, and to only then eat the apple, consummating the sin, and to unravel: “The apple of the Tree of Knowledge is what you meant, Doctor Jordan. Good and Evil. Any child could guess it” (*Alias Grace: Miniseries*, episode 1; 09,23'-09,31'). In their first session, at the governor's house, Dr. Jordan brings a beetroot and Grace simply states that it is a vegetable hard to clean a stain from, but, again, she premeditates on missing the intended point to associate it with blood and murder. Margaret Atwood explains this behaviour by saying that Grace: “. . . is a storyteller, with strong motives to narrate but also strong motives to withhold; the only power left to her as a convicted and imprisoned criminal comes from a blend of these two motives” (Stanley 372).

Nonetheless, as the sessions progress: “. . . in the frame-story parlour, Grace is bathed in beatific light . . .” (Valentine n. p.), tending to sit in quietude on the right side of the screen, which represents the unknown, while Dr. Jordan appears on the left, representing the known, establishing Grace as a dominant figure over Dr. Jordan. In addition to that, Grace always sits for the sessions with countless pieces of cloth near her since she is working on a quilt for Miss Lydia. The fact that Grace is sewing specifically a quilt is quite symbolic, since a quilt is essentially, made, or constituted of several scraps that are stitched together, which may indicate a strong analogy to the human memory, highlighting “the fragmented story that she offers Simon Jordan . . .” (Garrett n. p.). Thus, on these sessions, Grace is both figuratively and literally sewing scraps. Grace carefully manipulates the scraps of information that Dr. Jordan so eagerly listens to, completely oblivious of how Grace works her own narrative of the facts regaining some sort of control over her life. Moreover, the fact that Grace is weaving a quilt that is not hers also shows the lack of agency she has in relation to her actions.

For the second session, Dr. Jordan determines a different method, he starts enquiring about Grace's dreams for “the interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind” (Freud, *The Interpretation of*

Dreams: The Complete and Definitive Text 604). Even though, Grace merely claims: “I suppose I have. Though none I can remember at the moment” (*Alias Grace: Miniseries*, episode 2; 04,17'-04,22'); it seems that she has a recurrent dream about Nancy Montgomery, an apparent fragment of memory when she first saw her at Mr. Kinnear’s farmhouse. Nancy is wearing a pink dress, the same one Grace wore at her infamous trial, picking up red roses unto a basket, then suddenly a cut appears on Nancy’s forehead, blood running from it, she grabs her throat with startled eyes and falls to the ground. Pursuant to Genevieve Valentine:

What makes Grace an uncanny² rather than a tragic figure is the control she exerts in the telling. Half the satisfaction of her interviews is seeing what scraps she keeps away from Dr. Jordan’s prying eyes. And as she presents her unanswered questions to Dr. Jordan, he is, inch by inch, forced to answer them himself. (n.p.)

However, even though Dr. Jordan remains uncertain about Grace’s ethos, his growing fascination and attraction towards her materialize in his lustful dreams. Quoting Sandra Stanley: “Dr. Simon Jordan, who attempts to study the imprisoned Grace, fantasizes about the convicted woman . . . crossing the eroticized boundaries between doctor and patient . . .” (380). Indeed, in their first session, there is a moment when Grace pauses sewing to lick the thread for it to pass through the hole of the needle, as Dr. Jordan looks intensely at her. On the one hand, this seems to represent a direct connection with sexual intercourse and desire, whereas on the other hand it can be read as yet another biblical reference as in the New Testament, Jesus professes the commonly well-known expression: “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle . . .” (Matthew 12:21). This particular expression conveys a metaphor for a very limited, or narrow opening to pass through. And certainly, it is very hard, or nearly impossible, for Dr. Jordan to pass through Grace, to capture her essence, and such a struggle creates tension, incredibly palpable in the intimate atmosphere of Governor’s parlour: “Given how much of the series rests on this claustrophobic rhythm, it’s remarkable how effective it always is to cut from Grace’s carefully-arranged features to the Doctor’s vampiric attention - an old-fashioned horror beat . . .” (Valentine n. p.).

