


# Via Panoramica

Série 3, vol. 10, n.º 2, 2021



**Via Panoramica:  
Revista de Estudos  
Anglo-Americanos  
Série 3, vol. 10, n.º 2, 2021**

# Apresentação

*Via Panoramica: Revista de Estudos Anglo-Americanos/ A Journal of Anglo-American Studies* (ISSN: 2182-9934 | DOI: 10.21747/2182-9934/via) acolhe artigos para os seus próximos números.

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# Presentation

*Via Panoramica: Revista de Estudos Anglo-Americanos/ A Journal of Anglo-American Studies* (ISSN: 2182-9934 | DOI: 10.21747/2182-9934/via) welcomes the proposal of articles for its next numbers.

*Via Panoramica* is published by CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation and Anglo-Portuguese Studies), at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto. The journal, which is published twice a year, welcomes essays in Portuguese or in English, within the field of Anglo-American Studies, proposed preferentially by early-career researchers, from post-graduate students to researchers who have recently obtained their PhD degrees. *Via Panoramica* has a Scientific Committee which ensures double blind peer-review of the texts submitted for publication.

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# *Via Panoramica*, série 3, vol. 10, n.º 2, 2021

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# A Prefatory Note

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Márcia Lemos


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Despite its comprehensive range of topics, the current issue of *Via Panoramica* deals mostly with the subversive potential of Arts and Humanities, a potential that has traditionally aroused contradictory reactions with critics either calling into question their relevance and their very existence or, quite the opposite, trying to censor them for fear of their power over people's actions. Literature, in general, has been the object of several attacks, which, in turn, originated famous defences as for example Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy* dating back to the sixteenth century.

The issue includes five main articles. The first is authored by João Sottomayor Fernandes who addresses the way Social and Human Sciences were taught in the United States of America during the Second World War, an interesting case study that illustrates the above-mentioned need for a defence of the Humanities in particularly troubled times.

Jéssica Bispo, on the other hand, presents a postcolonial reading of J. M. Coetzee's literary works *Foe* and *Youth* through two key concepts: "mimicry" and "subversion". By analysing the actions of two main characters - John and Friday - Bispo understands the strategies of mimicry employed in the texts as a successful attempt to subvert established Western discourses of power.

Still within the realm of literature, Rui Mateus and Diogo Barbieri address two very subversive and elusive genres: fantasy and dystopian literature respectively. Indeed, while Mateus seeks to apply Farah Mendlesohn's categorization of fantasy to N. K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* trilogy to reveal Jemisin's innovative approach to the genre; Barbieri, in turn, revisits the fields of memory studies and psychoanalysis to investigate the importance of dreams and memory in Cormac McCarthy's post-apocalyptic novel *The Road*.



The issue is brought into a conclusion by Eelke André Verhagen's paper on the American reality show *RuPaul's Drag Race*. Verhagen analyses the show and its potential for the individual liberation of a traditionally marginalized group of people within the framework of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's thesis of Culture Industry and assesses the relevance of this theory when applied to a twenty-first century cultural object.

# O Estado das Ciências Sociais e Humanas nos EUA durante a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial

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João Sottomayor Fernandes

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## Abstract

It is well known that scientific advances, particularly in the field of armament, assured the Allies' victory in World War II. However, the role the Humanities played in this conflict is considerably less clear. Focusing on the case of the United States of America, we shall discuss how the Social and Human Sciences were taught during the war. Additionally, through the reading of numerous articles contained in academic journals, we will endeavour to highlight the defence afforded by professors of Humanities of the value of their field of study in the preservation of moral values, as well as their criticisms of the Natural Sciences. Finally, we will display the importance given to the learning of foreign languages in the war effort.

**Keywords:** World War II; Humanities; Natural Sciences; Foreign Languages

## Resumo

Não é segredo que os avanços científicos, principalmente a nível do armamento, asseguraram a vitória dos Aliados na 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial. Contudo, o papel que as humanidades desempenharam neste conflito militar é muito menos nítido. Concentrando-nos no caso dos Estados Unidos da América, discutiremos como as ciências sociais e humanas eram ensinadas durante a guerra. Além disso, a partir da leitura de diversos artigos provenientes de jornais académicos da época, procuraremos evidenciar a defesa efetuada por parte dos professores de humanidades do valor da sua área na preservação dos valores morais, bem como as suas críticas das ciências naturais. Finalmente, destacaremos a importância dada à aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras no esforço de guerra.

**Palavras-chave:** 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial; Humanidades; Ciências Naturais; Línguas Estrangeiras

## **Introdução**

É inegável que um dos acontecimentos que mais contribuiu para a vitória dos Aliados na 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial foi a invenção e subsequente utilização da bomba atômica em 1945. Naturalmente, esta foi um produto dos avanços científicos e tecnológicos sentidos na época, tendo reforçado a percepção já existente da importância das ciências naturais. Em sentido contrário, raras são as investigações efetuadas relativamente ao estado das humanidades durante a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial. No presente trabalho, procuraremos, efetivamente, descobrir que papel as ciências sociais e humanas desempenharam no cenário de guerra, focando-nos especificamente no caso dos Estados Unidos da América. Com esta finalidade, abordaremos em primeiro lugar a situação geral do sistema de ensino americano, e em que medida este foi influenciado pela guerra. Subsequentemente, falaremos de como os professores das humanidades tentaram provar a relevância da sua área face a críticas e, finalmente, abordaremos o papel da aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras na guerra, tal como este era descrito pelos estudiosos das ciências sociais e humanas. Uma vez que as fontes bibliográficas relativas a este tema são relativamente escassas, recorreremos sobretudo a artigos de revistas académicas da época.

### **1. O Ensino das Ciências Sociais e Humanas durante a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial**

Segundo Kandel (173-4), a crise pela qual passou o ensino das humanidades durante a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial, apesar de ter piorado consideravelmente com a guerra, não foi um resultado direto dela. Na verdade, a crise terá sido causada por vários outros problemas, nomeadamente o fracasso por parte das faculdades em fornecer um percurso académico equilibrado, a exigência cada vez maior de uma educação focada na especialização em detrimento da educação geral e a má preparação dos professores.

Farrison, por sua vez, explicita dois fatores que explicam o ceticismo relativamente ao mérito do ensino das humanidades: em primeiro lugar, estas não estão suficientemente relacionadas com o mundo do conflito, isto é, com a dura realidade marcada pela guerra, uma vez que não parecem ter utilidade prática; em segundo, as ciências humanas não incentivam o ensino do patriotismo (334). O primeiro argumento de Farrison é, de resto, partilhado por Kandel, sublinhando este último que existia na altura uma tendência para procurar o ensino de técnicas de utilidade prática que podiam ser aplicadas na vida diária (188).

Com efeito, como explica O'Dell, durante a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial, a matéria

lecionada na área das ciências sociais focava-se sobretudo nos temas da guerra, dos acontecimentos principais da atualidade e da promoção dos valores democráticos americanos (1). Além disso, a autora parafraseia o escritor Gerard Giordano que, na sua obra *Wartime Schools: How World War II Changed American Education*, afirma que o sistema escolar promovia tanto o conservadorismo político como a ideia de que a educação devia encorajar o patriotismo e o interesse na segurança nacional (2). Por outro lado, segundo O'Dell, Giordano também refere que se sentiu durante a guerra um temor de livros que supostamente defendiam valores antiamericanos, particularmente nas obras de ciências sociais (2). Esta opinião é partilhada por Conner e Bohan que argumentam que, nos Estados Unidos, o ensino secundário progressista era visto como uma ameaça à segurança nacional, não só devido à sua tendência para enfatizar o pensamento crítico independente, mas também pela sua propensão para desafiar o *status quo* (95).

Na verdade, algo que era incentivado nas aulas de ciências sociais antes da 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial consistia em analisar as instituições democráticas e sociais de forma crítica. Aliás, ainda de acordo com O'Dell (2), nos anos 30, considerava-se que o objetivo das ciências sociais consistia precisamente em questionar a sociedade em redor dos estudantes, a fim de que estes conseguissem melhorar as instituições sociais sem seguir cegamente uma única ideologia. Esta metodologia de ensino foi abolida pouco tempo antes de os Estados Unidos entrarem na guerra e o objetivo das ciências sociais passou a ser a celebração da democracia e da cultura americanas, ou seja, as escolas passaram a ser um instrumento de propaganda do *status quo* (O'Dell 4). Um exemplo disto foi a existência de um teste com perguntas e respostas como por exemplo: “To what church must you belong, according to the Bill of Rights? (Any church or no church. It even protects non-believers.) . . . The years 1863 and 1919 admitted two classes of people to the full benefits of the Bill of Rights. Who were they? (Negroes and women)” (O'Dell 15-6). A existência de desigualdades sociais era completamente omitida.

Por outro lado, verificamos uma certa hipocrisia na condenação da censura dos jornais alemães por Goebbels e na tentativa deste de exhibir apenas o que havia de melhor no governo do seu país (O'Dell 19-20). Tópicos como a evolução dos direitos nos Estados Unidos e as lutas contra a escravatura e a desunião serviram para convencer os estudantes da superioridade do seu país face ao resto do mundo. O'Dell cita mesmo o editor Forrest E. Long que defendia que o sistema escolar devia estar disposto a deixar a sua forma de procedimento pelo bem comum, uma vez que trabalhar para a vitória era o objetivo principal das escolas americanas (O'Dell 5-6).

De facto, até mesmo encorajar alterações no currículo a favor de temas patrióticos era visto como uma prova de lealdade para com os Estados Unidos.

Entre os métodos que foram utilizados para incluir informações sobre a guerra no sistema de ensino, encontramos jornais como o *Weekly News Review*, que incluía diversos artigos acerca da guerra e mesmo testes com perguntas de resposta múltipla (O'Dell 30). Podemos verificar nitidamente a evolução dos objetivos do ensino das ciências sociais e humanas de que fala O'Dell se consultarmos os *Presidential Addresses* do *National Council for the Social Sciences* (NCSS) de 1937 até 1947. Elmer Ellis, professor assistente da Universidade de Missouri, discute os verdadeiros significados de “propaganda” e “doutrinação”. No seu *Presidential Address*, este refere que, se houver apenas propaganda e não objetividade no ensino das ciências sociais, este teria de ser modificado (30). No entanto, Ellis afirma que o significado de “propaganda” fora estendido para consistir mesmo nos valores nos quais se baseia a sociedade americana. Ellis dá como exemplo a tolerância para com outras raças, que não pode ser incentivada sem uma espécie de propaganda. Contudo, acaba por concluir que seria errado aceitar a doutrinação, mesmo que esta leve uma pessoa a tomar uma atitude que consideramos correta, pois tal seria contrário ao espírito da democracia (32).

Howard Anderson, professor da Universidade de Cornell, afirma, em resposta ao ceticismo relativamente à eficácia do curso de ciências sociais, que é uma boa prática criticar livremente as instituições americanas, incluindo as escolas (62-3). No entanto, Anderson também critica um artigo chamado *Treason in the Textbooks*, segundo o qual a história, a geografia e as ciências sociais são um instrumento de propaganda para mudanças na ordem política e económica (63). Além disso, o artigo que Anderson refere acusa as ciências sociais de colocar em dúvida os feitos dos heróis nacionais, atacar a Constituição e promover a ideia de que a religião e a moral fazem parte de um sistema obsoleto. Assim, Anderson critica o artigo pelas insinuações contidas no mesmo de que os alunos não deviam ter nem liberdade de expressão nem pensamento crítico. No entanto, curiosamente, o professor de Cornell (67-8) afirma também que os professores de ciências sociais deviam, em primeiro lugar, selecionar tópicos de estudo relacionados diretamente com a defesa da América e com a sua política externa; em segundo, enfatizar o treino de técnicas de organização de informação; em terceiro, ensinar como ignorar propaganda; e, finalmente, desenvolver a lealdade para com as instituições democráticas. Verificamos assim neste *Presidential Address* uma posição ambivalente: por um lado, Anderson encontra-se a favor da utilização do pensamento crítico por parte dos seus alunos, por outro, defende a necessidade de as ciências

sociais se concentrarem sobretudo na guerra e na defesa da democracia. Estamos, por conseguinte, perante uma fase intermédia entre o apelo pelo pensamento individual e a reverência cega face às instituições americanas de que fala O'Dell.

Mais tarde, no *Presidential Address* da NCSS de Fremont Wirth de 1941, já não se fala sequer no pensamento crítico dos estudantes. Em vez disso, o professor de história conclui o seu discurso com a aplicação das ciências sociais no esforço de guerra, afirmando: “Our political ideals must be brought to voters, candidates, and especially office holders, as well as to the political scientists. This is not a new task, but an important one if our American institutions are to be strengthened and preserved” (79). Ou seja, o objetivo principal da área de ciências sociais, de acordo com Wirth, deve ser a preservação (e não a crítica construtiva) das instituições e a promoção de certos ideais políticos.

Finalmente, a fim de podermos concluir a nossa comparação dos *Presidential Addresses* de antes, durante e após a guerra, referiremos aquele efetuado por Burr Philips, professor da Universidade de Wisconsin, em 1946, e W. Chase, professor da *Boston University*, em 1947. Philips explicita cinco convicções pessimistas que os alunos de ciências sociais possuem nesta altura. No entanto, para os propósitos do presente trabalho, interessam-nos apenas a primeira e a quinta:

1. Many of our pupils believe, and they reflect a society that seems to believe, that selfishness is the only motive powerful enough to insure success to individuals or group of individuals. . . . 5. The general attitude toward the United Nations and toward all current attempts to solve our world problems without recourse to war is one of skepticism. National selfishness and false pride loom large in the thinking of many of our pupils. (107-8)

O que esta descrição nos indica é que os estudantes do ano em questão passaram pela reafirmação do patriotismo que teve lugar nas faculdades de ciências sociais e humanas durante a guerra. Como tal, menosprezam os objetivos pacíficos das Nações Unidas e consideram o egoísmo nacionalista o motivador por excelência dos povos. Perante isto, Philipps defende que os professores de ciências sociais devem incentivar o otimismo nos estudantes, mesmo que para tal seja necessária a doutrinação. O tema do pensamento individual não só não é abordado, como aparenta ser desprezado por Philipps.

Por outro lado, Chase já valoriza o espírito crítico, opinando que os estudantes devem aprender a exercitar o seu pensamento crítico e desenvolver o gosto pelo conhecimento (118). Curiosamente, mais adiante, Chase chega a encorajar o ensino do

chamado “sonho americano”, mas sem a crença de que os demais países o devem seguir da mesma forma (123).

A partir deste último *Presidential Address* seria de supor que o objetivo das ciências sociais e humanas voltara nesta altura, dois anos após o fim da guerra, a ser, por um lado, incentivar o espírito crítico, e por outro, respeitar e lutar pelo “sonho americano”, tal como fora em 1940. No entanto, Conner e Bohan negam que tal tenha ocorrido na prática (pelo menos, no que diz respeito à primeira finalidade referida). Na verdade, segundo as autoras aconteceu precisamente o inverso: “As the hunt for communists within schools intensified, teachers began to self-censor and schools began to remove courses stressing social problems” (Conner e Bohan 100). Ou seja, devido ao clima social do pós-guerra, muitos professores recusavam-se a lecionar temas considerados potencialmente antiamericanos, sob pena de serem acusados de incentivar o comunismo. Além disso, foi criado um comité, intitulado *House Un-American Activities Committee*, que proibia a crítica da política e do sistema económico dos Estados Unidos por parte dos professores de ciências sociais, criando um clima de tensão e medo na sociedade americana em geral (Conner e Bohan 100).

## 2. O Valor das Humanidades durante e após a Guerra

Thomas English, no seu curto artigo “Retreat of Humanities”, refere Louis Wright que, por sua vez, explica assim o menosprezo relativo às Humanidades:

The humanities have neglected to be “impressive”, to develop a front, and to window-dress their subjects. . . . The humanities have not made a mystery of themselves. For example, everyone feels that he could understand literature and history if it were worth the trouble. . . . In the opinion of the public, a technical language, plus statistics and graphs, makes a learned science to be approached with respect and to be interpreted only by its high priests. (qtd. in English 2)

Wright descreve assim a visão do público geral do carácter aparentemente transparente e de fácil compreensão das humanidades. Partindo desta ideia, não surpreenderá o ceticismo que muitos sentiriam relativamente ao investimento no ensino desta área. Os professores de ciências humanas não só tinham de justificar a existência destas nas universidades, como tinham de impressionar o público americano. Loren MacKinney, tendo algum conhecimento do que fora escrito em revistas académicas durante a guerra, explica a situação das humanidades da seguinte forma:

Since Pearl Harbor, writing concerning the Humanities have manifested three distinct trends. In the early war period, when materials and men were being frantically mobilized, humanities and liberal education seemed destined to at least a temporary blackout. . . . Later, as it became apparent that higher education was not doomed, humanistic writings took on a distinctly aggressive tone. . . . During this phase, vigorous proponents of the Humanities stressed the special “values” inherent in the Liberal Arts, and identified the Humanities with democracy, freedom, culture, civilization, and all of the eternal verities “for which we are fighting”. Late in the year 1943, a new and more constructive trend became apparent . . . that of cooperative effort not only among Humanists, but also among educators in general.

(1)

Apesar de não termos encontrado artigos que explicitassem a terceira fase de que fala MacKinney (isto é, a cooperação entre professores de diferentes áreas), não são poucos os textos nas revistas académicas da altura a atacar as ciências naturais e a defender o valor e a utilidade das humanidades.

Fremont Wirth, no seu *Presidential Address* para a NCSS, faz uma crítica feroz ao progresso científico: “[Science] has produced wonders in causing the world to shrink and in bringing to our very doors the misery, starvation, death, and destruction brought on by wars thousands of miles away” (72). Temos então uma apreciação negativa do papel da ciência que, devido à evolução da tecnologia de armamento, trouxe consigo a destruição, não tendo sido acompanhado por uma semelhante evolução moral. Tomando em consideração o facto de esta declaração ter sido proferida no ano de entrada dos Estados Unidos na guerra, podemos ver nela uma evidência da vontade dos professores de humanidades em salvar a sua área. Por outro lado, se tivermos em conta o que referimos sobre as ideias de Wirth no capítulo anterior, podemos concluir que estamos perante um excelente exemplo da segunda tendência referida por MacKinney. Kallen chega a colocar a problemática do ensino das humanidades como um fator fundamental que distingue os Aliados dos nazis:

We do know that in seven years the Nazis have been able, by means of a doctrine and discipline of working, stealing, fighting, breeding and dying for the Führer, to pattern German youth according to an image of a warrior carrying on with a traditional military culture mechanized and streamlined and brought up to date. (331)

Verificamos assim que, na perspectiva de Kallen, os soldados nazis foram desumanizados e transformados em máquinas de guerra. Para o autor de “The War and Education in the United States” (331-2), isto é o que acontece quando as pessoas

adotam uma única doutrina bélica em vez de estudar as humanidades, explicando assim por que razão era necessário que os Aliados ganhassem. Por outro lado, também verificamos em Kallen a tendência por parte dos educadores americanos de promover uma visão extremamente positiva dos valores do seu país e de os contrastar com os ideais nazis. Assim sendo, temos mais uma promoção da reverência face às instituições americanas típica na época.

Falconer (2) aparenta concordar com Kallen, afirmando que a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial é um conflito não só de armas, mas também de intelecto. No entanto, o autor considera também que o controlo das armas e da razão não são necessariamente os ingredientes para a construção de uma comunidade que se pretende em convivência pacífica, sendo necessário acrescentar uma bússola moral: “. . . sheer intellect combined with will-power cannot weld the nations into a friendly or rational community”; “. . . intellect, when developed without moral purpose and a supreme human end, is destructive of what is most distinctive and worthy in man” (Falconer 3). Encontramos assim a ideia (agora em 1943, dois anos após a entrada dos EUA na guerra) de que, apesar de a ciência tecnológica e o intelecto serem importantes para a vitória, é fundamental a existência de uma base humanitária e humanista.

Por outro lado, Falconer (3) fala do investimento por parte dos alemães na medicina e na engenharia, fechando, no entanto, as faculdades de filosofia, famosas pela sua liberdade académica. O autor de “The Humanities in the War Time University” considera as humanidades superiores às ciências naturais do ponto de vista académico, sendo nas primeiras que o verdadeiro espírito académico prospera - “the spirit of the university has its inmost home” (Falconer 4). O resto do artigo de Falconer consiste numa descrição do valor abstrato da literatura e da arte como instrumentos civilizacionais sem os quais é impossível ter uma cultura moral e democrática. Apesar de este artigo confirmar a existência da dita “segunda fase” da escrita em defesa das humanidades de que fala MacKinney, este comete um erro em julgar que já em 1943 deixa de existir a crítica agressiva da amoralidade das ciências naturais. Ainda no mesmo ano, foi realizado um inquérito pelo professor Warner Rice da Universidade de Michigan e pelo professor Howard Jones da Universidade de Harvard relativamente à proteção das humanidades. Segundo o artigo publicado pela revista académica *College English*, o dever principal das faculdades americanas é preservar os elementos de uma aprendizagem liberal e humana, a fim de atribuir dignidade à vitória na guerra (313). O autor anónimo do artigo relativo ao inquérito refere inclusive a decadência intelectual das instituições académicas de outros países como a Grã-Bretanha e a França (314). Assim sendo, ainda segundo o mesmo, cabe aos Estados Unidos

humanizar a vida acadêmica. Temos assim outro exemplo da promoção do excecionalismo americano que foi discutido no primeiro capítulo do presente trabalho. Até as ciências tecnológicas são atacadas quando o autor de “The Humanities and the War” refere a construção de faculdades idênticas às dos nazis (314).

Foerster, tal como Falconer, reafirma a necessidade de uma reorientação moral defendendo que foi precisamente a ausência do respeito pelos assuntos humanitários que despoletou um novo conflito armado à escala global (286). Kandel dedica, na obra já mencionada, um subcapítulo chamado “The Search for Values and Liberal Education” ao conflito entre as humanidades e as ciências naturais, afirmando que este foi inútil, por um lado, porque os valores das ciências humanas foram negligenciados pela forma como eram abordadas na altura, e por outro, porque os maiores cientistas já tinham admitido que as ciências naturais não podiam responder a todas as perguntas sobre a vida (191). A abordagem às humanidades à qual se refere Kandel será a tendência da altura por parte dos professores de ciências sociais e humanas de incentivar os estudantes a reverenciar as instituições americanas em vez de treinar o seu pensamento crítico e individual.

Quanto ao reconhecimento por parte dos cientistas da necessidade de uma base moral, esta é evidenciada, por exemplo, pelo artigo de Oppenheimer intitulado “On Science and Culture”. No seu texto, o cientista afirma que o progresso científico não é necessariamente acompanhado por uma evolução moral e que, aliás, os retrocessos morais não deixam de ser possíveis (4). Kandel, por sua vez, conclui o seu subcapítulo afirmando que o que mais contribuiu para o antagonismo entre as duas áreas foi a especialização intensa, que causou uma rutura que em 1948, três anos após o fim da guerra, ainda não tinha sido colmatada (192-3). Kandel culpa tanto os cientistas por isto como os humanistas, os primeiros pela sua indiferença geral para com as humanidades e os últimos por desprezarem o facto de o humanismo ter tido a sua origem na procura da descoberta da Natureza por parte do Homem.

Finalmente, é importante sublinhar que, por muito que os autores referidos no presente capítulo tivessem tentado evidenciar os valores morais das humanidades, nenhum deles abordou nem tentou propor soluções para a nova tendência no ensino das ciências sociais de doutrinar os alunos com valores nacionalistas, menosprezando a liberdade de expressão.

### **3. A Aprendizagem de Línguas Estrangeiras durante a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial**

Enquanto alguns autores de artigos académicos afirmavam que as humanidades eram uma área pacifista, houve quem tentasse atribuir-lhes uma função essencial na 2.<sup>a</sup>

Guerra Mundial, mas houve também quem se apressasse a refutar tal utilidade. Engel refere quatro objeções ao ensino das línguas estrangeiras:

1. That the study of foreign languages is of no practical value, that it contributes nothing to the economic usefulness and success of the individual. 2. That of those pursuing the study on the high school level only the few who go on to college are likely to have any further use for the language studied and that public education cannot afford such disparity in the benefits which it confers. 3. That students of foreign languages whether in high school or college soon forget all they have learned and therefore time spent on such study is wasted. 4. That very few students acquire sufficient proficiency in a given language to use it with ease and enjoyment and therefore with satisfaction in the pursuit of culture or in travel. (569)

Verificamos assim que os motivos do ceticismo perante o ensino de línguas são bastante semelhantes àqueles que são apontados ao ensino das ciências sociais e humanas. Enfatizamos em particular a ideia de que as línguas estrangeiras não têm nenhuma utilidade prática e que a aprendizagem das mesmas raramente compensa a longo prazo.

No que diz respeito à defesa da aprendizagem de línguas, verificamos que Cross, por exemplo, entendia que, para vencer o inimigo, era necessário falar a sua língua, à qual o autor chamava a língua da força (277). Especificamente, Cross explicita que uma das maiores carências do exército dos Estados Unidos é a de soldados que soubessem falar as línguas dos seus inimigos, principalmente o japonês. O autor atribui ao linguista inúmeras possibilidades de auxiliar os Aliados, nomeadamente escutar as comunicações dos inimigos, interrogá-los quando são capturados e decifrar os códigos que utilizam (279). Por sua vez, Girard partilha a opinião de Cross, estabelecendo uma comparação entre a utilidade da aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras em tempo de paz e de guerra:

Whereas when we were at peace we taught languages mostly for appreciating the literatures and civilizations represented, we now are under pressure to use foreign languages for much more immediate practical purposes- to talk directly to natives, to carry on radio propaganda, to develop communications of all types all over the globe. (24)

Além disso, Girard (25-6) afirma que o conhecimento de outras línguas por parte dos países do Eixo lhes permitia conhecer o seu inimigo melhor que os Aliados. Uma função atribuída aos linguistas tanto por Cross como por Girard, que consiste em combater a

propaganda do Eixo, é abordada mais minuciosamente por Danton. Segundo Danton, na Alemanha, o inglês e o francês são ensinados na escola primária e secundária, durante oito ou nove anos (511). Assim sendo, os nazis podiam lançar propaganda crítica dos Aliados em países que falam estas línguas. Por outro lado, Danton (509) afirma que os americanos não costumam aprender línguas estrangeiras, pelo que não conseguem combater a propaganda nazi, nem lançar a sua noutros países.

McCrosen, entretanto, refere que, em vez de abandonar as línguas faladas pelos inimigos, os estudantes deviam aprender bem o alemão e o italiano, e até exigir um curso de japonês (97). Além disso, o autor de “The Place of Language in the College Program in Times of War- and Peace” (98) regista uma certa relutância na aprendizagem das línguas dos países do Eixo devido à ideia de que a fluência nas mesmas é um sinal de apoio da política totalitária da Alemanha, da Itália e do Japão. De facto, McCrosen afirma que é necessário saber o maior número de línguas possível uma vez que tal permite o conhecimento das invenções concebidas pelo mundo fora, que surgem tanto em tempo de paz como em tempo de guerra (98). Por outro lado, segundo o autor (98), as línguas estão associadas com diferentes áreas académicas. O alemão, por exemplo, tornara-se na língua tradicional das ciências puras e aplicadas. O russo, entretanto, é a língua da sociologia, devido ao interesse da União Soviética por esta área. Finalmente, McCrosen defende a importância da aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras, afirmando que se os Aliados soubessem melhor as línguas dos seus inimigos, teriam um conhecimento muito mais aprofundado das suas capacidades, o que os auxiliaria a ganhar a guerra.

Ainda assim, paradoxalmente, esta relutância em aprender línguas resulta em parte da própria guerra. Freeman afirma que o número de estudantes da língua e cultura francesas sofreu um decréscimo de 15% no ano letivo de 1940/1941 e de 12% desde 1937 (735). Stroup por sua vez, refere que, apesar de ter havido um aumento no número de alunos inscritos na faculdade de quase 50% entre 1932 e 1940, a percentagem de inscrições em cursos de línguas estrangeiras e literatura subiu apenas 8% (*The Humanities* 1, 12). Entretanto, o número de estudantes de latim desceu 75% desde 1932, o inglês, 31%, e o espanhol, 28%. Stroup explica que estas descidas significativas se devem a dois fatores: em primeiro lugar, muitos dos currículos académicos da altura deixaram de ter línguas estrangeiras como cadeiras obrigatórias (*The Humanities* 12). Por conseguinte, os professores muitas vezes não têm formação em nenhuma língua exceto a sua materna. Em segundo lugar, as escolas de comércio, de engenharia e de arquitetura rejeitaram por completo o ensino de línguas. Stroup critica esta tendência pois considera que os americanos ouvem e leem mais expressões

estrangeiras do que em qualquer outra altura na História (12). É bem possível que este desprezo pela aprendizagem das línguas esteja relacionado com as tendências nacionalistas sentidas nos Estados Unidos nesta época que, como vimos, afetaram também as ciências sociais.

Curiosamente, noutro artigo, Stroup acrescenta que não é só no ensino das línguas que se sente um decréscimo (*State of Humanities* 4). Mesmo a aprendizagem de matemática, história e das ciências naturais estava a ser substituída por cursos práticos de aritmética de negócios, de democracia, de sociologia e de saúde. O autor do artigo chega a insinuar que cada vez menos estudantes americanos conseguiam ler, escrever e mesmo pensar por consequência destas alterações ao currículo académico (4).

Butler também regista uma descida na aprendizagem de línguas semelhante às de Freeman e Stroup, mas explica que a mesma provém da aversão às políticas dos países do Eixo: “What will be the attitude of the average student toward the study of a language and its literature, however important, which are those of a people whose present policies and acts he deplores and condemns?” (Butler 300). No entanto, o estudo do alemão aparenta não ter sido prejudicado pela guerra, algo que Butler (301) teoriza ser devido ao valor cultural considerável da literatura e da língua alemãs. Por outro lado, o italiano deixou quase completamente de ser estudado (principalmente por pessoas de ascendência italiana), por motivos de constrangimento social. Seja como for, Cardozier afirma que a liberdade académica durante a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial a nível dos estudos culturais foi superior à da primeira e que não tinha havido nenhum caso de um professor se recusar a ensinar as línguas dos países do Eixo, nem de destruição de obras alemãs, nem de maus-tratos a estrangeiros (216). Partindo do princípio que Cardozier está correto, não parece ter havido nenhuma tentativa agressiva por parte do governo americano de desencorajar o estudo da cultura dos países do Eixo.

Hutchinson, escrevendo já um ano após o fim da 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial, distingue cinco objetivos relativamente à aprendizagem das línguas estrangeiras:

- 1- Ability to communicate with and understand one’s neighbor both at home and abroad.
- 2- Acquaintanceship with one’s cultural heritage.
- 3- Ability to understand and make the right use of one’s physical environment.
- 4- Understanding of one’s social and economic environment within the development of economic efficiency and civic responsibility,
- 5- Development of the ability to use one’s leisure time profitably and intelligently. (258)

O autor em questão acreditava que, através do cumprimento destes objetivos, seria possível evitar um novo conflito armado, ou seja, Hutchinson afirma que a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial foi travada majoritariamente devido à falta de interação de culturas provocada pela ignorância de línguas estrangeiras: “. . . if we were really in rapport with our neighbor, and he with us, most of our wars, industrial disputes, national jealousies, etc, would vanish into thin air” (259). Assim sendo, para Hutchinson, a aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras é importante pois encoraja a tolerância e a cordialidade entre povos de diferentes países.

Apesar de todos estes esforços a fim de justificar o ensino de línguas nos Estados Unidos da América, a verdade é que estes fracassaram majoritariamente. Nancy Sterniak, cita Burn & Perkins, quando constata o papel dominante dos Estados Unidos no pós-guerra com a consequente afirmação da língua inglesa e o declínio do estudo das restantes em território americano: “After World War II we [the United States] were the ostensible scientific leader of the world . . . which incidentally led to English becoming the monopoly world language because everybody wanted to plug into our science” (qtd. in Sterniak 18). É curioso que, mais uma vez, foram as ciências naturais (isto é, a evolução das mesmas nos Estados Unidos) que levaram à decadência da aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras, tal como aconteceu com as ciências sociais.

## Conclusão

Tomando em consideração as obras consultadas relativamente ao sistema de ensino durante a 2.<sup>a</sup> Guerra Mundial, torna-se claro que este já possuía falhas bem antes do surgimento do conflito armado. Já nos anos 30 se falava de disciplinas inúteis para o futuro dos estudantes (geralmente, aquelas relacionadas com as ciências sociais) e de professores mal preparados. No entanto, com a guerra, surgiram novos problemas relativamente à posição que os académicos deviam tomar quanto à mesma. O resultado foi que o pensamento crítico, outrora considerado fundamental para a aprendizagem das ciências sociais, foi substituído pela obrigação de respeito cego pelas instituições americanas, algo que, devido à perseguição dos comunistas que se verificou durante a Guerra Fria, não chegou a mudar mesmo nos anos 50. A propaganda e a doutrinação, tão desprezadas nos anos 30, passaram a ser uma parte fundamental do ensino das ciências sociais durante a guerra. Podemos verificar isto não só nos *Presidential Addresses* da NCSS datadas da primeira metade dos anos 40, mas também nos vários artigos escritos por professores das humanidades da mesma altura. Além disso, estes revelam que os professores de ciências sociais e humanas tentaram provar o valor da sua área de estudo de duas formas: a primeira consistiu em tentar

argumentar que as humanidades seriam indispensáveis para os Estados Unidos (e o resto do mundo), devido ao seu valor moral e humanizador; a segunda passou por estudar de que forma as ciências da linguagem podiam ser utilizadas como uma arma de guerra. O primeiro método referido resultou na rutura entre as humanidades e as ciências naturais. Aliás, estas últimas nunca deixaram de ser colocadas num patamar superior em relação às primeiras. Por outro lado, o segundo método falhou, uma vez que foi considerado desnecessário aprender línguas estrangeiras tendo em consideração que a maioria das descobertas científicas passaram a provir dos Estados Unidos.

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# *Almost the same but not quite: Mimicry e Subversão em Youth e Foe* de J. M. Coetzee

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## **Abstract**

This article analyzes, through a postcolonial perspective, the literary works *Foe* and *Youth*, both written by J. M. Coetzee. It problematizes the concept of mimicry as presented by Homi K. Bhabha in his essay “Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse”. Analyzing the actions of the characters John and Friday, it becomes possible to perceive how they resort to strategies of mimicry and attempt to resist Western discourses of power. Consequently, they present themselves as disruptive and subversive in a cultural space traditionally imbedded with colonial authority.

**Keywords:** Postcolonialism; Mimicry; Subversion; Resistance; Culture

## **Resumo**

O presente artigo efetua uma análise pós-colonial das obras literárias *Foe* e *Youth*, ambas da autoria de J. M. Coetzee, problematizando o conceito de *mimicry* tal como este é expresso por Homi K. Bhabha no seu ensaio “Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse”. Analisando as ações das personagens John e Friday, torna-se perceptível a forma como recorrem a estratégias de *mimicry* com o intuito de resistirem ao discurso de poder ocidental e, conseqüentemente, se apresentam como elementos disruptivos e subversivos num espaço cultural tradicionalmente munido de autoridade colonial.