Such an idea is continuously reinforced, as the second episode starts, with Dr. Jordan dreaming of Grace standing outside the penitentiary with a white dress on, most likely a nightgown, a possible indication of Dr. Jordan’s desire for Grace’s innocence. She is exposed to the cold, which shows vulnerability, and Dr. Jordan comes, and protectively places his coat on Grace’s shoulders embracing her. Dr.

Jordan yearns to be Grace's saviour, which is pointed out when Dr. Jordan climbs up the stairs to meet the imprisoned Grace at the penitentiary. A rescuer that also seeks to control Grace, whom he wants to possess, but who realizing that impossibility, gets sexually involved with Mrs. Humphrey (Sarah Manninen), his landlady, instead. Perhaps, a subtle hint of this sexual arousal is the means of Dr. Jordan's transportation to Kingston. He travels by train, which is implicitly associated with feelings of excitement expressed through sexual desire, according to the latent Freudian symbolism of the train being understood as a representation of a phallus.

Still, the sessions are characterized for their intentional overbearing feeling that haunt the viewer with its immured close-ups. Building up the sense of anxiety and confusion, Grace's transgressive nature as a murderess is ultimately what attracts Dr. Jordan as he

. . . fears that he is losing himself in Grace's narratives - her multiple representations of herself - which, like Scheherazade's stories, become narratives of survival. Simon feels he must unlock Grace's Pandora's box . . . What the doctor does not realize, however is that he also is Pandora. (Stanley 380)

Alluding again to the scene of the needle, mentioned above, it additionally represents a classic example of the male gaze,³ which is one of the moving forces of the plot. Due to her servant status, Grace excites passion and lust among more than one man. Another example of the male gaze in the series is, for instance, when Tomas Kinnear: ". . . surreptitiously and lustfully gazes at Grace when she scrubs the dirty kitchen floor" Both these men represent a ". . . dominant class, fantasize about Grace, a member of the labouring class . . ." (Stanley 372). As Stanley further explains:

. . . bourgeois male's erotic fascination with hired servants . . . [Freud displaced] the male's fascination for the maid onto the biological parents, attempting to reintegrate male desire back into the endogamous drama of the family romance, in which the male's oedipal yearning is directed at the desirable mother, not the "dirty" maid. But in these scenarios, the dirty maid . . . is precisely the one who excites this passion, and the unstable boundaries between classes become an eroticized topography for transgressive desire. (371)

This actively illustrates that Grace Marks is the object through which the eroticised knowledge is explored, and she is aware of this, being involved in this social dynamic lifting the story to a regime of psychosexual manipulation. Furthermore, one of the few art objects portrayed in the series is a painting by Guido Reni, entitled "Susanna

and the Elders”. Grace comes across with this painting when she is cleaning her employers’ bedroom. The story of the Apocrypha’s, of a woman falsely accused of a grave crime saved only by the intervention of a man, seems to unsettle Grace, with its uncanny resemblance it appears as an implicit foreshadowing of Grace’s future. As Grace listens to this augur narrated by Mr. Kinnear, she “. . . doesn’t yet understand that the horror of the story is that women are always being watched” (Valentine n.p.).

This surveillance becomes even more acute on Grace’s birthday. Even though she, apparently, has the afternoon for herself, she is never alone, which is perceptible by the way the scene is shot. The camera is placed behind Grace and she is being watched by someone, most likely by James McDermont. In this scene the male gaze is presented through the eyes of a man behind the camera following Grace’s every move, a parallel to a horror film shot, a prolonged and abusive observation of the female subject, as Grace becomes the focus of an intrusive gaze: “The camera is far from a neutral observer. Harron knows it; familiar tricks of the horror genre are presented in a way that forces us to consider how violence it implies. In horror, anticipating the violence is both a source of suspense and of perverse glee . . .” (Valentine n.p.). Later, when Grace returns to the farm, Mr. Kinnear awaits to interrogate her. At a purely visual level, Mr. Kinnear is shot from a low angle which establishes his dominant character. In contrast, Grace is shot from above, and is depicted as passive and weak, consummating: “the idea of patriarchal norms as an unconscious, poisonous force” (Valentine n. p.). Ultimately, Grace comes to face that the supposed afternoon by herself was a mere falsehood, as she was all thoroughly surveyed by punctilious eyes of different male characters.