**Palavras-chave:** Pós-colonialismo; *Mimicry*; Subversão; Resistência; Cultura

Em “Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse”, da obra *The Location of Culture*, Homi K. Bhabha sintetiza, com a expressão que serve de título a este artigo - “. . . a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (86)-, de forma clara e direta (na medida do possível dada a complexidade do ensaio), o conceito de *mimicry* apresentado pelo seu autor. No universo da Biologia, este termo remete para um fenômeno caracterizado pela semelhança entre dois ou mais organismos que não são taxinomicamente relacionados, sendo que esta aproximação física confere uma vantagem a um destes organismos, podendo proteger o mesmo dos seus predadores (Wickler s/ pág.). Bhabha alicerçou precisamente a sua visão neste fenômeno e transportou o mesmo para o domínio dos Estudos Pós-coloniais, onde o aplica à dinâmica entre colonizador e colonizado, derrubando o binarismo expresso por Edward Said em *Orientalism* (1978).<sup>1</sup>

O presente artigo pretende efetuar uma análise das obras *Youth* (2002) e *Foe* (1986), ambas da autoria do escritor sul-africano J. M. Coetzee, recorrendo ao conceito de *mimicry* tal como este é concebido e explicitado por Bhabha. Devido à pluralidade de aspetos passíveis de análise de tão complexas obras, focar-nos-emos nas personagens Friday, no caso de *Foe*, e John, relativamente a *Youth*. É do nosso interesse demonstrar como estas personagens recorrem a estratégias de *mimicry* para subverterem o poder autoritário que as colocaria, à partida, numa posição inferior. Desta forma, ao invés de as situarmos e interpretarmos à luz de uma simples dinâmica de Eu/Outro ou colonizador/colonizado, o que implicaria atribuir uma posição de poder intrínseca ao Eu colonizador e uma posição de inferioridade ao Outro colonizado, comprovaremos que as relações estabelecidas entre estas personagens e as demais são na verdade ambivalentes, e ambas as partes se repelem e se complementam simultaneamente. Tal permitirá que estas personagens, aparentemente em posição de inferioridade, surjam como elementos perturbadores da ordem vigente e sejam capazes de subverter relações de poder através da paródia e do ridículo.

Partindo de uma explicação e problematização do conceito de *mimicry* e a devida contextualização do mesmo tendo em conta os Estudos Pós-coloniais, iremos seguidamente focar as obras em estudo, iniciando esta análise literária por *Foe*, seguida de *Youth*. O nosso principal objetivo é demonstrar como Friday e John, em posição de agentes colonizados, desafiam o agente colonizador ocidental, representado em ambas as obras por um ou mais indivíduos britânicos e pela Inglaterra, espaço propício à subversão efetuada pelos agentes colonizados. Considerando que ambos resistem ao discurso de poder que emana do agente

colonizador, iremos, através do conceito de *mimicry*, perceber de que forma é exercida uma discreta subversão e, no processo, como a impotência e a superficialidade do agente colonizador ficam expostas.

Com este artigo pretende-se contribuir para a expansão do debate em torno dos Estudos Pós-coloniais aplicados à análise literária, em que destacamos a natureza atual do tema e, como Robert Young enfatiza, a importância de produzir e disseminar conhecimento que contribua para uma transformação social e ideológica em prol da igualdade e da contestação de formas de domínio (*An Historical Introduction* 11). Assim, é de extrema importância alargar a investigação destas obras, e outras similares, para incluir um foco nas formas de resistência dos agentes colonizados, ao invés de reduzir a análise à dicotomia Eu/Outro, em que o agente colonizador permanece numa posição de superioridade e não contestação e apenas o silêncio do agente colonizado (literal ou metafórico) é focado, bem como a aparente incapacidade de este resistir e se revoltar.

A leitura pós-colonial das obras escolhidas oferece então um rico e produtivo entendimento sobre as relações coloniais estabelecidas tanto no passado como no presente, ainda que manifestadas de forma distinta. Assim, optamos por este ponto de vista em detrimento de perspectivas mais tradicionais que são desnecessariamente limitativas.<sup>2</sup> Para melhor introduzir a nossa análise e sustentar esta abordagem em que a baseamos, resta referir ainda que, apesar de o objetivo do presente artigo não passar por colocar um foco na natureza destas obras como sendo reescritas do paradigmático *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) de Daniel Defoe (constituindo assim o que chamamos de Robinsonadas),<sup>3</sup> este aspeto não pode deixar de ser mencionado. *Foe* e *Youth* apresentam-nos o ponto de vista de personagens não-ocidentais que resistem à influência colonizadora de uma Inglaterra hegemónica, sendo que esta se manifesta através de determinadas figuras (veremos adiante quais). Assim, as dinâmicas que encontramos em *Robinson Crusoe* estão também presentes em *Foe* (mais obviamente) e *Youth* (de forma menos óbvia).

Neste espírito, e contrariando perspectivas que parecem perdurar no seio da academia e que reduzem a essência de *Robinson Crusoe* - e algumas das suas reinterpretações - a uma expressão do mito ou fantasia colonial (McInelly 2), procuramos alargar a discussão em torno destas dinâmicas e caminhar numa direção que permite não apenas focar a superioridade do agente colonizador mas também, e principalmente, o potencial do sujeito colonizado como elemento disruptivo e subversivo, pois tal como o próprio J. M. Coetzee anuncia no seu ensaio “Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*”: “No one wants to read about docile sons” (23).

## 1. *Mimicry* segundo Homi K. Bhabha e os Estudos Pós-coloniais

No ensaio “Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse”, Bhabha expressa a sua perspectiva relativamente ao conceito de *mimicry*, argumentando que este se apresenta como o desejo que o agente autoritário do discurso colonial nutre por um Outro que lhe seja familiar e semelhante, mas não em demasia (86). Desta forma, é criada uma relação de ambivalência entre este agente, que designaremos de agente colonizador doravante para facilitar a compreensão da presente análise, e o Outro, a que nos iremos referir como agente colonizado.

Necessitamos também de explicar, desde já, a escolha destas designações e efetuar um breve esclarecimento sobre a nossa aceção de *mimicry*. As personagens que iremos focar em cada uma das obras em estudo - Friday em *Foe* e John em *Youth* - completam um percurso que as retira de um local que foi sujeito a um processo de colonização europeu e as coloca naquela que foi a metrópole de um império.<sup>4</sup> É por esta razão que consideramos estas personagens como sendo agentes colonizados e analisamos a sua capacidade de subversão em relação ao agente colonizador, *i.e.* a Inglaterra. Apesar de as obras em análise não terem sido redigidas neste contexto imperial, as relações de poder permanecem e, por essa razão, o processo de colonização, ao invés de se extinguir, apenas sofre mudanças e se adapta ao longo da história. Também a viagem - interior e exterior - das próprias personagens implica uma deslocação, um crescimento e uma transformação, pelo que *mimicry* não é somente uma representação estática das tensões coloniais - “one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge” (Bhabha 85)-; é sim um complexo processo que acompanha a evolução identitária e cultural das personagens, que se vão progressivamente tornando mais ousadas e subversivas nos seus atos.

Regressando agora à teoria expressa por Bhabha, o agente colonizador repudiará então o colonizado pela sua diferença e por considerar que continua a exercer a sua superioridade em relação a este. No entanto, é também, inevitavelmente, criada uma relação de proximidade quando o agente colonizado é sujeito a uma formação por parte do colonizador - “reform of manners” (*Ibidem* 87)-, visando este último conferir-lhe um papel ativo na sua estrutura social. É esta relação ambivalente que dá permissão ao agente colonizado para resistir e subverter a autoridade do colonizador, pois não existe uma oposição direta entre ambos e sim uma relação de repúdio e fascínio mútuos:

Adapted into colonial discourse theory by Homi Bhabha, [ambivalence] describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and colonized. The relationship is ambivalent because the colonized subject is never simply and completely opposed to the colonizer. (Ashcroft et al. 10)

Muitas vezes de forma inconsciente, o agente colonizado, localizado entre duas culturas distintas, serve-se do processo de *mimicry* para diminuir a autoridade do agente colonizador, debilitando o sistema de poder do mesmo e expondo a sua fraqueza e superficialidade. Mimetizando uma cultura que não a sua, este agente colonizado deixa de ser um Outro na sua totalidade, estando agora num *in-between* ou nível intermédio e devidamente capacitado para questionar ativamente o agente colonizador, como Sumit Chakrabarti esclarece:

He is now 'other' but 'not quite'. This lateral movement places him in the ambivalent position of the hybrid subject who is neither colonizer nor colonized, but something in between. This in-betweenness of the emergent colonial subject who is 'white, but not quite' portends the beginning of a counter-gaze that effectively displaces the social control of the power centre. (13)

O papel ativo do agente colonizado incita um sentimento, também ele ambivalente, de ansiedade e reconforto no agente colonizador. Este último sente o conforto de criar um Outro mais familiar e reconhecível e, portanto, dominado aparentemente de forma mais fácil. No entanto, também uma ansiedade peculiar advém da ameaça que o processo de *mimicry* representa para o agente colonizador, uma vez que o colonizado, ao ser assemelhado a este, passa a possuir a capacidade de interagir com ambas as culturas. Existe agora uma possibilidade de subversão que convive em simultâneo com o sistema de autoridade colonial, o que permite ao agente colonizado atuar de forma reservada e eficaz.

Desta interação surge a oportunidade de questionar a cultura dominante, pois o agente colonizado não se encontra numa posição de completa submissão. É através da ridicularização e da paródia, características intrínsecas do processo de *mimicry*, que o agente colonizado consegue subverter a autoridade do agente colonizador. De acordo com Enrique Galvan-Alvarez et al., o processo de descolonização envolve sempre, de alguma forma, o ato de espelhar os movimentos do colonizador e dominar a sua língua (164). A apropriação da língua, evidenciada de forma bastante óbvia em obras como *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) de Sam Selvon, constitui de facto um ato subversivo por introduzir um discurso marginal na capital britânica. No entanto, mais do que espelhar

os movimentos do colonizador e ficar igual a este - sendo a imagem refletida num espelho exatamente igual ao que se posiciona à sua frente -, o agente colonizado mimetiza apenas determinadas características do colonizador e a sua presença é somente parcial. Assim, a sua ação, que conjuga características de agente colonizador e colonizado, deturpa discursos de poder ocidentais, ridicularizando-os, e a discriminação por si sofrida é transformada na afirmação da sua identidade cultural híbrida e potencialmente subversiva:

. . . as discrimination turns into the assertion of the hybrid, the insignia of authority becomes a mask, a mockery. After our experience of the native interrogation, it is difficult to agree . . . that the psychic choice is to “turn white or disappear.?” There is the more ambivalent, third choice: camouflage, mimicry, black skins/white masks. (Bhabha 120)

A capacidade de o agente colonizado subverter o poder e autoridade do agente colonizador constitui a motivação substancial dos Estudos Pós-coloniais<sup>5</sup> e o conceito de *mimicry* definido por Bhabha apresenta-se precisamente como uma abordagem incluída nesta perspetiva. A sua relevância para o presente artigo explica-se por um alargamento do pensamento já introduzido por Edward Said, permitindo assim um avanço do debate em torno da resistência ao processo de colonização e ao imperialismo, e pelo facto de apresentar uma estratégia deveras discreta e eficiente para colocar em causa discursos de poder ocidentais, fora do imaginário popular que reduz frequentemente as tensões coloniais a batalhas territoriais: “To the extent to which discourse is a form of defensive warfare, mimicry marks those moments of civil disobedience within the discipline of civility: signs of spectacular resistance” (*Ibidem* 121).

O crítico demonstra assim que o discurso colonial não é coeso nem infalível, pois na tentativa de aculturar o Outro, o agente colonizador não produz indivíduos que sejam uma cópia sua, mas sim sujeitos que o copiam e que são, portanto, capazes de agir por vontade própria e de acordo com as suas motivações e desejos. Tendo em consideração o poder que reside nestes sujeitos, os Estudos Pós-coloniais mudam o foco do discurso dominante ocidental para as vozes não-ocidentais - tal como Robert Young afirma - “. . . turning the world upside down . . . looking from the other side of the photograph . . .” (*A Very Short Introduction* 2) - numa miríade de formas distintas que permitem visualizar as estratégias de resistência que os agentes colonizados empregam e que iremos de seguida identificar e analisar no *corpus* literário escolhido.

## 2. Um silêncio disruptivo: Friday em *Foe*

*Foe*, romance publicado dezasseis anos antes de *Youth*, apresenta-se como uma reescrita da *magnum opus* de Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, introduzindo novas perspectivas sobre pertinentes questões apresentadas pela célebre obra que lhe serviu de base. Exibindo novas personagens, como Susan Barton e o escritor Daniel Foe, e transformando as já existentes (Robinson e Friday), *Foe* revela uma brilhante leitura pós-colonial da obra de Defoe, explorando a relação colonial entre as diversas personagens e, especialmente relevante para o presente artigo, estratégias de resistência do agente colonizado em relação ao agente colonizador. São inúmeras as dinâmicas entre as personagens passíveis de serem abordadas à luz do conceito de *mimicry* de Homi K. Bhabha, especialmente se interpretarmos espaços geográficos e psicológicos como personagens e, portanto, desempenhando um papel ativo no desenvolvimento da narrativa e das relações interpessoais existentes. No entanto, pela necessidade de delimitar a presente análise, iremos focar-nos em Friday, que se apresenta nesta obra de uma forma bastante distinta do seu homónimo em *Robinson Crusoe*.

Em primeiro lugar, atentemos na característica mais marcante de Friday em *Foe*: o seu inquietante silêncio. Poderíamos interpretar este silêncio como representativo da incapacidade de Friday se revoltar contra o agente colonizador, *i.e.* Robinson Crusoe, permanecendo por essa razão num estado de submissão e total ausência de expressão própria. No entanto, o silêncio de Friday não simboliza a sua opressão e sim a sua capacidade de resistência. A ausência de voz não corresponde a uma falta de expressão, é antes uma manifestação em si mesma. Friday fala através do seu silêncio: “Friday’s body speaks beyond itself, and silence has its own agency. Friday’s mute body is its own text, its own story” (Neimneh 52). Esta conclusão pode ser retirada das diversas interações entre Friday e Susan após estes abandonarem a ilha de Crusoe, oportunidade providenciada por um mercador que navegava em direção a Bristol (Coetzee *Foe* 38). Após a chegada a Inglaterra, Susan, viajando junto de Friday, regista os seus pensamentos, sendo claramente perceptível a sua tentativa de operar, como Bhabha evoca, uma “reform of manners” em Friday.

Susan transforma-se assim num agente colonizador que tenta consecutivamente inculcar em Friday a sua forma de vida ocidental. A placidez de Friday parece indicar que Susan terá sucesso, mas atentemos na seguinte passagem, que revela uma das várias instâncias em que Susan tenta ensinar Friday a exprimir-se em inglês através de palavras: “Was it possible for anyone, however benighted by a lifetime of dumb

servitude, to be as stupid as Friday seemed? Could it be that somewhere within him he was laughing at my efforts to bring him nearer to a state of speech?" (*Ibidem* 146).

Imediatamente identificamos o sentimento ambivalente que Bhabha exprime no seu ensaio, sendo que Susan se encontra explicitamente ansiosa e frustrada, mas mantém igualmente a ilusão de que, ao tentar ensinar Friday, consegue exercer controlo sobre este. E porque se encontra Susan tão inquieta? Precisamente porque Friday utiliza uma estratégia de resistência para contrapor o discurso de poder que emana do agente colonizador, neste caso a própria Susan. Tal é intensificado pela seguinte observação desta última: "Somewhere in the deepest recesses of those black pupils was there a spark of mockery?" (*Ibidem*). Aqui é introduzida, de forma bastante óbvia, a área que Bhabha identifica como aquela que cria uma ameaça à missão civilizadora e reformadora do agente colonizador: "It is from this area between mimicry and mockery, where the reforming, civilizing mission is threatened by the displacing gaze of its disciplinary double . . ." (Bhabha 86).

É igualmente interessante o facto de Susan referir que, mesmo que Friday estivesse a ridicularizar os seus esforços, esta não iria conseguir comprová-lo. Tal acontece porque Susan observa Friday através de uma óptica de superioridade e condescendência, infantilizando o ser humano adulto que está à sua frente. Susan revela-nos que o que a impede de ter esta percepção é um factor cultural, uma incapacidade do seu "English eye" detectar a "African spark" de Friday (Coetzee *Foe* 146). Sabemos, pois, que Susan menospreza a cultura de Friday. Mas este consegue interagir tanto com o seu próprio *background* cultural como com este novo mundo ocidental, que tenta subverter através da paródia e do seu permanente silêncio.

Noutra ocasião, Friday veste as roupas e perucas de Foe e, de seguida, delicia-se numa dança frenética que Susan é incapaz de impedir (*Ibidem* 92, 151). Esta dança apresenta-se como mais uma ridicularização do agente colonizador, aqui personificado por Foe<sup>6</sup> e Susan. Friday, desenvolvendo uma ousadia que excede a sua timidez inicial e mimetizando de forma óbvia determinadas características do colonizador, subverte a autoridade deste último e fica "beyond human reach" (*Ibidem* 92), insubordinado e invulnerável.

Para além da dança, mas ainda com as vestes de Foe colocadas, Friday alimenta-se de um prato tipicamente britânico (*pease pudding*), e Susan, observando, reflete: "Did human flesh once pass those lips? Truly, cannibals are terrible . . ." (*Ibidem* 94). Esta eterna dúvida perturba Susan, mas é também através da mesma que Friday consegue novamente subverter a autoridade do agente colonizador, pois atentemos no facto de ele estar a mimetizar um britânico (neste caso, Foe) mas com a possibilidade

de, outrora, ter sido um canibal, uma sombra do passado que impede a completa aculturação de Friday e o coloca, portanto, no nível intermédio que potencializa a inversão do discurso de poder. Metaforicamente, está aqui presente um elemento britânico (o *pudding*) a ser devorado por uma boca estrangeira e alienígena, que poderá eventualmente ter estado em contacto com carne humana, uma prática tabu no mundo ocidental e um estereótipo propagado em relação a diversos povos sujeitos ao processo de colonização, nativos da região das Caraíbas e até mesmo do Brasil.<sup>7</sup>

Repetindo uma vez mais este comportamento, Friday acaba por adicionar o material de escrita de Foe à sua imagem: “It was Friday, with Foe’s robes on his back and Foe’s wig, filthy as a bird’s nest, on his head. In his hand, poised over Foe’s papers, he held a quill with a drop of black ink glistening at its tip” (*Ibidem* 151). Esta passagem é extremamente simbólica para percebermos o processo de subversão que Friday emprega: fazendo uso da imagem característica de Foe (note-se a repetição do nome) que representa o homem branco ocidental e o agente colonizador, Friday ridiculariza o mesmo e, algo acrescentado por esta instância em particular, revela que domina a sua própria narrativa. Isto é representado pela forma como Friday se apodera do material que Foe utiliza para escrever. Não só Friday demonstra metaforicamente que é capaz de narrar a sua própria história, como utiliza uma ferramenta do agente colonizador para o fazer. Desta forma, ganha voz sem perder o seu silêncio tenaz. Sobre este processo, Elham Naeef afirma: “When Coetzee’s colonized characters mimic the colonizer, they manage to broach a counter-discourse which enables his marginal characters to write back into the colonizer’s own discourse by trying to subvert it while re-producing” (43-4). É este *counter-discourse* que retira as personagens de uma margem e, como Naeef falha em aprofundar na sua análise, as coloca no centro, sendo que, a partir desse local central abstrato, subvertem o discurso do agente colonizador.