Lastly, to conclude this episode, Grace has a very peculiar dream: she goes outside the house and meets with McDermont, George Parkinson (Will Bowes) and her own father (Jonathan Goad), and gets involved with all of them. She is an object of sexual desire, being embraced and kissed by each one of them. The dream is a reflexion of the oppressive masculine authority, the constant surveillance, representing that patriarchy ultimately is the fatal blow of the plot. But, in this dream, Grace is stricken by the vision of three headless angels sitting on a tree in quiet judgement. Three angels appear to be symbolic of three women: Grace’s mother (Kirstin Rae Hinton), Mary Whitney (Rebecca Liddiard) and Nancy Montgomery: “. . . a warning from women to women about the inescapable” (Valentine n.p.). When Grace wakes up, she notices that her feet are dirty, raising the doubt whether it was an actual dream or an episode of somnambulism. Notwithstanding, this dream displays how Grace “. . . enters a social unheimlich,⁴ an arena in which polymorphous social

desire destabilizes the hierarchy of the class system. Within this social *unheimlich*, Grace excites Thomas's sexual interest and allegedly encourages James to kill Nancy to rid herself of a rival" (Stanley 372).

A propelling factor for Grace to enter this social *unheimlich* is the tragic death of her close friend Mary Whitney. Every time Grace recalls Mary, she has an immediate memory about when they decided to test the old wives' tale, of cutting the peel of an apple in one piece and throwing it behind their backs, so that it would spell the name of their future husbands. Again, the reappearance of the apple is quite symbolic, being associated with female sin. Indeed, throughout the series there are a couple of references to the so called "Eve's curse", which is generally connected with certain female afflictions such as the pain of childbirth. For instance, Mary mentions it when Grace menstruates for the first time. Also, when Mary dies, another servant seeing the cause of Mary's tragic death exclaims: "It is the curse of Eve we must all bear" (*Alias Grace: Miniseries*, episode 2; 39,30'-39,34').

A curse epitomized by the theme of female death, bound to the brutal annihilation of women as subjects, demonstrated by the conflict of female characters restricted by social conventions, to which they were limited to react in three different ways: either to adapt and accept it, to rebel against it following the path of criminality, or to violently scourge against it leading to abortion, suicide and/or death. Transgressive behaviours performed by women, such as an illegitimate pregnancy, dared the societal ideal of respectability whereas men, eminently those of higher classes, walked out unscathed from their transgressions. Therefore, the experience of motherhood, for the members of the working class especially, is converted into something perilous. Throughout history, the occurrence of pregnancy and childbirth had a direct connection with imminent death, a prediction for female extinction. Hence the desperate search for violent means to interrupt or deny the possibility of generating a child: Mary Whitney, for instance, is left with no other option but to abort, after being abandoned by George Parkinson, while Nancy is brutally murdered still bearing her unborn child. Ironically, the quality that best defines womanhood - the ability to generate a new life - is ultimately the cause for their grim life ending. Another factor of the utmost importance to notice is that the outcome of that innocent game comes true, Grace does end up marrying a man whose name starts with the letter J, while Mary shall not live long enough to get married.