Deste momento particular da obra de Coetzee, valerá a pena salientar também a incompreensão de Foe perante o ato subversivo de Friday. Não assumindo que este último está discretamente a inverter os papéis de colonizador e colonizado, Foe menospreza o acontecimento: “‘Let him be, Susan,’ he said in a tired voice: ‘he is accustomed to his tools, it is part of learning to write’” (Coetzee *Foe* 151). Esta atitude de superioridade demonstra a fragilidade do agente colonizador, que não reconhece o facto de a sua autoridade estar a ser colocada em causa. Foe persegue o seu objetivo de instruir, e por extensão colonizar, Friday, que deveria progressivamente adotar uma presença, sempre parcial, no universo ocidental. Tornar-se-ia assim, para Foe e Susan, no desejável Outro familiar e reconhecível mas submisso

ao agente colonizador. Considerando que a pantomima de Friday faz parte deste processo de anglicização, Foe considera o mesmo inofensivo e ignora o seu poder subversivo. Esta situação é comparável à criação de verdadeiros *mimic men* pelos colonizadores britânicos, sendo que estes últimos falhavam em reconhecer o poder e o conhecimento dos homens por si escolhidos para representar a cultura ocidental nas diversas colónias, nomeadamente na Índia:

. . . the basic idea behind the creation of these Anglicized (but not English) subjects was to make them repeat rather than represent the West and its socio-cultural formations. It was also to transform Indian knowledge into European information that would facilitate domination and rule. . . . However, what the European master failed to realize was that many of these chosen and educated colonial subjects who were meant to play the role of the mimic men were also men of letters by their own right. They realized that they were being used by the colonizer for the simple reason that they were better than many of their brethren in certain respects . . . this is why there was always the implicit possibility of the counter-gaze . . . (Chakrabarti 14)

Apesar de Foe e Susan falharem em reconhecer de forma direta o poder que reside em Friday, estes não ocultam, de forma alguma e como já foi mencionado, a frustração perante o recorrente fracasso em entender e subseqüentemente dominar o seu silencioso discurso. Isto é particularmente visível no desespero que Susan demonstra após diversas tentativas falhadas em ensinar Friday a viver na sociedade ocidental, considerando-o um fardo tremendo e um obstáculo à sua liberdade (Coetzee *Foe* 147). A representação de Friday desta forma é deveras simbólica, pois o agente colonizador não só é incapaz de controlar Friday como se sente aprisionado por este.

Finalizamos assim este capítulo, reiterando a relevância do acto de mimetizar o agente colonizador como forma de resistência. Friday consegue proteger a sua própria história e toda a sua cultura antes de Robinson, Susan e Foe surgirem na sua vida. Se o seu silêncio é provocado por uma incapacidade física ou por escolha do próprio, o leitor nunca saberá,<sup>8</sup> o que reforça o seu valor subversivo.

### 3. Uma desilusão subversiva: John em *Youth*

*Youth* apresenta-nos John, uma personagem pautada por uma constante melancolia derivada de um particular sentimento de não-pertença: África do Sul é o país onde nasceu, mas é em Inglaterra que anseia viver, na procura por inspiração que lhe proporcione uma completa realização literária. No entanto, no seio desta constante

angústia e dúvida, percebemos que reside em John um potencial subversivo que se manifesta quando abandona a África do Sul e passa a viver em Inglaterra.

Antes de percebermos como esta subversão é efetuada, é necessário entender que a principal causa da melancolia que John sente é a sua (falta de) identidade cultural, colocando-o no espaço intermédio - *in-between* - que o capacita a diminuir a superioridade do agente colonizador ocidental, aqui representado novamente pela Inglaterra e a sua capital Londres. Descendendo de antigos colonos holandeses e tendo consciência do violento processo de colonização de África do Sul (Coetzee *Youth* 17), John sente-se incapaz de uma identificação plena com estes e também com os povos nativos sul-africanos, negros na sua cor de pele.

É através da estratégia de *mimicry* que John subverte o discurso de poder e se coloca numa posição que nos transmite a superficialidade do agente colonizador. A este propósito, será interessante aludir à figura de Krotoa, uma jovem que, durante a colonização holandesa do extremo sul de África no século XVII e o posterior estabelecimento da Colónia do Cabo, permitiu a comunicação entre os povos nativos e os recém-chegados colonizadores:

In December 1651 the Dutch East India Company (VOC) appointed the merchant Jan Van Riebeeck to establish and command a permanent settlement on the southern tip of Africa. . . . Soon after Van Riebeeck arrived, a twelve-year-old Khoekhoe girl named Krotoa came to live with his family. Initially a servant, once she had learned to speak Dutch fluently she became a valued interpreter between the two cultures. Renamed Eva, she provided Van Riebeeck with valuable inside information about Khoekhoe politics and plans, contributing to the cross-cultural communication that enabled the Dutch to acquire livestock in exchange for tobacco, copper, beads, and drink. (Berger 22)

Mencionamos aqui esta figura histórica para estabelecer uma imediata relação com os *mimic men* referidos por Bhabha. Krotoa, que vê a sua identidade anulada e substituída por um nome cristão de veras simbólico,<sup>9</sup> encontra-se, metaforicamente, no mesmo espaço de John em *Youth*: um intermédio potencialmente subversivo, pois existe uma sobreposição e um diálogo entre a cultura do agente colonizador e do colonizado. Estes deixam assim de constar em esferas culturais distintas. Veremos de seguida como este *in-between*, acompanhado do processo de *mimicry*, capacita John de parodiar a cultura supostamente dominante e demonstrar as fraquezas da mesma.

É necessário desde já referir a forma como John encara a sua ida para Londres: idealizando profundamente a cidade, o jovem crê inicialmente que a sua adaptação

será fácil e que esta permitirá que se transforme num ilustre escritor. Verificamos, imediatamente, a intenção de John se aproximar da cultura ocidental, numa tentativa de se identificar plenamente com esta e conseguir obter sucesso, nomeadamente num âmbito profissional e criativo. Este processo de tentar encontrar, no agente colonizador, uma identidade cultural satisfatória é uma manifestação de *mimicry* que percorre toda a obra, pois John considera que imitando o indivíduo britânico e tornando-se um “proper Londoner” (Coetzee *Youth* 113), conseguirá o que pretende.

Após a sua chegada à capital britânica, John transmite de imediato a sua desilusão devido à dificuldade em encontrar um emprego estável e aprazível. Mais do que desagrado perante as suas funções (que também é manifestado), John sente-se frustrado por não conseguir transmitir aos seus colegas a sua veia artística: “How can he bring out words like *love, poetry* before them?” (*Ibidem* 43). Esta interrogação é uma primeira chamada de atenção para uma das diversas fraquezas do agente colonizador, que se demonstra incapaz de proporcionar a John - e, por extensão, a todos aqueles que partilham uma identidade cultural híbrida - uma satisfação pessoal e uma realização profissional. No entanto, sabemos que o espaço ocupado por este agente colonizador, *i.e.* Londres, não é de forma alguma monocultural: nesta urbe, a que temos acesso através de John, os cinemas exibem films internacionais - “films from all over the world” (*Ibidem* 48)-; a empresa de excelência que lhe oferece emprego é americana (*Ibidem* 50); e nos jornais impressos apenas as secções que se ocupam de temas muito concretos são vistas com seriedade: “American poetry, electronic music [and] abstract expressionism” (*Ibidem* 49). Estas considerações são de extrema importância quando atentamos na persistência de John em integrar-se na sociedade britânica, assemelhando-se aos indivíduos ali nascidos.

Após dois meses em Londres, John vê mudanças em si: “. . . indistinguishable in his black uniform from any other London office-worker, exchanging opinions on everyday subjects with a fullblooded Londoner, successfully negotiating all the conversational properties” (*Ibidem* 51). Destacamos aqui a utilização do termo “fullblooded” que nos remete para o facto de John crer ser semelhante a indivíduos que supostamente não possuem uma identidade cultural híbrida. Aludimos agora ao parágrafo anterior para entender que esta consideração revela uma falta de *cultural awareness* por parte de John, pois Londres não é um centro cultural que possa ser apelidado de puro e isolado de influências exteriores, apesar de ter sido outrora a capital de um grande Império.

Curiosamente, esta atitude de John auxilia-o em demonstrar precisamente o quão este agente colonizador ocidental é frágil na sua própria identidade cultural e

autoridade colonial. Mantendo esta mentalidade e aproximando-se dos supostos *fullblooded Londoners*, John consolida-se como elemento disruptivo da identidade cultural do agente colonizador que fica agora desprovido de superioridade racial e conseqüentemente enfraquecido na sua missão colonizadora. Pelo contrário, é John que, utilizando a estratégia de *mimicry*, atinge uma vantagem sobre ele e subverte o seu discurso de poder: “Thus the desire for mimicry . . . is eventually transformed into a strategic desire of the colonized, who, metonymically subverts the location from one of disadvantage to one of advantage” (Chakrabarti 15). Esta *mimicry* manifesta-se de diversas formas. Sabemos que John procura aproximar a sua pronúncia àquela dos britânicos e é referido que, se mantiver tal progressol e se se revelar cuidadoso com as suas vogais, conseguirá passar por um britânico no meio de uma multidão (Coetzee *Youth* 51). Esta referência ao seu progresso indica que John está conscientemente a alterar a sua pronúncia sul-africana e a adotar uma britânica. Analisando este processo à luz do pensamento de Bhabha e da potencialidade de subversão, vemos que, por mais que John se assemelhe a este agente colonizador ocidental, ele é incapaz de se libertar da sua cultura sul-africana (consciente e inconscientemente): tal como Friday em *Foe* guarda e transporta a sua história através do seu silêncio, John transporta a sua cultura continuando a escrever sobre África do Sul e sentindo-se confortável quando dialoga usando *Afrikaans*, a sua língua materna (*Ibidem* 62; 127). John está a resistir ativamente. Temos então aqui presente um agente colonizado que mimetiza o agente colonizador e se infiltra na sociedade ocidental transportando todo o seu *background* cultural sul-africano e a recentemente adquirida identidade britânica, usando-a em seu proveito, algo que ocorre visível também no importante passo que se transcreve em seguida: “. . . he got free lodging by masquerading as a dependable professional man, he has to keep up the pretence of having a job” (*Ibidem* 122).

Assim como Friday, John também ridiculariza o agente colonizador britânico. Uma das instâncias em que tal se verifica é quando o jovem demonstra uma vontade de abandonar por completo aquilo que considera ser o seu ar colonial: “air of colonial gaucherie” (*Ibidem* 71). Imagina-se então envergando um *outfit* igual aos dos seus vizinhos britânicos. No entanto, ao invés de sentir satisfação por esta tentativa de aproximação e conseqüente integração, John revela que estas roupas são motivo de estranheza: “not only alien to his character but Latin rather than English” (*Ibidem*). Assim sendo, o jovem não consegue optar por uma aparência que lhe facilite uma conquista amorosa na capital de Inglaterra, sendo que a sua dificuldade em manter uma parceira percorre toda a narrativa. A este propósito, Daniel Matias afirma:

The mimicking act . . . is subversive in itself. In seeking to enact what the culture believes to be the correct way of being masculine, John comes to understand the inherent flaw in the demands of hegemonic masculinity, that is, the impossibility of holding a truer connection with another. (Matias 118)

Esta é precisamente a consequência que John enfrenta durante a sua tentativa de se assemelhar ao homem britânico: uma profunda frustração. Esta aproximação não lhe dá, como ele esperava, uma identidade cultural confortável, apesar de estar na esfera cultural do colonizador. Pelo contrário, esta insatisfação de John vem demonstrar o facto do agente colonizador ser, no fundo, superficial e possuir *inherent flaws*, como invoca Daniel Matias.

Outro momento em que a paródia que deriva desta subversiva *mimicry* se manifesta de forma muito subtil é quando John reflete sobre o Museu Britânico, que frequenta para melhor conhecer a cultura britânica e se integrar na mesma: “. . . he thinks to himself: is that what we have dedicated ourselves to, I and these other lonely wanderers in the bowels of the British Museum?” (Coetzee *Youth* 55). Aludimos a esta passagem porque, como temos vindo a verificar, a escolha atenta de vocabulário - ainda que seja apenas um único termo - é de extrema relevância na transmissão de determinados significados, que muito importam para a presente análise. Destacamos então o uso de “bowels”: este termo invoca de imediato um submundo, expresso de uma forma quase hilariante e aqui associado ao Museu Britânico. Há uma ausência de luz (associada ao processo de colonização) no mais importante centro cultural do país, que se estabeleceu claramente como um símbolo do Império Britânico no século XIX e, segundo Emily Duthie, conservando uma índole imperialista até aos dias de hoje: “Despite its claims that it has re-defined its public image, the museum’s attempted transition to a post-imperial context has been confused and deeply uneasy. It remains an imperial institution in a post-imperial world” (23).<sup>10</sup>

Resta-nos finalizar este capítulo referindo aquele que consideramos ser o exemplo que melhor ilustra a subversão efetuada por John, ocorrendo este perto do fim da obra e simbolizando assim o culminar de uma viagem intrapessoal muito atribulada mas que permite subverter o discurso de poder ocidental: “He is better, much better, as a batsman and as a bowler too, than his fellow players. How, he asks himself, did these young Englishmen spend their school days? Must he, a colonial, teach them to play their own game?” (Coetzee *Youth* 159). É aqui revelado que John, através da estratégia de *mimicry* que emprega, supera os jogadores britânicos num jogo que é um símbolo nacional britânico.<sup>11</sup> É um acontecimento que - invocando Homi

Bhabha - parodia o poder do agente colonizador como modelo e destrói a sua monumentalidade histórica (87-8). John está aqui a comprovar que não só é capaz de mimetizar o agente colonizador britânico como mudar o foco do discurso, para que o poder resida agora em si próprio nesta dinâmica proporcionada pela partida de críquete. Existe então uma subversão do poder do agente colonizador e o desejo que este nutre por um sujeito colonial semelhante (denote-se o uso de “colonial” na passagem supracitada de *Youth*) transforma-se assim numa verdadeira ameaça: John é visto como inapropriado - “‘inappropriate’ colonial subject” - e, portanto, este desejo (re)produz agora uma versão ainda que parcial do colonizador - “partial vision of the colonizer’s presence; a gaze of otherness” (*Ibidem* 88-9).

Nunca conseguindo integrar-se plenamente mas aproximando-se o suficiente da cultura britânica para que esteja capacitado de a questionar ativamente, permanece na mente de John a eterna questão que deriva da sua *in-betweenness* cultural: “How long will he have to live in England before it is allowed that he has become the real thing, become English?” (*Ibidem* 103).

#### 4. Notas conclusivas

O estudo de obras como *Youth* e *Foe* partindo de uma abordagem pós-colonial permite, como verificado através da investigação aqui desenvolvida, colocar o foco em personagens cujo *background* cultural tenha sido marcado por um processo de colonização e inferiorização. Ao invés de reduzirmos estas personagens à sua posição de agentes colonizados, tencionámos demonstrar como são capazes de resistir ao discurso de poder do agente colonizador e subverter o mesmo. O conceito e processo de *mimicry* apresentado por Bhabha, servindo como base teórico-metodológica da nossa abordagem, revelou-se extremamente útil para perceber esta estratégia de subversão em particular e a abrangência da mesma no abalo dos sistemas de poder de nações historicamente colonizadoras. Permitiu também demonstrar, através do conceito de ambivalência aplicado a esta abordagem pós-colonial, que Bhabha contribui para um avanço na forma de entender as complexas dinâmicas coloniais e a interligação entre os agentes colonizador e colonizado, pelo que nem o agente colonizador detém um poder inquestionável, égide da sua missão civilizadora, nem o agente colonizado se revela incapaz de o contestar, demonstrando uma (talvez) surpreendente capacidade de resistência.

Incorporado nos Estudos Literários e na análise de obras como as que elegemos, a proposta de Bhabha permite identificar instâncias onde a estratégia de *mimicry* é

empregue pelo agente colonizado e como a mesma traz para a luz o seu poder aparentemente oculto e reservado, mas, na verdade, extremamente desestabilizador.

No entanto, é necessário referir também que, no decorrer da elaboração deste artigo, evidenciou-se uma certa impossibilidade de escapar do binarismo tradicional. Invocamos novamente Edward Said e o pressuposto de que não é possível ignorar divisões no seio da análise pós-colonial (327). Tal é visível na nossa escolha terminológica, que não descurou a utilização dos termos agente colonizador e agente colonizado, demonstrando que, apesar da ambivalência e subversão existentes, esta dinâmica binária permanece bastante enraizada não apenas na nossa linguagem como também no próprio processo de pensamento e memória cultural coletiva. Não obstante, procurámos explorar as obras com o cuidado requerido de uma análise desta natureza, tendo presente que as personagens que decidimos focar - Friday e John - se encontram fora do espaço cultural que os enuncia como agentes colonizados na sua totalidade, para se moverem num *Third Space* que arruina a originalidade, pureza e poder absoluto do espaço do agente colonizador e permite uma sobreposição de ambos. No fundo, um espaço híbrido e não dicotómico, tanto num plano mais abstrato como também histórico.<sup>12</sup>

Resta-nos referir que, naturalmente, não foram aqui abordados todos os aspetos passíveis de análise contidos nestas obras, atestando assim a sua rica complexidade. No entanto, através daqueles a que escolhemos dar atenção no presente artigo, procurámos cumprir o objetivo a que nos propusemos, demonstrando que tanto *Foe* como *Youth* nos apresentam personagens que viajam até ao espaço privilegiado do agente colonizador, mimando-o e aí subvertendo o seu poder. Reclamando a sua capacidade de, a par com Robinson Crusoe, serem eles próprios uma ilha, Friday e John transportam na sua existência toda uma identidade cultural que os estabelece como verdadeiros elementos de disrupção e resistência.

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<sup>1</sup> Ver *Orientalism* (327).

<sup>2</sup> Aquelas que, ocupando-se de analisar as relações coloniais, nomeadamente em domínio literário, excluem aspetos que o pós-colonialismo enfatiza para alargar o espectro da crítica a povos e nações sujeitos ao processo de colonização. Sobre esta questão, veja-se o artigo "Before the Postcolonial" de Ronnie Scharfman.

<sup>3</sup> Termo cunhado pelo escritor alemão Johann Gottfried Schnabel no prefácio da sua obra *Die Insel Felsenburg* (1731). Este veio a designar, como Andrew O'Malley refere, um subgénero literário de narrativas que tematicamente se demarcam pelas suas demandas recheadas de aventura e exploração (48). No entanto, para uma explicação mais detalhada que estabelece uma relação com a origem do termo, citamos presentemente Claudia Nitschke: "Johann Gottfried Schnabel's novel *Insel Felsenburg* (...) offers a prime example of this classification, as the forpartite novel combines shipwreck, insular isolation, and the conceptualisation of a utopian community far away from . . . Europe . . ." (s/pág.).

<sup>4</sup> Atente-se no carácter expansionista do Império Britânico que, durante a Era Vitoriana (mais concretamente entre 1870 e 1914) conheceu a sua maior extensão e foi aclamado como ". . . o Império no

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qual o sol nunca se punha [e que] ocupava um quinto do mundo e integrava mais de 300 milhões de pessoas. . .” (Ramos 87).

<sup>5</sup> No presente artigo, faremos uso do termo tal como este é explicitado por Elleke Boehmer na sua obra *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*. A autora afirma: “. . . postcoloniality can be defined as that condition in which colonized peoples seek to take their place, forcibly or otherwise, as historical agents in an increasingly globalized world” (3). No âmbito dos Estudos Literários, que nos interessa particularmente, a literatura pós-colonial apresenta-se como aquela que escrutina de forma crítica e subversiva a relação colonial e confere a possibilidade de resistência a perspectivas colonialistas (*Ibidem*).

<sup>6</sup> Uma vez que Foe representa o escritor Daniel Defoe, que efetivamente escreveu *Robinson Crusoe*, a subversão de Friday consegue esbater aqui as fronteiras do literário e do histórico. Se estabelecermos uma analogia entre a obra de Coetzee e a realidade histórica que envolve a produção e publicação de *Robinson Crusoe*, podemos interpretar a pantomima de Friday como uma ridicularização do próprio Daniel Defoe, comumente identificado como o fundador do romance inglês. Foe adquire assim uma extraordinária abrangência, com um *counter-gaze* que é transportado para a realidade sociocultural de Coetzee, cujo ato de reescrever a obra-prima de Defoe pode também ser considerado um ato de *mimicry* e, portanto, subversivo: “Regarding Foe, critics regarded the very act of rewriting a former novel, which was the representative of English colonization, as an act of mimicry” (Naeef 42).

<sup>7</sup> No seguimento de uma conversa entre Susan e Cruso sobre o suposto canibalismo de Friday, este último afirma: “Brazil is hundreds of miles distant, and full of cannibals. . .” (Coetzee *Foe* 13). Cruso, como agente colonizador na sua ilha, faz aqui referência a este estereótipo que mencionamos. É interessante ainda verificar que a própria Susan, refutando esta informação, nos alerta para o facto de a perspectiva de Cruso ser uma consequência da sua mentalidade: “Growing old on his island kingdom with no one to say him nay had so narrowed his horizon . . . that he had come to be persuaded he knew all there was to know about the world” (*Ibidem*). Susan crê que este tipo de pensamento se deve ao modo de vida de Cruso e importa destacar o uso do termo “kingdom” nesta passagem, pois é precisamente esta conceção da ilha como um reino que consolida a mentalidade de Cruso em torno de uma superioridade que este atribui a si mesmo. Assim, sem ninguém para o contestar (“no one to say him nay”, que antecipa aliás o papel de Susan como agente colonizador de Friday, pois ela escolhe desde já ignorá-lo como elemento munido de poder subversivo), Cruso estabelece-se como agente colonizador e utiliza uma linguagem condescendente, mas também autoritária para instruir Susan sem admitir uma contestação da sua parte.

<sup>8</sup> Note-se que Susan permanece incerta sobre a razão que impede Friday de falar, pois esta nunca observa o interior da sua boca: “When your master asked me to look, I would not. An aversion came over me that we feel for all the mutilated” (Coetzee *Foe* 85).

<sup>9</sup> Não se poderá ignorar o facto de o nome Eva simbolizar um início, o que denota uma colonização não só da cultura e ascendência desta jovem, como da sua identidade individual.

<sup>10</sup> Tal acontece, em parte, pela insistência do Museu em manter nas suas coleções artefactos que colecionou durante as expedições que decorreram do processo de colonização britânico: “Increasingly demands for the repatriation of key objects in the museum’s collection have appeared in the public arena. Countries including Greece, Egypt and Nigeria maintain that antiquities belong to the particular nations in which they were found and demand the return of ancient artifacts to national jurisdiction. The British Museum has rejected most demands for repatriation” (Duthie 12-3).

<sup>11</sup> Dominic Malcolm constrói uma interessante análise sobre a associação entre o críquete e o conceito de *Englishness* e identidade nacional, bem com o papel da literatura em consolidar esta relação. Partindo da premissa de que o conceito de nacionalidade é subjectivo e uma forma de definir um Eu e um Outro (31), o autor elabora: “The ideological connection between cricket and Englishness emerged concurrently with . . . late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century developments. In the same way that sportization and parliamentarization were concomitant processes, so the identification of English national character and cricket as the national game corresponded. Like English national character, cricket’s social significance was championed by a literary elite” (3-4). Já Richard Holt, apesar de não se debruçar sobre a ideologia subjacente a este desporto da mesma forma que Malcolm, reflete sobre o críquete atentando no facto de este se disseminar por diversas classes sociais e assim se tornar um desporto nacional: “Cricket . . . was unlike other sports not only in the way it acquired a moral vocabulary and called up images of a vanishing pastoral England but because it was no longer confined to certain social groups or regions. It was the English national sport. Cricket spread from the eighteenth-century gentry and their country house teams of servants to the growing Victorian middle classes and industrial workers of the cities, covering most of the country” (48).

<sup>12</sup> Veja-se o capítulo “The commitment to theory” em *The Location of Culture* de Bhabha.

# Breaking the Borders of Fantasy: Travelling through the Stillness in N. K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* Trilogy

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## Abstract

As the genre of fantasy literature continues to grow, new authors strive to innovate and stray from the traditional principles that ruled it for many decades when epic fantasy was more prominent. Though epic features still remain a great part of the genre, the characteristics that rule fantasy worlds, stories, and characters have changed over time, bringing new aspects into the fold and introducing new voices. As academics attempt to categorize a genre as diverse as fantasy to better understand it and define it, authors continue to expand and mingle fantasy elements with components from other genres, especially science-fiction. The aim of this article is to identify how a taxonomy of fantasy can be used to understand the relation between the fantastic and the narrative. By analyzing N. K. Jemisin's novels in the *Broken Earth* trilogy through Farah Mendlesohn's categorization of fantasy proposed in *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008), the goal is to discover the aspects in which Jemisin brings innovation into the fantasy genre by applying elements from various categories.

**Keywords:** N. K. Jemisin; Fantasy; Farah Mendlesohn; Taxonomy of fantasy

## Resumo

À medida que o género da fantasia cresce, novos autores esforçam-se por trazer inovação ao género e desviar-se dos princípios tradicionais que durante décadas o governaram, numa época em que a fantasia épica se mostrava mais proeminente. Embora a componente épica permaneça uma grande parte do género, as características que regem os mundos, histórias e personagens mudaram com o tempo, trazendo novos aspetos para o meio literário e introduzindo novas vozes. À medida que os académicos tentam categorizar um género tão diverso como fantasia para o melhor poderem entender e definir, os autores continuam a expandir e misturar elementos de fantasia com elementos de outros géneros, sobretudo de ficção-científica. O objetivo deste artigo é identificar como uma taxonomia de fantasia pode ser utilizada para entender a relação entre o fantástico e a narrativa. Ao analisar as obras da trilogia *Broken Earth* de N. K. Jemisin à

luz da categorização de fantasia de Farah Mendlesohn proposta em *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008), pretende-se descobrir os aspetos em que N. K. Jemisin traz inovação para o género da fantasia ao utilizar elementos de diversas categorias.

**Palavras-chave:** N. K. Jemisin; Fantasia; Farah Mendlesohn; Taxonomia de fantasia

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

When *The Lord of the Rings* was published in 1954-55, J. R. R. Tolkien became one of the most important authors in the fantasy genre and his work set the parameters for what is known today as epic fantasy. Tolkien's work became a "mental template . . . until someone else achieves equal recognition with an alternative conception" (Attebery 14). However, over the decades, as the genre continued to expand and fantasy encompassed an ever-growing spectrum, it became too diverse a group to easily define and classify its characteristics.

The expansion of the fantasy genre has increased the popularity of novels that mingled elements of fantasy, science-fiction and horror. Not only does this bring innovation to fantasy, but it also gives rise to the formation of new types of literature, such as science fantasy or the new weird. Gary K. Wolfe groups fantasy authors according to the contribution they bring to the genre. In one group can be found the traditionalists who maintain the principles of epic fantasy. In the other, less relevant here, are the authors who only resort to elements of fantasy to create their stories. In a third group are the authors who subvert the "rules" of fantasy, expanding the genre. About this last group, Wolfe states the following:

The writers who contribute to the evaporation of genre, who destabilize it by undermining our expectations and appropriating materials at will, with fiction shaped by individual vision rather than traditions or formulas, are the same writers who continually revitalize genre: A healthy genre, a healthy literature, is one at risk, one whose boundaries grow uncertain and whose foundations get wobbly. (51)

Academics such as Wolfe, Brian Attebery or Farah Mendlesohn have contributed to an understanding of fantasy that involves finding the borders of the genre, however blurry, and analyzing how it incorporates elements of other genres. Mendlesohn's proposal is somewhat more restrictive, for it tries to find borders for different types of fantasy within fantasy itself. This helps organize a genre that would otherwise be too large to be understood as one.

An understanding of Mendlesohn's taxonomy of fantasy, developed in *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008), is required to see whether the categorization can be subverted by authors who attempt to expand the borders of the fantasy genre. For this purpose, the analysis will take into consideration N. K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* trilogy (2015-2017), which includes elements that straddle at least three of the four major categories in the taxonomy.

The analysis will fall on aspects of the narrative such as elements external to the main text (map and appendices), the structure of the plot and the shifting role of the main characters. The purpose of this article is, therefore, to assess how the *Broken Earth* novels, analyzed through Mendlesohn's taxonomy, provide an insight on the relation between the fantastic and the narrative, giving the readers a glimpse of some of the main principles of each of Mendlesohn's categories.

## I - Text, World, and Taxonomy

N. K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* trilogy, consisting of *The Fifth Season* (2015), *The Obelisk Gate* (2016) and *The Stone Sky* (2017), has become one of the most influential fantasy series of the decade. N. K. Jemisin had already been acclaimed by several authors and critics after the publication of *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms* (2010). Nnedi Okorafor mentions Jemisin's intention of creating "fantasy worlds which distance themselves from the default whiteness of the Tolkien tradition" (Okorafor 183). Jemisin wanted to break the barrier and give importance to "different voices, spoken by native tongues" (Jemisin, *How Long 'til Black Future Month?* viii). In this respect, she clearly stands out from the traditional type of fantasy based off Tolkien's writings. Both authors wrote for different purposes. Tolkien wanted to create a mythology for the English people that he thought lost. Jemisin writes to give readers characters they can identify with and that until then were rarely seen in fantasy and science-fiction. Jemisin's novels are categorized as part of the Afrofuturism movement, a term first used by Mark Dery to classify "[s]peculative fiction that treats African-American themes and addresses African-American concerns in the context of twentieth-century technoculture" (180). Such novels deal with topics of slavery, race and gender, which Jemisin adopts as the core of her works.

The *Broken Earth* trilogy describes a world consisting of a single continent called the Stillness, a place constantly devastated by natural catastrophes. These disasters are caused by the orogenes, humans with the ability to control the movements of the earth as well as temperature around a certain radius. Orogenes are hated by the stills (humans without orogeny) who often persecute and kill them. Some orogenes are found at an

early age and taken to the Fulcrum, an institution that helps them control their abilities. Those trained by the Fulcrum do not usually become victims, but they are regarded with great contempt anyway. The hate felt towards orogenes can be attributed to the fear that their abilities cause among the population. When one loses control, he or she can unleash amounts of power that will cause devastation throughout the Stillness, sometimes causing the Fifth Seasons. These periods of time in which the land experiences unusual activity can occur at any time and bring different phenomena and consequences for the inhabitants of the continent.<sup>2</sup>

The *Broken Earth* trilogy presents a narrative very similar to fantasies with epic contours. Even though it doesn't portray a struggle between good and evil, which is common in epic fantasy, Jemisin's novels bring attention to a quest that promises to change the world once fulfilled. Despite being considered a story that displays innovation within the fantasy genre, the trilogy can actually be regarded as a portal-quest fantasy according to Mendlesohn's categorization of the genre. On the other hand, it presents characteristics of the immersive fantasy, subverting the traditional lines of the genre and, therefore, Mendlesohn's taxonomy itself.

Mendlesohn's *Rhetorics of Fantasy* proposes a division of the genre into four major groups: portal-quest, immersive, intrusion and liminal. A set of characteristics is attributed to each group concerning the story and the way it is narrated. One of the key principles of the taxonomy is the categorization according to "the means by which the fantastic enters the narrated world" already described by Mendlesohn in "Toward A Taxonomy of Fantasy" (171). Mendlesohn also refers the role of the fantastic in each category: "In the intrusive fantasy the fantastic enters the fictional world; in the estranged fantasy<sup>3</sup> the magic hovers in the corner of our eye; portal fantasies invite us through into the fantastic; while the immersive fantasy allows us no escape" (171). Aside from an imaginary world, the fantastic in the *Broken Earth* trilogy is the existence of orogenic abilities, skills akin to magic, and which come naturally to certain people, the orogenes. In this respect the story already deviates from the principles of the taxonomy, for orogeny can be considered both intrusive and immersive.

Mendlesohn argues that Dark Lords in fantasy can be considered intrusions, for they are often outsiders. Father Earth in Jemisin's novels represents, in a sense, an intruder, for he "disrupts normality and has to be negotiated with or defeated" (Mendlesohn, *Rhetorics* 115). Orogeny comes from Father Earth and can be, therefore, associated directly with his intrusion. However, his nature as an intruder only comes after humanity started damaging the world. Father Earth cursed humanity with orogeny, as Schaffa explains to Damaya: "You're a gift of the earth—but Father Earth hates us,

never forget, and his gifts are neither free nor safe” (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 38). The fact that orogeny is granted by a god only makes it more inevitable, and therefore inescapable, corresponding then to the immersive and intrusive types.<sup>4</sup>

One of the first steps in seeing how Jemisin subverts the taxonomy is by analyzing the narrative techniques employed in the novels. One important aspect to the categorization is the way information is imparted to the reader. The absence of a crossing from the Primary World to the Secondary World<sup>5</sup> in the *Broken Earth* frees the protagonist/narrator from giving explanations about the fantasy world since they are already part of it. So, the reader travels with the protagonists, seeing and hearing what they see and hear, and trying to decipher the meaning of everything. This is typically the type of narration found in immersive fantasies.

One technique common in portal-quests, but sometimes employed in immersive fantasies, that can be found in Jemisin’s works, is the “download” (Mendlesohn, *Rhetorics* 13). This consists of a torrent of information about the world for the reader to become familiar with the story and the setting. Sometimes, it takes the form of a story from the past or an explanation of how something works. *The Fifth Season* (2015) starts with a “download” that explains the world of the Stillness. The extract in the beginning of the novel is written as something that should be dealt with so the real story can begin: “Let’s start with the end of the world, why don’t we? Get it over with and move on to more interesting things” (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 1). The prologue serves as context for the whole narrative, introducing the protagonist, Essun, and describing the Stillness.

The three novels in the series are steeped with explanatory excerpts external to the narrative. These may refer to the Fifth Seasons, periods of time in which catastrophe changes the land, or parts of stonelore, a philosophy that teaches people how to survive in the Stillness. The appendices at the end of each novel also work as sources of information for the reader. Therefore, in terms of narrative structure, the trilogy is more closely associated with the portal-quest fantasy than with the immersive, since the reader acquires a certain amount of relevant information before embarking on the story. However, some of this information does not elucidate the reader entirely in matters related to the plot, and much of what is seen throughout the story must be deciphered. And so, the narrative is ambiguous concerning this aspect of Mendlesohn’s taxonomy.

Another important aspect that would place the *Broken Earth* in the category of portal-quest is the map. According to Mendlesohn, “the very presence of maps at the front of many fantasies implies that the destination and its meaning are known”

(*Rhetorics* 4). The map in portal-quest fantasy implies a journey. The map of the Stillness is designed, not for a known destination, but for a journey to happen. There is no path delineated for the characters, but the map shows only some communities, like Tirimo, Allia or Yumenes, all of which Essun visits. So, this particular map symbolizes several stages of Essun's quest.