The second episode culminates with the shocking death-bed scene of Mary Whitney. As Grace is staring at the corpse, she hears Mary say, "Let me in", and thinking she meant "Let me out", she rushes to open the window to let Mary's soul

out. Later, when Grace is washing the blood out of the bedsheets she passes out, and when she wakes up, she is desperately looking for Grace, giving the impression that she assumed another identity. However, Grace has no memory whatsoever of this happening, representing Grace's first episode of amnesia as well as the moment which constitutes the first manifestation of the doppelgänger. Naturally, the discussion about the existence of such individuals as alter egos, or doubles (doppelgänger) is a central aspect in *Alias Grace*. Freud understands the existence of the double as an event that causes strangeness. In the words of the psychoanalyst, in *The Uncanny*, the doubles are characterized by:

. . . transferring mental processes from the one person to the other . . . so that the one possesses knowledge, feeling and experience in common with the other, identifies himself with another person, so that his self becomes confounded, or the foreign self is substituted for his own - in other words, by doubling, dividing and interchanging the self. (Freud, *The Uncanny* 9)

Such is further emphasized when Grace adopts Mary's name as her own, on her escape with James McDermott, assuming thereby a new identity: "And finally, there is the constant recurrence of similar situations, a same face, or character-trait, or twist of fortune, or a same crime, or even a same name . . ." (Freud, *The Uncanny* 9).

Nevertheless, this outstanding reaction is understood by Dr. Jordan as a hysterical behaviour caused by a great shock following Mary's death, quoting: "This hallucination was followed by an episode of fainting and hysterics, mixed with what would appear to have been somnambulism, after which there was a prolonged sleep and subsequent amnesia" (*Alias Grace: Miniseries*, episode 3; 02,29'-02,40'). Indeed, Grace's lapses of memory begin to occur just as Mary dies, so it can be inferred that a strong connection exists between these two women and the processes of Grace's memory. Furthermore, on the night before the murders Grace dreams of Mary being beside her bed holding a firefly in a jar, leading Grace to think that a window should be open. And, after the murders, while Grace rests at the Lewistown tavern she dreams of walking towards Mr. Kinnear's house, Mr. Kinnear himself is walking behind her holding a lantern, she looks ahead and Nancy is inside the house at the window and holds a lamp. Then, on the place where Nancy was, appears Mary, someone is holding Grace's hand; it seems to be a feminine one, maybe her mother. All the deceased characters hold some sort of light in Grace's dream. Although this dream is an omen to the feminine triad, it curiously gives a sense of confinement, especially of feminine figures as there is a pattern concerning female death and confinement:

Grace's mother's soul cannot leave, nor Mary's, and Nancy's body is closed in the basement.

Yet, this consistent problematization of fragmentation of identity presented in the form of a doppelgänger reaches its height on the hypnosis's scene performed by Dr. Jerome du Pont (Zachary Levi), who "works via a direct appeal to the unconsciousness through neuro-hypnosis . . . designed reclaim repressed memories and to heal the psyche" (Pourgharib 9). On this scene, a black veil is placed over Grace, which may symbolize a darker side, the unconscious, and Grace assumes the identity of Mary Whitney, speaking in an unusual voice, referring to herself in the third person singular and communicating in an uncharacteristically frank manner. This scene may reveal a case of split personality, a symptomatic "double consciousness", a case of spirit or demonic possession, entering the realm of parapsychology, or a mere trick played by Jeremiah (aka Dr. Jerome du Pont), or by Grace bearing in mind how she manipulates the scraps of her own narrative, all the possibilities remain open. Rather than revealing the desired truth, this scene simply maintains ". . . Grace as an enigma - as an 'alias' - providing us with a series of potential narratives that attempt to name Grace's illusive/elusive identity" (Stanley 372).

Finally, Grace's uncanniness is revealed when the camera follows Grace's invisible movements, a travelling subject for an extended amount of time, as she recalls wandering at Mr. Kinnear's house. With a lengthy tracking shot the camera is used as an agent of suspense, suggesting once more the uncanny as Grace's presence looms heavily over Mr. Kinnear's house. She is within and without. Paradoxically, she remains as an active element albeit her absence is stressed. In symmetry with the opening, the quote chosen for the last episode is the following:

I felt a Cleaving in my Mind -
As if my brain had split -
I tried to match it - Seam by Seam
But could not make it fit. (Dickinson 439)

Emily Dickinson writes, in these verses, that she fails to place together all the parts of her cracking mind. And so does the viewer of *Alias Grace*. Since the series has an open ending, the viewer will never have a definite answer of what truly happened, or what version of the story is right. There are several possibilities, a lot of unanswered questions, as it is impossible to have a clear access to Grace's thoughts and emotions, she must remain an enigma, to honour the ambivalence of the whole plot.