In *Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation* (2012), Mark J. P. Wolf proposes that the construction of imaginary worlds is centered on a set of characteristics that give consistency and plausibility to the world. These characteristics are "secondary-world infrastructures", and they can be applied to a world in different amounts according to the authors' wishes.<sup>6</sup> Maps, timelines, genealogies, nature, culture, languages, mythologies, and philosophies help make the world consistent. According to Wolf, the first three "arise from the three basic elements needed for a world to exist" (154). These structures can either appear in the text as part of the story or as appendices, usually at the end of the novel. N. K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* features a map (the Stillness), a timeline (an appendix of former Fifth Seasons and their approximate dates) and the genealogy of Essun's family is implied in the text. In addition to these, Jemisin presents a wasteland (nature) where multiple communities dwell (culture). The author does not give emphasis to language in the novels, but there are hints of a mythology represented by the existence of a god, Father Earth, whose child, the Moon, has disappeared. In the philosophy aspect are included the mindsets of each community and their views on the world, in particular the stonelore.

So, Jemisin gives the reader a fully developed world whose characteristics, both in terms of narrative and of world-building, flow between Mendlesohn's categories of portal-quest fantasy and immersive fantasy. This is not uncommon, for these groups complement each other and the immersive fantasy is typical of novels in which the protagonists are already part of the imaginary world.

## II - Quests and Characters

Portal-quest fantasies normally start with a familiar setting, a place of safety, that will be disrupted, pushing the protagonist into a quest. *The Fifth Season* begins with three different quests with very different outlines. The first is Damaya's, a child from the East Coast in the Nomidlat, from a town named Palela. Her display of orogenic abilities<sup>7</sup> represents the disruption that takes Damaya from her familiar surroundings to an unfamiliar place. When learning of her trip to Yumenes, Damaya thinks: "Yumenes is only a legend to her, and the rest of the places Schaffa has mentioned are just words in a creche textbook" (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 35). So, the reader witnesses a transition

common in portal-quest fantasy, the crossing of a threshold to a zone of magnified danger. Damaya's quest is the honing of her orogeny, to be done in the Fulcrum.

The guiding figure usually found in portal-quest fantasies is a mysterious character who relays the quest to the protagonist. Since Damaya's abilities have already been discovered, she has no choice but to leave with Schaffa and no opportunity to question the information he chooses to impart. Mendlesohn states that "[t]he journeyman succeeds or fails to the extent he listens to those wiser or more knowledgeable than him, whether these be spiritual, fantastical, or human guides" (*Rhetorics* 4). Damaya is intimidated by Schaffa and impelled to do as he says, and, following his instructions, she passes the first test in her training.

The second protagonist is Syenite, who is actually Damaya as a young adult woman. Syenite's quest doesn't follow the principles of the portal-quest fantasy, for she has had enough experience with her abilities to manipulate the world around her and the reader doesn't witness that acquisition of experience. However, she still needs a guide, as Feldspar declares:

'Five-ringers and above are no longer required to have a partner or Guardian when traveling outside the Fulcrum'. . . . 'At that point we are judged stable enough in our mastery of orogeny to be granted a modicum of autonomy.' Five rings. She has four. It's bullshit that this has anything to do with orogenic mastery; if a Guardian has doubts about an orogene's willingness to follow the rules, that orogene doesn't make it to the first ring, let alone the fifth. (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 63-4).

Syenite resents needing a guide. On the other hand, she is impressed that the Fulcrum gave her powerful tutor, who has ten rings.<sup>8</sup> From this moment the reader witnesses what W. A. Senior refers as the "simplest confrontations and dangers [that escalate] through more threatening and perilous encounters" (190). First, Syenite has a confrontation with the Guardian Edki in the town of Allia: "[s]he and Alabaster face Edki on a boardwalk stark with shadows and bloody sunset light, with children and old ladies playing beyond them" (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 258-9). She has the help of a stone eater, who takes Alabaster and Syenite to the community<sup>9</sup> of Meow, where she will be found, attacked, and forced to murder her own child to prevent the attackers from taking him and using him as a node maintainer.<sup>10</sup>

The plot of *The Fifth Season* starts with Essun, who had been Damaya and Syenite, years after the events in Meow. Essun is pursuing her husband Jija, who murdered their son Uche for being an orogene and kidnapped their daughter Nassun. This begins a new quest in the series. Essun leaves the community of Tirimo at a time

when communities are preparing for a new Fifth Season and, therefore, closing to outsiders. But, just like when she was Damaya and Syenite, she finds a new guide, a boy called Hoa. Though he only seeks shelter with Essun one night, “[i]n the morning you rise and move on, and the boy comes with you” (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 105). Like Schaffa, Hoa is mysterious and Essun cannot decipher him, but she learns that he is a stone eater, a creature that guides Essun through the greater quest that will divert her from the search for Nassun.

All the quests presented above share the characteristics of the journeys found in portal-quest fantasies. However, the *Broken Earth* trilogy focuses on one major quest that is delivered only in *The Obelisk Gate* (2016). One of the characteristics of portal-quest fantasies is that the quest is usually delivered at the very beginning, whether it is the search for an object, the destruction of one, or a journey to defeat evil. If it isn’t delivered at the beginning, there is at least an awareness of where the problem lies.<sup>11</sup> Only in *The Obelisk Gate* does the reader know the true goal of the story: to bring the moon back to orbit<sup>12</sup> and, hopefully, end the cyclical Fifth Seasons.<sup>13</sup> This group of quests in the first volume of the trilogy symbolizes a confusion to divert readers to the real quest, therefore subverting the paradigm of the portal-quest, in which the battle between good and evil is ever present throughout the narrative.

Nassun’s quest is similar in the sense that it doesn’t start as a mission of epic proportions to save the world, but as a journey imposed by her father. Because orogenes have to hide their abilities from those around them, Nassun’s education was extremely harsh. Essun taught both her children to control their orogeny by recurring to violence. This education represents the first stage in Nassun’s journey, influencing her decisions later, which can be analyzed in the point of view of Mendlesohn’s taxonomy. Nassun is only eight when Jija takes her from her hometown. Essun’s severe training makes Nassun turn to her father as a figure of affection, so she isn’t much frightened that Jija will kill her as well. She doesn’t feel the horror of what happened: “[b]ut she loves her father, fears him, worships him, and therefore some part of her wants to appease him” (Jemisin, *The Obelisk Gate* 77).

With Essun’s point of view in *The Fifth Season*, the reader is led to believe Nassun was kidnaped by Jija, but when, in *The Obelisk Gate*, Nassun appears for the first time, the reader learns that she left willingly. As usual with portal-quest fantasies, there is a sense of a disrupted stability. Nassun never felt that stability during her childhood, and the beginning of the novel doesn’t offer it. In fact, it seems that the situation is reversed; Nassun leaves an unstable place to find her own stability. On the other hand,

that is the ultimate goal of the portal-quest, to heal and bring restoration and, therefore, safety.

Her father's crime doesn't erase the love she feels towards him. And she knows that she is Jija's favorite. But Nassun's decision to leave with Jija was made twofold. Part of her feels only a little frightened, but she leaves out of love for Jija. Another part of her saw this as the opportunity to leave her mother behind. Nassun blames her mother for the situation she has found herself in and the text gives the reader a glimpse of what Nassun went through during her training:

That had been Mama's command, along with all the others: Don't reach, don't ice, I'm going to make the earth move and you'd better not react, didn't I tell you not to react, even listening is reacting, normal people don't listen like that, are you listening to me, rusting stop, for Earth's sake can't you do anything right, stop crying, now do it again. Endless commands. Endless displeasure. Occasionally the slap . . . of a hand, . . . the jerk of a hand on her upper arm. Mama has said occasionally that she loves Nassun, but Nassun has never seen any proof of it (Jemisin, *The Obelisk Gate* 77-8).

This gives the reader an idea of the traumatizing experience Nassun suffered and why she would turn to her father for protection. And the quick succession of commands given by Essun emphasizes the harshness of Nassun's training. This experience is a prelude of the clash that will occur between mother and daughter later in the story.

However, with Uche's murder and Jija's knowledge that Nassun is an orogene, Nassun starts doubting her father's love for her, seen occasionally during their journey through the Stillness and later when they reach the community of Found Moon.

All of Nassun's and Essun's background determine how their decisions were influenced by experience.<sup>14</sup> First, it is important to understand what type of world is found in the *Broken Earth* trilogy. According to Mendlesohn:

The immersive fantasies are overwhelmingly concerned with the entropy of the world. In each of the texts discussed in this chapter . . . , cities and civilizations fall, families follow political systems into moral degradation and decline, absent gods leave men to fend for themselves, worlds once impervious to the external world see their walls breached. Struck by the degree to which thinning<sup>15</sup> was the dominant mood of a set of novels selected relatively arbitrarily, I put the question to John Clute who responded, "Simple. Because in an immersive fantasy, what is storyable is not the discovery of the world (in which we are immersed) but its loss". (*Rhetorics* 60-1)

What Mendlesohn describes can be applied to Jemisin's works. However, Jemisin decides to manipulate this definition by having characteristics from the portal-quest and the immersive in her novels. In the Stillness, the reader finds the decline of cities and communities,<sup>16</sup> the apparent end of the world. In fact, according to Essun, this new Fifth Season might last thousands of years (Jemisin, *The Obelisk Gate* 68). Additionally, the story begins with the surety that "this is the way the world ends" (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 14). However, in the end, the story turns from one of thinning to one of restoration, representing a shift from the immersive to the portal-quest.

The same shift occurs with the two protagonists. Damaya and Syenite are more firmly trapped within the constraints of portal-quest fantasy, a child and a young adult woman with no experience in the world and who have to learn their place in it. However, Essun is sufficiently experienced in the world "to question it while staying within the shell of immersion" (Mendlesohn, *Rhetorics* 67). The fact that Essun is the same person as Damaya and Syenite becomes irrelevant in this matter because the author structured the story in such a way that the reader only becomes certain they are just one character when Damaya's plotline ends, more than halfway through *The Fifth Season*.

This questioning of the world on Essun's part makes her an antagonist, according to Mendlesohn's taxonomy. It starts with her destroying Tirimo when leaving to find Uche: "And then the valley floor splits open. The initial jolt of this is violent enough to knock everyone standing to the ground and sway every house in Tirimo. Then those houses judder and rattle as the jolt smooths into a steady, ongoing vibration" (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 57). Essun doesn't destroy the town completely, but with a new Fifth Season coming, it will be nearly impossible to rebuild, especially since the wells will dry eventually.

But in the community of Castrima Essun starts challenging the political system. It is a community unlike any other in the Stillness. Castrima itself defies the social conventions in the *Broken Earth*. When Essun arrives, she is greeted by Ykka, the leader of the comm:

'Ykka,' she says. You realize it's a name. Then she adds, 'Ykka Rogga<sup>17</sup> Castrima. Welcome. And you are?' You blurt: 'Rogga?' You use this word all the time, but hearing it like this, as a use name, emphasizes its vulgarity. Naming yourself rogga is like naming yourself pile of shit. It's a slap in the face. It's a statement—of what, you can't tell. (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 267-8)

An orogene like Ykka leading a community is something unheard of. But Castrima is a sanctuary for orogenes, for here they can coexist with the stills. Essun is welcomed but

she does not fit in. Mendlesohn refers to this as a subversion of the portal-quest: “the novel requires the protagonist to become ever more comfortable with the fantasyland she has entered” (*Rhetorics* 55). First, Essun doesn’t see herself as a rogga, which every orogene in the community does. That is why, when Essun destroys the only means for the community to survive, the strain between still and orogene becomes stronger.

On the other hand, Essun was only trying to help the comm: “Locking all those stone eaters into the crystals. You meant to save everyone, but Castrima was a machine - a very old, very delicate machine that you didn’t understand. And now you’re topside, traipsing through the ashfall” (Jemisin, *The Stone Sky* 21). And so, it is possible to see that Essun works both in the role of hero and anti-hero. Ultimately, by trying to save the world, Essun is categorized within the principles of portal-quest fantasy, in which the hero fulfils the quest and is rewarded. However, saying Essun fulfilled her quest is not entirely true, because she didn’t:

So... you give up. I ache with the look on your face, because I know what it costs you to give up Alabaster’s dream - and your own. You so wanted to make a better world for Nassun. But more than anything else, you want this last child of yours to live... and so you make a choice. To keep fighting will kill you both. The only way to win, then, is not to fight anymore. (Jemisin, *The Stone Sky* 385)

From the very beginning of the story, the reader feels compelled to think of Essun as the heroine, the one who meant to save the world. But by giving up, Essun gives her daughter the power and opportunity to be the one doing it.

At some point in the story, Nassun also acted as an antagonist. She decided not to bring the moon back into orbit, but to crash it against the Earth (Jemisin, *The Stone Sky* 344). Unlike Essun, Nassun is the embodiment of the subversion to the portal-quest fantasy. She is not interested in saving the world or in the epic quest to end the Seasons. All she wants is to save Schaffa, the only person who didn’t mistreat her. And that is the reason she wants to end it all. This is where she and her mother clash. The narrator even stops the narrative to justify Nassun’s choice:

(She is such a good child, at her core. Don’t be angry with her. She can only make choices within the limited set of her experiences, and it isn’t her fault that so many of those experiences have been terrible. Marvel, instead, at how easily she loves, how thoroughly. Love enough to change the world! She learned how to love like this from somewhere.) (Jemisin, *The Stone Sky* 344)

Nassun's decision, therefore, is influenced by the harsh experiences she faced during her childhood, her mother's training and her brother's murder. Portal-quest fantasies are deeply associated with prophecies concerning the heroes. The fact that there isn't one in the *Broken Earth* indicates that the supposed hero might not be the actual hero. By giving up the power of the Obelisk Gate to Nassun, Essun showed heroism, but the ultimate deed was Nassun's. This subverts the portal-quest by revealing the real heroine only in the climax of the story. Essun's decision of dying for Nassun was the determining factor in the accomplishment of the epic task. It was Essun's redemption, which made Nassun choose:

Because the world took and took and took from you, too, after all. She knows this. And yet, for some reason that she does not think she'll ever understand... even as you died, you were reaching for the Moon. And for her. . . . And in the cold stone silence, alone, Nassun chooses. Yes. (Jemisin, *The Stone Sky* 387)

Therefore, Nassun reverts to a heroine of the portal-quest fantasy. And like the heroes of epic fantasies, she was meant to accomplish the task because, by being Essun's daughter, she had the power to do it even without the prophetic sign saying that she would. Moreover, Essun's redemption as an apology and Nassun's acceptance of it both play into the restoration and healing of the world, a characteristic that is typical of the portal-quest fantasy.

## Conclusion

The analysis of Jemisin's work uncovers a possible tendency in fantasy literature that breaks the genre's boundaries and defies the traditional principles that had ruled fantasy for a long time. Examples of this include Brandon Sanderson *Mistborn* novels (2006-2008), Evan Winter's *Burning* series (2019), or several of China Miéville's works, such as the *Bas-Lag* series (2000-2004) or *Un Lun Dun* (2007). All of these demonstrate original ideas concerning fantasy and the deviation from more established principles like those seen in portal-quest fantasy, embodied in popular works such as the *Lord of the Rings*.

The authors who try to strive for innovation in fantasy contribute to a subversion of some of the theories that create categorizations to organize the genre to facilitate its study. That was Farah Mendlesohn's main purpose with *Rhetorics of Fantasy*, not to establish rules or definitions, "but to consider the genre in ways that open up new questions" (xv). N. K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* trilogy belongs in the group of authors who promote Gary K. Wolfe's theory of the evaporating genre, as mentioned earlier in this

article. Jemisin's novels escape the principles of more conventional fantasies, seen, for example in the shifting roles of the characters in the story, making the novels harder to classify specifically in one group and demonstrating the multiple facets that her works incorporate.

Finding a place for the *Broken Earth* trilogy within Mendlesohn's taxonomy revealed that there is a constant shift between categories, showing that the novels take a more innovative approach in the genre. On the other hand, the trilogy seems to rely much on the principles of the portal-quest fantasy, especially in terms of the narrative techniques employed by the author, such as the aspects of the narration that contribute to a better understanding of the world by the reader. Still, the stability of the portal-quest is broken with the protagonists, Essun and Nassun, who seem to walk on the frontier between the portal-quest and its own subversion. The confusion over who the real heroine is and over the quest, delivered very late in the story, makes the *Broken Earth* very unseemly of Mendlesohn's first category. Moreover, aspects such as the intrusion of orogeny in the world or the thinning typical of immersive add to the mixture that makes the novels more difficult to categorize in only one group.

In short, the way the narrative of the *Broken Earth* is constructed highlights the presence of the whole taxonomy of fantasy in the novels. The elements provided outside the text (map and appendices), and, in part, the characters indicate a portal-quest, whereas the fantastic elements (orogeny and Father Earth) represent intrusions that must be dealt with. The characteristics of immersive fantasy seem to be more present within the story, with the changing nature of the characters and the way information is delivered to the reader. It can be argued, then, that the story marks a passage through the whole taxonomy, shifting heavily between the portal-quest and immersive categories to land firmly in the first as the plot draws to a close. However, rather than having a submission to only one of the groups of Mendlesohn's taxonomy, N. K. Jemisin plays with it to create her world. But to maintain the contact with the more traditional aspects of epic fantasy, Jemisin relies on some of its most structural aspects to convey the idea of a portal-quest fantasy, albeit with a certain degree of subversion.

The aim of this article was to understand how the taxonomy of fantasy can be used to understand the relation between the fantastic and the narrative, using N. K. Jemisin's novels as the focus for analysis. It can be concluded that, while Jemisin clearly subverts some of its aspects by drawing elements from, at least, three of the four categories, the essential characteristics of each group are still very firm. But it can also be concluded that the difficulty of categorizing the *Broken Earth* within a single group demonstrates not only its flexibility but also the large scope of fantasy as a genre,

especially as authors make a more conscious attempt to stray from the principles of fantasy usually regarded as traditional.

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<sup>2</sup> A Fifth Season can involve any kind of catastrophic event. For instance, the Boiling Season consisted of an "eruption [that] launched millions of gallons of steam and particulates into the air, which triggered acidic rain and atmospheric occlusion over the southern half of the continent for three years" (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 452).