The denouement of the series is disguised as a happy ending. Having spent most of her adult life locked away, once free again, Grace remains nonetheless limited; limited to one single option for how she must spend the rest of her life, and, naturally, Jamie Walsh's (Stephen Joffe) offer of a respectful and settled life as a married lady is the best she will ever get. Hence, such also represents how deceitful the concept of marital bliss and happiness so widely propagated by the Victorian discourse was, as most women were left with no other alternative but to conform to it. This offer is rushed out of guilt and regret and not of love. And, by accepting this offer, Grace gets everything that Mary Whitney envisioned for her future. Grace, as if a prism refracts Mary's light, meticulously follows everything that Mary wished for, re-enacting her dream life: marrying a settled farmer with a property of his own, having, white and red Leghorns, and a Jersey cow for the cream and cheese, two horses, Charley and Nell, a cat named Tabby, and a dog named Rex. Mary is incorporated in Grace's life and the phenomenon of the doppelgänger is clearly completed. Grace may not have carried on using Mary Whitney's name; however, there is certainly a reoccurrence of events between them, and Grace is undoubtedly confounded in Mary.

In the final scene, Grace makes her own quilt, the Tree of Paradise, which incarnates both the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge. In her quilt she fits together three different pieces of cloth, Mary's red petticoat symbolizing the heart fire, Nancy's pink dress, and her yellowish prison gown; their lives intertwined and sutured together at the centre of the quilt. This quilt is a warning, as Grace hangs it outside at the end of the series, so that it looks like a flag, a warning, and a testament of the "unvarnished picture of systematic male abuse of female servants" (Garrett n. p.).

Moreover, "in Grace's final words, we discover that she established a collective identity . . . with two dead female servants: Mary Whitney and Nancy Montgomery" (Stanley 373); a collective identity where all women share the social status of maidservants and all transgress boundaries as they perpetuate in Grace's life as haunting ghosts, precipitating a mingling between the living and the dead. The series concludes with Grace having surpassed the men who sought to diminish or phantom her. At the last shot/reverse shot Grace is looking back at Dr. Jordan. Now she stands in the role of the examiner, while Dr. Jordan is the helpless patient: "Doctor and patient exchange roles . . . , Grace becomes the doctor, the mesmerist who exerts control over those who listen to her stories, whilst Dr. Jordan becomes the patient, the madman who, ironically, ends up losing his memory altogether" (Doblas 95). This phenomenon can be identified as a case of Freudian countertransference,⁵ which

consists of the transferring of emotions, desires and expectations between a therapist and the patient. The person in treatment redirects feelings towards the psychotherapist, leading to the creation of an emotional entanglement. Yet, besides this notorious emotional entanglement, from Dr. Jordan's part particularly, what is possible to conclude is that there is a shift on the power relation between them, due to Grace's influence on Dr. Jordan unconscious feelings. As once the male gaze yearned to penetrate Grace, at last she stands at an advantageous position allowing her to be the cautious and casual observer, no longer being seek as the object of desire, no longer in the vulnerable position of focus of the male gaze, the servant to be possessed by the Doctor or the Master as the social class warfare enabled.

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¹ The term "apple" is never used in the creation stories of the Bible. Eve and Adam ate the fruit of "the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil", there is no explicit connection to an apple. This generic perception of the forbidden fruit being an apple, most likely, came from the artists' imagination when they started depicting this biblical scene in paintings, as apples are a commonly recognized fruit.