<sup>3</sup> Mendlesohn will later refer to this type as liminal fantasy.

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<sup>4</sup> The magic powers bestowed by entities such as gods or Dark Lords often work as an intrusion in many fantasy worlds, providing a shifting between immersion and intrusion. Other examples of this can be found in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* with the One Ring (a magical object forged by the intruder Sauron) and in Robert Jordan's *The Wheel of Time* series (1990-2013) with the True Power (a form of magic that comes from the Dark One, an invader in the world).

<sup>5</sup> The world of the *Broken Earth* is an imaginary world independent from ours. The terms Primary World and Secondary World were first developed by Tolkien in his essay "On Fairy Stories", delivered as a lecture in 1939. The term Primary World refers to the real world in which the author lives, and Secondary World to the invented setting in which the fantasy story takes place.

<sup>6</sup> Wolf adds that "depending on their purpose, worlds have these structures to varying degrees, and less developed worlds can lack some of them altogether" (155).

<sup>7</sup> "Ordinary people can't take care of...of children like her [and] she almost killed a boy at school" (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 32).

<sup>8</sup> Rings determine the orogene's power, ten being the highest.

<sup>9</sup> Normally called comms.

<sup>10</sup> A node maintainer works in a node station to control any movements of the earth that might damage any communities in the vicinity. A node maintainer is usually a child who is kept in merciless conditions: "The body in the node maintainer's chair is small, and naked. Thin, its limbs atrophied. Hairless. There are things—tubes and pipes and things, she has no words for them—going into the stick-arms, down the goggle-throat, across the narrow crotch" (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 139).

<sup>11</sup> This is the case with many epic fantasies like *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Fionavar Tapestry* (1984-1986) or *The Wheel of Time* (1990-2013).

<sup>12</sup> To bring the moon back, one must tap into the power of the Obelisk Gate.

<sup>13</sup> Orogeny and the Fifth Seasons are a consequence laid by Father Earth when the moon drifted from the Earth: "The job you have to do is the easier of the two, you think. Just catch the Moon. Seal the Yumenes Rifting. Reduce the current Season's predicted impact from thousands or millions of years back down to something manageable - something the human race has a chance of surviving. End the Fifth Seasons for all time" (Jemisin, *The Stone Sky* 11).

<sup>14</sup> Essun lost children and Nassun was traumatized by her mother's violence.

<sup>15</sup> The concept of thinning is related to how the land is affected and threatened by wrongness. In the novels, this can be seen with the Fifth Seasons, which transform the land into "a parody of itself" (Clute and Grant, "Thinning" 942).

<sup>16</sup> "Here are many other such cairns around the world: a thousand ruined cities, a million monuments to heroes or gods no one remembers, several dozen bridges to nowhere." (Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* 8).

<sup>17</sup> Rogga is an insulting form of addressing an orogene.

# “How Does The Never To Be Differ From What Never Was?”: The Importance of Dreams and Memory in *The Road*

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## Abstract

The haunting presence of memories and dreams from an unregenerate past society thoroughly permeate the action of Cormac McCarthy’s vision of the post-apocalypse in *The Road*. Besides the intention of contrasting the barrenness of the world that the protagonists inhabit with the lively imagery of the old world, the recollections that invade the father’s inner self provide a clash between personal and collective narratives which push him to struggle for survival and protect his son in an effort to “carry the fire” of humanity. Parallely, the symbolism of the dreams that we encounter throughout the novel hold valuable clues that can be accessed to resolve the ambiguous closure to *The Road*. In the first part of this paper, I will revisit the field of memory studies to reveal the importance that memory holds as a provider of meaning for life in the apocalypse. The second part of the article develops a theory that absolutely disregards any optimistic reading of the end of the novel, as it presents us with the possibility that what we read in the last pages of the book constitutes the wish-fulfilment produced by the boy’s dying dream. To investigate this enticing theory that was furthered by Jacob M. Powning, I will assess this hypothesis through the lenses of Psychoanalysis. McCarthy’s interest in the psychoanalytic studies, and his fascination with the dream world will help to develop a pertinent proposition that seeks to ultimately resolve the enigmatic Deus Ex-Machina that closes the novel.

**Keywords:** Cormac McCarthy; Dream; Memory; Apocalypse; Psychoanalysis

## Resumo

A presença assombrosa de sonhos e memórias de um passado que não pode ser regenerado permeia a ação da visão pós-apocalíptica apresentada por Cormac McCarthy em *The Road*. Para além da intenção de contrastar a esterilidade do mundo habitado pelos protagonistas com as

imagens vivazes do mundo antigo, as lembranças que invadem o espaço íntimo do pai causam um choque entre narrativas pessoais e coletivas que o motivam a lutar pela sobrevivência e a proteger o seu filho num esforço por "carregar o fogo" da humanidade. Paralelamente, o simbolismo dos sonhos que encontramos ao longo do romance contém pistas valiosas que podem ser analisadas para resolver a conclusão ambígua da narrativa. O presente artigo pretende, primeiramente, revelar a importância das reminiscências do pai como criadoras de propósito para a vida no apocalipse, revisitando estudos acadêmicos na área da memória. A segunda parte do artigo desenvolve uma teoria que descarta por completo qualquer leitura otimista do romance, apresentando a possibilidade de que a conclusão de *The Road* constitua a realização de um desejo produzido pelo sonho do filho moribundo. Esta fascinante teoria que foi avançada por Jacob M. Powning será avaliada através de uma análise de foro psicanalista que visa ampliar esta hipótese. O interesse que o próprio McCarthy nutre por estudos da psicanálise, bem como o seu fascínio pelos mistérios do subconsciente e o mundo dos sonhos, ajudarão a desenvolver uma proposta pertinente que procura resolver fundamentalmente o enigmático Deus Ex-Machina que encerra o romance.

**Palavras-chave:** Cormac McCarthy; Sonho; Memória; Apocalipse; Psicanálise

In an essay that explores the theme of memory in McCarthy's *The Road* and *No Country for Old Men*, scholar Marie-Reine Pugh considers that the protagonists of these novels must mediate between the pressures of both the personal and collective memory, emphasizing that the consideration of these distinct yet approachable theories is indispensable to unveil the character's purpose in the diegesis of each work:

By having characters shoulder the weight of both types of memory [personal and collective], McCarthy's novels actively question an individual's obligations to the larger communal past as well as the community's artificial pressure on individual motivations, which pushes characters to reexamine their assumptions about their self-identity and greater purpose. (51)

The tension created by both types of memory will force McCarthy's characters to face their own conceptions of the self, and subsequently to question their purpose in life. In *The Road*, the father is consistently afflicted by the weight of both types of memory, however, should we analyze these memories through the lenses of Paul Ricœur, or Pierre Nora (to whom I will return later), we might infer that even though the powerful invasions of memory in the father's inner world leave him utterly exasperated, they are essential contrivances, produced by the father's subconscious, to tackle the barrenness of the apocalyptic world, and provide meaning for a nihilistic existence.

David Lowenthal, the American historian, and geographer, defines memory as an individual process of awareness. He states that “[t]he remembered past is both individual and collective. But as a form of awareness, memory is wholly and intensely personal . . . . We recall only our own experiences at first hand, and the past we remember is innately our own” (194). Lowenthal expressly overlooks the origin of memories. Even though he recognizes that the genesis of remembered memories might be either private or shared, nonetheless, it is the self that experiences the actual remembering (194). Moreover, in the process of remembering, the individuals reshape those memories according to their personal scope of the world and its events. Consequently, Lowenthal considers the individual mind as the place where the past resides.

On the other end of the spectrum of memory studies, we find the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, the originator of the idea of collective memory. For him, memory is a social phenomenon, for he believed that “it is in society that people normally acquire their memories”, and that similarly, “[it] is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories” (38). Since Halbwachs notices that our memories, and our sense of the past are inherently influenced by external factors; he centers his thesis on the principle that the vulnerability of individuals against the power of the social narratives causes them to be unconsciously controlled by their memories.

However, in *The Road*, McCarthy projects a world that is receding to a state of pre-language, and pre-culture:

The world shrinking down about a raw core of parsible entities. The names of things slowly following those things into oblivion. Colors. The names of birds. Things to eat. Finally the names of things one believed to be true. More fragile than he would have thought. How much was gone already? The sacred idiom shorn of its referents and so of its reality. Drawing down like something trying to preserve heat. (88)

The apocalyptic earth that father and son inhabit is devoid of all its collective frameworks and social constructs, which hinders the father from experiencing memory as a social phenomenon. The father cannot “recall, recognize and localize” (Halbwachs 38) his memories in society for his only companion is a boy born in the new barren world, who looks to his father as a “being from a planet that no longer existed” (McCarthy 153).

In this sense, the father is left to be tortured alone by his personal memories, which seem to haunt him with reminiscences of a better past that cannot be restored -

he is harassed by images filled with beauty and hope, of a time when the world was teeming with life, and one could live rather than scarcely survive:

He could remember everything of her save her scent. Seated in a theatre with her beside him leaning forward listening to the music. . . . She held his hand in her lap and he could feel the tops of her stockings through the thin stuff of her summer dress. Freeze this frame. Now call down your dark and your cold and be damned. (McCarthy 18)

There are many other manifestations of torture caused by the father's personal memory, which could stem for instance, from the insistent reminder of his wife's coldness for abandoning him and their son, leaving the father alone to care of their child in the wretchedness of the wasteland:

As for me my only hope is for eternal nothingness and I hope it with all my heart.  
He didnt answer.  
You have no argument because there is none.  
Will you tell him goodbye?  
No. I will not.  
Just wait till morning. Please.  
I have to go.  
She had already stood up. (McCarthy 57)

Accordingly, the dreams that haunt the father at night, and thoroughly permeate the action of the novel, are also strong harbingers of personal memory, causing coextensive torment by the ethereal presence of an unregenerate past:

In his dream she was sick and he cared for her. The dream bore the look of sacrifice but he thought differently. He did not take care of her and she died alone somewhere in the dark and there is no other dream nor other waking world and there is no other tale to tell. (McCarthy 32)

Life in *The Road* requires a persistent state of vigilance, particularly when dwelling through it with a child under one's care. In consequence, the father constantly scorns the invasion of memory in his inner world (either if caused by dreams or daytime recollections), for it breaks the state of alertness that is necessary to protect himself and his son from the grip of death. *The Road's* narrator explicitly addresses such tendencies when referring that the father "mistrusted all of that. He

said the right dreams for a man of peril were dreams of peril and all else was the call of languor and of death” (McCarthy18).

Curiously enough, in succession of this same statement, the father’s unconscious mind seems to rebel against his own conscious thoughts. After struggling for some time to fall asleep, when he is finally able to do so, he is invaded once more by the dream-land beauty of the pre-apocalyptic world: “He dreamt of walking in a flowering wood where birds flew before them he and the child and the sky was aching blue . . .” (McCarthy 18). As one can deduce, the attempts to impose on himself the repression of personal memories are rather pointless, for the mysterious workings of the subconscious, as well as the influence of the external narratives of the old world will be constantly pushing repressed memories to the surface.

Still in the first stretch of the novel, when the father was battling the most to repress the haunting images of the past from his mind, he feels paradoxically drawn to show his son the house where he grew up. The son, however, shaped by the anxieties that troubled his father, feels terrified to explore this piece of personal history:

Are we going in?  
Why not?  
I'm scared.  
Dont you want to see where I used to live?  
No. (McCarthy 25)

Yet, the father, still drawn by the power of the collective narratives, neglects the child’s apprehensions and proceeds to narrate memories from his conventional childhood:

This is where we used to have Christmas when I was a boy. . . . On cold winter nights when the electricity was out in a storm we would sit at the fire here, me and my sisters, doing our homework. . . . We should go, Papa, he said. Yes, the man said. But he didnt. (McCarthy 26)

It becomes rather clear that even though the father is continuously suffering from the haunting images of his personal memory, and insistently pushing them away to keep his focus centered on the menacing outside world, the external narratives of the past (Christmas; standard familiar moments) keep pushing the personal memories back to his brain, without his proper recognition or control. In this case, the sole clue of consistency with the father’s former stances on the perils of memory and dreams, can only be deduced by the anxiety that the boy feels while exploring the house. The

child displays an utter disquietude by the nostalgic impulse of his father, which mirrors the father's former thoughts. Either if by mere instinct, a simple mirrored reflection of his father's ways, or a Jungian inscription of the collective unconscious in the boy's DNA; this disquietude emphasizes the abnormality of the father's impulse in the context of the novel. Additionally, the Beckettian moment in this paragraph, provided by the stasis that overwhelms the father upon his son's insistent pleas to leave the house, denotes further evidence of how much power the collective memories pose to an individual.

If we consider the effectiveness of the father's uncontrollable impulses to dive into recollection, notwithstanding his awareness of the inherent perils that such indulgence poses to life on the apocalypse, one can infer that the father's subconscious is screaming at his conscious self, as to alert him to the importance that memory holds to their survival in *The Road*. Just as Marie-Reine Pugh notices in her essay: "His reminiscing goes beyond escapism: his memories of the past can add meaning to the present" (53).

Indeed, some meaning needs to be produced out of this quest for survival, or else both father and son might suffer a similar fate to the mother. Human rationality begets for the search of meaning in life, without such continuous pursuit, death becomes appealing. Yet, how will the memories of the pre-apocalyptic life produce meaning in the wretchedness of *The Road*?

Paul Ricœur's studies on the reciprocal relationship between the acts of remembering and forgetting regard the subsequent aftermath on the perception of historical experiences, as well as on the production of historical narratives. But they also address the tensions between personal and collective memory and might provide some inceptive clarification to the question formerly proposed. He figures that the close relations we keep with each other are the solution to the struggle that both type of memories pose to the sense of identity of an individual (132). In his book, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, he states that ". . . my close relations are those who approve of my existence and whose existence I approve of in the reciprocity and equality of esteem" (132).

It is rather evident that the boy cannot mediate his father's memories from the old world, but the close relationship between both might help alleviate the despair of the present reality. The needed strength to keep pushing for survival reaches the father through the hope that his son represents to him, for he regards the child as the carrier of goodness and morality, in a world of debased humanity: "He knew only that the child was his warrant. He said: If he is not the word of God God never spoke"

(McCarthy 5). The father's interactions with the son contradict the hopelessness of his initial introspections - he seems convinced of the impossibility to regenerate the past, but he nonetheless keeps both hope and moral certainty alive for the sake of his son. The father is even portrayed as being embodied by the American spirit of manifest destiny when mentioning his duty to protect the boy, as he states that his ". . . job is to take care of you [The Boy]. I was appointed to do that by God" (McCarthy 77). As a result, the son becomes a vessel of divine hope and morality, the sole barer of human goodness, and subsequently, the single provider of meaning for their continued existence in the wretchedness of the world.

Furthermore, this manifest destiny of protecting the child, and regarding him as the last flame of human nature, motivate the father to keep a code of ethics and morality that he carefully instils into the boy. Apart from being a constant assurance of good morals to his son, this idea of keeping their humanity and subsequently "carrying the fire", provides further justification for survival, while simultaneously imparting a deeper meaning to a barren existence:

We're going to be okay, aren't we Papa?  
Yes. We are.  
And nothing bad is going to happen to us.  
That's right.  
Because we're carrying the fire.  
Yes. Because we're carrying the fire. (McCarthy83)

However, the close relationship between father and son is not the only contrivance capable of producing some meaning to existence in the apocalypse. Neither does it represent the sole effort of the father to perpetuate the past and subsequently, ensure the continued existence of humanity. Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) furthers that with the acceleration of history, the relation between Memory and History, which was already problematic, started to shift profusely:

Our interest in *lieux de mémoire* where memory crystallizes and secretes itself has occurred at a particular historical moment, a turning point where consciousness of a break with the past is bound up with the sense that memory has been torn . . . . There are *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory. (Nora 7)

The term “acceleration of history” denotes a fast-growing motion of the present into an historical past that cannot be reached again, ensuing a rupture in collective consciousness that is only exacerbated by the annihilation of real environments of memory in the contemporary world. To corroborate this tendency in contemporary existence, Nora offers the example of the “irrevocable break marked by the disappearance of peasant culture” (7). Similarly, in the apocalyptic world suggested by McCarthy in *The Road*, there are no real environments of memory, although the rhythm of history was not simply accelerated, it was completely terminated, along with all societal frameworks and collective consciousness.

In his essay, “Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*”, Pierre Nora notes:

These *lieux de mémoire* are fundamentally remains, the ultimate embodiments of a memorial consciousness that has barely survived in a historical age that calls out for memory because it has abandoned it. They make their appearance by virtue of the deritualization of our world - producing, manifesting, establishing, constructing, decreeing, and maintaining by artifice and by will a society deeply absorbed in its own transformation and renewal . . . . (12)

In this sense, we may consider that the father incarnates a *lieu de mémoire*, for even though the society of *The Road* is quasi non-existent, rather than “deeply absorbed in its own transformation and renewal” (Nora 12), the father stands as one of “the ultimate embodiments of a memorial consciousness that has barely survived” (12). Furthermore, the invasion of the past into his mind, through memory and dreams, along with the assuring impossibility of the past’s recovery, propel the father to engage in his own artificial ritualization (what Nora connotes as “deritualization”) of the world, in an effort to re-establish his humanity, and that of his son.

One of the earliest most staggering moments of the novel happens when the father must shoot a member of a gang, who is grabbing the boy, and threatening him with a knife pointed to the throat. This encounter causes the boy to be evidently traumatized, and the father becomes ever more stunned by the absurdity of this new existence as he takes care of his son and needs to reassure himself of his purpose: “This is my child, he said. I wash a dead man's brains out of his hair. That is my job” (McCarthy 77). The memory of the old world contrasts starkly with the reality that the father has to bear, which influence him to ritualize the barren present life, struggling to reconnect with some sort of ancient collective continuity to validate his own identity and existence: “All of this like some ancient anointing. So be it. Evoke the

forms. Where you've nothing else construct ceremonies out of the air and breathe upon them" (McCarthy 77). Similarly, the same effort is portrayed on a former episode of the novel, when the colour of a fire storm triggers the father's memories, and press him to ritualize the world once again, so that his past does not fall into oblivion: "The color of it moved something in him long forgotten. Make a list. Recite a litany. Remember" (McCarthy 31). The father is constantly struggling to resuscitate a collective conscience, which in the context of *The Road*, is the same as to state that he is fighting for a sense of continuous humanity in a world devoid of morality, while simultaneously searching for a meaning that pushes him to persist in their survival on the road.