² A kind of disturbing strangeness evoked by something (a person, a situation, a fact, or an impression) that cannot be described as mysterious but as strangely familiar, which causes a certain feeling of anguish and confusion, and in some extreme cases, terror. In Sigmund Freud's article *Das Unheimliche*, 1919, Freud proposes that the apparently strange is in fact a disguised representation of what is familiar.

³ The term "the male gaze" was first coined by filmmaker and theorist Laura Mulvey, in her paper "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1973). It consists in the cultural depiction women, in the visual arts and in literature, through a masculine perspective, which tends to sexually objectify women while the man is empowered.

⁴ The Freudian term "unheimlich" corresponds to the term uncanny in English. This word has an ambivalent etymology: "heimlich" means "homely" but paradoxically also means, in certain situations, something hidden inside, concealed, or withheld from others. Thus, Freud notes that although "unheimlich" initially may seem the opposite of what is familiar it is in fact, in between its many meanings, identical with its opposite and, therefore, not familiar. "Unheimlich" denotes a feeling of unease and it's frequently associated with strong emotions such as terror, fear, or dread.

⁵ Freud originally developed the concept of countertransference (in German: *Gegenübertragung*) in 1910, on his work entitled *The Future Prospects of Psycho-Analytic Therapy*.

Normas de Referência Bibliográfica

MLA Style Manual (2016)

I. Aspeto Gráfico

1. Papel A4, a um espaço e meio (1,5); corpo de letra 11, Trebuchet MS.

2. **Notas** - todas no final do texto, numeradas com algarismos, antes do item "Obras Citadas". No corpo do texto, o algarismo que remete para a nota deverá ser colocado depois do sinal de pontuação, exceto no caso de se tratar de travessões.

3. **Referências bibliográficas** - no corpo do texto, identificando, entre parênteses curvos, o nome do autor e o(s) número(s) da(s) página(s) em causa.

Ex: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World" (Shelley 794).

(ver secção II. REFERÊNCIAS BIBLIOGRÁFICAS para mais ocorrências)

4. Citações

4.1. **com menos de quatro linhas:** integradas no corpo do texto, entre aspas (" ' ' "); a indicação da fonte (autor, página) deve ser colocada preferencialmente no final da frase, *antes* do sinal de pontuação.

Ex: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times", wrote Charles Dickens about the eighteenth century (35).

4.2. **com mais de quatro linhas:** separadas do texto, recolhidas 1,5 cm, na margem esquerda, em corpo 10, sem aspas. Manter o mesmo espaçamento entre as linhas (1,5). A indicação da fonte (autor, página) deve ser colocada preferencialmente no final da citação, *depois* do sinal de pontuação.

Ex: *At the conclusion of Lord of the Flies*, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:

The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. (186)

5. **Interpolações** - identificadas por meio de parênteses retos: [].

6. **Omissões** - assinaladas por três pontos com um espaço entre cada um deles e um espaço depois do último: . . .

Ex: “Medical thinking . . . stressed air as the communicator of the disease”.

Se a omissão se verificar no final da frase, usar quatro pontos, isto é, três pontos seguidos de ponto final:

Ex: “Presidential control reached its zenith under Andrew Jackson For a time, there were fifty-seven journalists on the government payroll”.

7. **“Obras Citadas”** - sob este título, no final de cada texto e antes das notas, deverão ser identificadas todas as obras citadas ao longo do texto, de acordo com as normas do MLA, abaixo descritas.

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1. **Citação parentética, no corpo do texto** - identificando, entre parênteses curvos, o nome do autor e o(s) número(s) da(s) página(s) em causa.

1.1. **Um só autor** (sobrenome + página):

Ex: “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (Shelley 794).

Se o nome do autor estiver mencionado na frase, indicar apenas a página. Ex: “Poets”, said Shelley, “are the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).

1.2. **Dois autores** (sobrenomes + página): (Williams and Ford 45-7)

1.3. **Dois ou três autores** (todos os sobrenomes + página): (Demetz, Lyman, and Harris 30)

1.3.1. **Mais de três autores**

(sobrenome do primeiro autor + *et al.* + pág.)

ou (todos os sobrenomes + pág.)

(Demetz et al. 30) ou (Demetz, Lyman, Harris, and Johnson 747)

1.4. Um ou mais livros do(s) mesmo(s) autor(es)

(sobrenome + título do livro + página)

Ex: Shakespeare's *King Lear* has been called a "comedy of grotesque" (Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* 85).

Depois de ter sido mencionado pelo menos uma vez na totalidade (regra que não se aplica a títulos muito longos), o título pode ser encurtado:

Ex: Shakespeare's *King Lear* has been called a "comedy of grotesque" (Frye, *Anatomy* 85).

O título pode também ser abreviado. Neste caso, deve indicar-se, entre parênteses, a abreviatura a usar logo na primeira ocorrência do título:

Ex: In *As You Like It* (AYL), Shakespeare . . .

Os títulos abreviados devem começar pela palavra que é usada para ordenar o título alfabeticamente na lista de "obras citadas".

No caso de o nome do autor ter sido já referido na frase, indicar apenas título e página:

According to Frye, the play is a "comedy of grotesque" (*Anatomy* 85).

Em todos estes casos, na lista de "Obras Citadas" deverá aparecer:

Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton UP, 1957.

Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It*. Wordsworth, 1993.

1.5. Mais do que um autor com o mesmo sobrenome

(inicial do nome + sobrenome + pág.)

(A. Patterson 184-85) e (L. Patterson 340)

Se a inicial for a mesma, usar o primeiro nome por extenso.

1.6. Citação indireta (qtd. in [quoted in] + sobrenome + pág.) (qtd. in Boswell 57)

1.7. Mais do que uma obra na mesma citação parentética

(Gilbert and Gubar, *Madwoman* 1-25; Murphy 39-52)

1.8. Obra com mais de um volume (sobrenome + número do volume + pág.) (Boswell 2: 450)

2. "Obras Citadas" - lista completa das obras referidas ao longo do texto, por ordem alfabética de apelido dos autores, de acordo com os seguintes modelos:

2.1. Livros

Borroff, Marie. *Language and the Poet: Verbal Artistry in Frost, Stevens, and Moore*. U of Chicago P, 1979.

2.1.1. Dois ou mais livros do mesmo autor

Usar três hífen seguidos de ponto (---.) para substituir o nome do autor.

Usar três hífen seguidos de vírgula (---,) no caso de o autor desempenhar funções de editor, tradutor ou organizador: (---, editor.), (---, translator.)

Os títulos do autor devem aparecer organizados por ordem alfabética.

Borroff, Marie. *Language and the Poet: Verbal Artistry in Frost, Stevens, and Moore*. U of Chicago P, 1979.

---. "Sound Symbolism as Drama in the Poetry of Robert Frost." *PMLA*, vol. 107, no.1, 1992, pp. 131-44.

---, editor. *Wallace Stevens: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Prentice, 1963.

No caso de o nome do autor surgir combinado com outros, não usar hífen.

Scholes, Robert. *Protocols of Reading*. Yale UP, 1989.

Scholes, Robert, and Robert Kellog. *The Nature of Narrative*. Oxford, 1966.

2.1.2. Livro de vários autores

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 2nd ed., U of Chicago P, 2003.

Durant, Will, and Ariel Durant. *The Age of Voltaire*. Simon, 1965.

Saraiva, António José, e Óscar Lopes. *História da Literatura Portuguesa*. 14ª ed., Porto Editora, 1987.

ou

Gilman, Sander, et al. *Hysteria beyond Freud*. U of California P, 1993.

2.1.3. Livros anónimos

The MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing. 8th ed., The Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

2.2. Antologias ou colectâneas

Usar, depois do último nome do(s) autor(es), e antecedido por uma vírgula, *editor/editors, translator, compiler/compilers*. Em português, usar *editor/editores, tradutor, organizador*.

Peter Demetz et al., editors. *The Disciplines of Criticism: Essays in Literary Theory, Interpretation, and History*. Yale UP, 1968.

Kepner, Susan Fulop, editor and translator. *The Lioness in Bloom: Modern Thai Fiction about Women*. U of Berkeley P, 1996.

2.3. Edições críticas

Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage: An Episode of the American Civil War*. Edited by Fredson Bowers, UP of Virginia, 1975.

3. Artigos em revistas

Chauí, Marilena. “Política cultural, cultura política.” *Brasil*, no. 13, 1995, pp. 9-24.

Piper, Andrew. “Rethinking the Print Object: Goethe and the Book of Everything.” *PMLA*, vol. 121, no.1, 2006, pp. 124-38.

3.1. Artigos em jornais

Coutinho, Isabel, “Os Pioneiros da Literatura ‘Queer’ em Portugal.” *Público*, 24 Agosto 2007, p. 9.

Mckay, Peter A. "Stocks Feel the Dollar's Weight." *Wall Street Journal*, 4 December 2006, p. C1.

3.2. Artigos em coletâneas ou antologias

Greene, Thomas. "The Flexibility of the Self in Renaissance Literature." *The Disciplines of Criticism: Essays in Literary Theory, Interpretation, and History*, edited by Peter Demetz and William L. Vance, Yale UP, 1969, pp. 40-67.

3.3. Artigo anônimo

"The Decade of the Spy." *Newsweek*, 7 March 1994, pp. 26-27.

3.4. Um editorial

"It's Subpoena Time." Editorial. *New York Times*, 8 June 2007, late edition, p. A28.

3.5. Prefácios, introduções e posfácios

Borges, Jorge Luis. Preface. *Selected Poems, 1923-1967*, by Borges, edited by Norman Thomas Di Giovanni, Delta-Dell, 1973, pp. xv-xvi.

Drabble, Margaret. Introduction. *Middlemarch*, by George Elliot, Bantam, 1985, pp. vii-xvii.

4. Dissertações não publicadas

Kane, Sophia. "Acts of Coercion: Father-Daughter Relationships in British Women's Fiction, 1778-1814." Dissertation, University of New York, 2003.

5. Publicações de edição eletrônica

Para a referência a publicações de edição eletrônica deverão ser seguidas as normas de referência acima indicadas para livros, volumes de artigos e revistas periódicas, acrescidas de:

- nome do Web site, em itálico;

- editor ou patrocinador do Web site (caso o texto esteja apenas publicado na Internet); não havendo, usar n.p.

- data de publicação (dia, mês, ano) (caso o texto esteja apenas publicado na Internet); não havendo, usar n.d.

- data de acesso (dia, mês, ano)

- endereço eletrônico (URL)

Eaves, Morris, Rober Essick, and Joseph Viscomi, editors. *The William Blake Archive*. Library of Congress, 28 September 2008, www.blakearchive.org/blake/. Accessed 20 November 2007.

5.1. Revista eletrônica

Sargent, Lyman Tower. "Em Defesa da Utopia." *Via Panorâmica: Revista Eletrônica de Estudos Anglo-Americanos/An Electronic Journal of Anglo-American Studies*, no. 1, 2008, pp. 3-12, <http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/5168.pdf>. Accessed 10 January 2009.

Schmidt-Nieto, Jorge R. "The Political Side of Bilingual Education." *Arachne@Rutgers*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2002, n. pag, www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/projects/arachne/vol2_2schmidt.html. Accessed 12 Mar. 2007.

Nota:

Usar as seguintes abreviaturas para informação desconhecida:

n. p. no publisher given	Ex: n. p., 2006, pp. 340-3
n. d. no date of publication given	Ex: U of Gotham P, n. d., pp. 340-3.
n. pag. no pagination given	Ex: U of Gotham P, 2006, n. pag.

Para estas e outras ocorrências, consultar:

MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing. Eighth Edition. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2016.