Both Ricœur's and Nora's studies provide evidence of the power that memory holds as a provider of meaning and self-identity to life in *The Road*, and how essential it is to the idea of "carrying the fire", which sustain the existence of father and son throughout their quest for survival. Yet, how could this be related to the symbolism behind dreams? And how does their symbolism might elucidate us on the mysterious end of the novel?

In an essay called "Dreams So Rich in Colour. How Else Would Death Call You", Jacob M. Powning, a graduate from the university of New Brunswick Saint John wrote a compelling argument on how the symbolism enveloping dreams in McCarthy's novel might bring some closure to its ambiguous ending. Like many of us, Powning felt unsettled by the peculiarity of the ostensible happy ending to *The Road*'s plot. The employment of a Deus ex-Machina family that fulfils the boy's deepest expectations, as well as the unpredictable hopeful closure to such a nihilistic plot might strike even the most senseless readers as wishful and incongruent, expressly so when set against McCarthy's body of work. Confronted by such incongruence, Powning raises pertinent issues about how reading this ending at face value is inconsistent with McCarthy's former novels. He mentions the absence of happy endings in any of McCarthy's texts, while simultaneously calling attention to how the writer closed both *The Border Trilogy*, as well as *No Country For Old Men* with dream endings - he writes that "[s]ince McCarthy has never written a happy ending before, and has written vivid descriptions of dreams and laid hints throughout the book about their significance, it is at least possible that this happy ending is the boy's wishful dream" (26).

The core of Powning's hypothesis is that the boy is in fact dreaming when he encounters this family. It absolutely disregards any optimistic reading of the end of the novel, as it presents us with the possibility that what we read in the last pages constitutes the wish-fulfilment produced by the boy's dying dream. I am willing to

corroborate this enticing theory with further interpretations from the novel, and by accessing this hypothesis through the lenses of Psychoanalysis. I believe that McCarthy's interest in the psychoanalytic studies, and his fascination with the dream world, will help to sustain Powning's theory.

The first aspect that is relevant to highlight from this thesis surfaces from a close reading of the moment when the boy is presented to this Deus ex-Machina of a man:

The man that hove into view and stood there looking at him was dressed in a gray and yellow ski parka. He carried a shotgun upside down over his shoulder on a braided leather lanyard and he wore a nylon bandolier filled with shells for the gun. A veteran of old skirmishes, bearded, scarred across his cheek and the bone stoven and the one eye wandering. When he spoke his mouth worked imperfectly, and when he smiled. (McCarthy 281)

As Powning notices, the term "hove", might be suggestive of the nature of this encounter. "Hove" is the past tense of the verb "to heave", which has two possible meanings. It might hold the meaning of raising, or lifting something with great effort, but it might also mean to linger, or to float, and is usually employed to refer to something that appears from nothingness into view. In this case, either of the uses are extremely suggestive of a vision, or a dream. It could suggest that the man was not essentially materialized, as he could be lingering, like a spectre. But it could also be evocative of its aforementioned meaning: to lift with great effort, as if the boy was harshly struggling to conjure this vision.

If we regard this encounter as an apparition, while parallelly considering the fatal perils that vivid dreams and memory pose as distractions to life in *The Road*, the inference of the boy's death is hardly surprising. Similarly, Powning also alerts to one of the most quoted lines in the novel to sustain the premise that the boy dreamed this encounter: "*And dreams so rich in color. How else would death call you?*" (McCarthy 21).

Indeed, we could argue that the description of the vision is not that colourful, but we should consider that the boy's imaginative world could not be nearly as rich as his father's, since his dreams can only be constructed from what he gathered in his experiences through a world that is "shrinking down about a raw core of parsible entities" (McCarthy 88). And that's exactly what surfaces from the boy's dying vision: the conversation between a man and the boy, a gun filled with extra ammo, and a parka that is grey like the ash, and yellow as the firestorms.

I would also suggest that this notion of vivid dreams being the harbinger of death is mentioned again towards the end of the novel. As the father's health deteriorates, his haunting dreams return in full force: "His dreams brightened. The vanished world returned. Kin long dead washed up . . ." (McCarthy 187). Not only did the father's dreams become clearer, but they were also invaded by close relatives who were long dead. Similarly, the boy's dying vision is also clear in detail, and brings with it a man and a woman that can be immediately linked to a father figure, and a mother figure, which would constitute the only family known to the boy.

Moreover, the paragraph that describes the encounter with the woman stands in stark contrast to the man's description: "The woman when she saw him put her arms around him and held him. Oh, she said, I am so glad to see you. She would talk to him sometimes about God" (McCarthy 286). We are not offered with any description of the woman, whatsoever. She is undefined, vague. She stands as the image of a nurturing mother but is not described as more than a mere voice and an embrace. The contrast between both descriptions provides further evidence of the possibility of the plot ending as the boy's dying dream. He conjured a clear depiction of a man to occupy the place of his father; however, since his mother died when he was yet too young, the description of the woman is but a motherly presence.

Curiously enough, the presence of the mother's memory throughout the novel provides with two more indicators that foreshadow not only the death of the boy, but also his dying dream. The first one appears in the last speech that the mother addresses to the father before committing suicide. She tells the father: "The one thing I can tell you is that you wont survive for yourself. A person who had no one would be well advised to cobble together some passable ghost" (McCarthy 57).

Apart from informing the father about the importance that the child bears to his own survival (hinting that he will not survive for himself), the mother is also foreshadowing the boy's dying dream, since when he is left alone in *The Road*, he cobbles up a whole family of ghosts. Additionally, the boy had already hinted in the novel that for him returning to his mother is a euphemism for death:

I wish I was with my mom.

. . . After a while he said: You mean you wish that you were dead.

Yes.

You mustnt say that. (McCarthy 55)

Moreover, towards the closing of the novel, the father warns the boy about the dangers of dreams, and their symbolism as harbingers of death, when he states that:

“When your dreams are of some world that never was or of some world that never will be and you are happy again then you will have given up” (McCarthy 189). If we consider this instance while following along the line of reasoning that envisions the end of the plot as the boy’s dying dream, this warning of the father becomes overflowed by prophetic significance. The vision of the boy is both of a world that never was, as well as of a world that could never be again, as he envisions a family for himself, with other kids to share experiences, and the nurturing love of a father and a mother. It is a vision that paves the way for the boy’s happiness, since it reflects the symbolic fulfilment of his most pressing wish. From his father’s words, we can subsequently infer that the boy has given up. Additionally, Freud’s study on *The Interpretation of Dreams* reveals that opposing to adults, children’s dream “are often simple fulfilments of wishes, . . . they are invaluable as affording proof that the dream, in its inmost essence, is the fulfilment of a wish” (Freud 38).

One could argue that using *The Interpretation of Dreams* to corroborate this theory is somewhat farfetched, since it bears the imposition of a psychoanalytic reading of the novel. Yet, since throughout his career, McCarthy displays a keen interest in the symbolic weight of dreams, and the mysteries of the subconscious, it would be rather nonchalant to neglect the importance of psychoanalysis in the diegesis of *The Road*. In this sense, even though Powning does not expressly refer to psychoanalysis in his theory, he surely addresses the importance of dreams in McCarthy’s work, and inadvertently links it to the power of the subconscious manifesting its guarded knowledge through the language of dreams:

The Border Trilogy represents evidence that, for McCarthy, dreaming connects both the character and the reader to a deeper truth of the world than can be spoken. This theme recurs throughout his work, especially in *Blood Meridian*, which lapses into lucid nightmare. From this perspective the ending of *The Road* gives us a vision of the boy’s experience that cannot be said, only described through the language of dream. (29)

Apart from the weight that the theme of dreams bears in McCarthy’s body of work, he also reveals the interest in psychoanalytic studies in one of his rare appearances to the public eye, in an interview with Oprah Winfrey. When speaking on the power that the subconscious holds, McCarthy tells the commonly known story of how the German organic chemist August Kekulé got to discover the molecular shape of Benzene. Kekulé had hit a wall in his scientific breakthrough, when an *Oroboros*

appeared to him in a dream to let him know of the possible shape of the molecule. He then proceeds to elaborate on this idea, and he states:

[McCarthy]: If your subconscious has solved this problem and is ready to tell you, why wouldn't it just say: "Hey Kekulé, It's a Ring!"

[Winfrey]: Yes, why wouldn't it do it that way?

[McCarthy]: We don't know but it may have to do with the subconscious being older than language, and maybe is more comfortable creating little dramas to tell you things. (McCarthy/Winfrey, video)

McCarthy's words in this interview reveal his scientific interest in the mysteries of the subconscious and the power of dreams, but they also resonate with the theory of the boy's dying dream. The boy's subconscious is creating his own "little drama", his own tale about finding a family. The dream represents the wish of reuniting with his family and responds to the crisis of being left alone in the wretchedness of the apocalypse.

Since the dream is the vehicle with which the subconscious communicates with us, wouldn't it be conspicuous that the subconscious is the voice appointed to bring closure to the plot? In a world devoid of all human and societal frameworks, shouldn't we expect the final voice of the novel to be one that precedes language itself?

Freud believed that the unconscious spoke to us in the dream world through symbols, and that it would be an error to analyse them at face value:

The dream-content is, as it were, presented in hieroglyphics, whose symbols must be translated, one by one, into the language of the dream-thoughts. It would of course be incorrect to attempt to read these symbols in accordance with their values as pictures, instead of in accordance with their meaning as symbols. (Freud 169)

In the same sense, it would also be an error to interpret the end of the novel for its immediate technical significance as literary composition; a Deus ex-Machina that provides a happy ending seems to be completely incongruent with the nihilism that permeates *The Road*. Moreover, the boy's death at the end enables a direct connection to the final paragraph that otherwise would feel as if it hove itself into the novel:

Once there were brook trout in the streams in the mountains . . . . On their backs were vermiculate patterns that were maps of the world in its becoming. Maps and mazes. Of a thing which could not be put back. Not be made right again. In the deep

glens where they lived all things were older than man and they hummed of mystery.  
(McCarthy 287)

By presenting an image of a past devoid of humankind to behold it or document it (“Maps of the world in its becoming”), McCarthy hints at a projection of a future when humankind is extinct (“a thing which could not be put back”). It shatters any optimistic reading of the closing of the plot: the boy dies, and with him goes the image of “carrying the fire”. In the end of *The Road* there is no hope for humankind, just the barren world without people to witness it. We are thus left to question: “How does the never to be differ from what never was?” (McCarthy 32).

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# Mundus Vult Decipi: *RuPaul's Drag Race* as Part of the Culture Industry

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## Abstract

In this article I examine the ways in which the competitive reality television franchise *RuPaul's Drag Race* (RPDR), immensely popular with Western LGBTQ+-communities, can be considered a product of what Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer identified as the Culture Industry (CI). On the one hand, this allows for a concrete application of the CI-thesis and the exploration of possible lines of critique concerning RPDR and its effects on its viewership, while, on the other hand, it is an opportunity to evaluate the aptitude of the CI-thesis for critical analysis in the 21st century. While the concepts related to the CI-thesis turn out to be remarkably productive, its latent totalitarian and pessimistic framework tends to skew any analysis. This may warrant supplementing its coarse-grained perspective with a more fine-grained empirical investigation.

**Keywords:** Pop Culture; *RuPaul's Drag Race*; Culture Industry; Theodor W. Adorno; Max Horkheimer

## Resumo

Este artigo tem por objetivo explorar os diversos modos em que o reality show *RuPaul's Drag Race* (RPDR), extremamente popular entre as comunidades LGBTQ+ ocidentais, pode ser considerado um produto daquilo que Theodor W. Adorno e Max Horkheimer identificaram como a indústria cultural (IC). Esta análise, que proporciona uma aplicação direta da tese da IC, bem como a exploração de linhas críticas potenciais respeitantes ao programa RPDR e aos efeitos que este produz na audiência, constitui ainda uma oportunidade preciosa para avaliar a possibilidade de realizar uma apreciação crítica sob o prisma da IC no século XXI. Apesar de os conceitos relacionados com a tese da IC se mostrarem particularmente adequados, o seu enquadramento pessimista e totalitário tende a influenciar qualquer tentativa de análise, sugerindo-se, deste modo, a possibilidade de complementar o uso desta perspetiva com uma observação empírica mais refinada.

**Palavras-chave:** Cultura Popular; *RuPaul's Drag Race*; Indústria Cultural; Theodor W. Adorno; Max Horkheimer

“Let’s change the motherf\*cking world!” Those were the words belted out by Alexander Hedges Steinberg (stage name: Sasha Velour) after winning season 9 of the immensely popular competitive reality television franchise *RuPaul’s Drag Race* (RPDR). It is not a commitment one would necessarily expect to hear on the stage of other shows belonging to the same genre, like *The Voice* and *Project Runway*. Drag indeed seems to give a tired format a rebellious edge, which prompted me to consider somewhat more critically Sasha Velour’s call to arms and the context in which it occurred, by drawing on Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno’s Culture Industry (CI) thesis. To what extent can Sasha Velour’s battle cry actually materialise? I will first briefly consider how drag might have become an attractive cultural object for the CI in the first place. Then I will examine the ways in which we can recognise the CI at work in RPDR itself. Thirdly I will look at the influence the CI may exert through RPDR over its viewership. Fourthly, and in conclusion, I will evaluate the aptitude of Horkheimer and Adorno’s theory for a critical analysis of the above question.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. “The Great Drag Queen Hype”

Over the past decades, drag has gone through a process that could be described as a progressive absorption by the CI, culminating in RPDR. In this televised reality competition show twelve to fifteen drag queens compete for the title of America’s Next Drag Superstar, which comes with a cash prize of \$100,000. Some might deem drag’s relatively swift commercialisation remarkable, considering drag’s past existence on the margins of the traditionally already marginalised LGBTQ+-community. However, at least two factors account for this apparent paradox: niche marketing targeting gays and the close relation between drag and pop culture.

Concerning the first, the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York, in which drag queens played a pivotal role, catalysed an important change in the public’s general perception of queers. Explicitly confronted with the difficult circumstances under which the gay community lived, American society became somewhat more accepting, while the community itself began to lose some of its self-stigma and shame (Balzer 114). Possibly this development heralded gay minority culture’s availability for commoditisation by the, in the words of Horkheimer and Adorno, naturally prudish CI. Provided with “the trade description ‘daring’” (“The Culture Industry” 111), the CI could opportunistically make money out of its “shock value”, all the while celebrating its own role in the movement of gay liberation. Thus, in capital’s perpetual “search

[for] new opportunities for the realization of capital” (Adorno, “Culture Industry Reconsidered” 99), the sprouting gay rights movement was gradually “drawn into market-based tactics and objectives”, promoting “identity difference only to the extent that it [served] as a basis for niche marketing” (Chasin vii). “A somewhat embattled minority” acquired what Stephen Valocchi calls a “domesticated and consumer identity” (324). It is thus no coincidence that RPDR premiered in 2009 on Logo TV, a cable network catering to the LGBTQ+-community.

Secondly, one should not overlook the fact that the type of drag underlying RPDR is the predominantly black and Latino “drag ball tradition” of Harlem, as it existed in the 1980s and 1990s. While undoubtedly undermining different cultural norms regarding gender, class, skin colour and sexuality, it did draw heavily on pop culture, while also influencing the latter. A particularly salient example of this mutual influence is “vogue”, a dance style that evolved inside Harlem’s drag scene, characterised by a succession of model-like poses. It rose to global fame with Madonna’s 1990 hit single carrying its name (Balzer 115; Daggett 272). Another important manifestation of this cross-pollination is RuPaul’s 1993 hit single “Supermodel of the World”, which was broadcasted by MTV at the time. Indeed, Chelsea Daggett states that “neoliberalism and drag subculture share a mutual interest in political communities built around celebrity and consumption” (271). Together with the famous 1990 documentary *Paris is Burning* by Jennie Livingston, this set the stage for what Carsten Balzer retrospectively labelled “The Great Drag Queen Hype” of the nineties.

## **2. Inside *RuPaul’s Drag Race*: Extended Mechanical Reproduction**

RPDR displays, both covertly and explicitly, the posited absorption of drag by the CI and its technical rationality, which translates “the diverse objects of the world into fiscally equivalent phenomena” (O’Connor 31-32). Not many viewers will contest that “RPDR is about consuming the RuPaul brand and its franchises” (Brennan 39-40). RPDR may indeed epitomise the way in which culture “merges with the advertisement” (“The Culture Industry” 131). Ostentatious promotion of sponsored products for the LGBTQ+-community and plugs of RuPaul merchandise are an integral part of every episode. Furthermore, the show conveys a markedly neoliberal ideology. As the show’s host RuPaul herself tells the contestants (also: queens) in S4E3: “Remember, you need to connect with the TV audience, make them laugh, *sell some product.*” The queens themselves willingly transform themselves into commodities and openly use their airtime to shape their own “brand” for future exploitation outside the show. By

constantly attempting to create “iconic” moments and come up with “unique” catchphrases, they seek to separate themselves from the pack, paradoxically *creating* an identity for themselves of which “authenticity” is considered an important element (Brennan 33).

One of the characteristics that make RPDR particularly attractive to Western audiences, is precisely how it frames contestants’ personal development, their “authenticity” as people, throughout a season. The queens need to match a particular “successful” profile in order to be potential winners (broadly based on and summarised by the somewhat misogynist acronym CUNT, formed by the words: charisma, uniqueness, nerve and talent), and viewers get to see how they struggle in the process of acquiring it. Over the years this profile, Julia Yudelman notes (26), has become more and more overtly about entrepreneurialism and self-branding. Moreover, every season the contestants entering the competition seem to have adapted better to this neoliberal profile from the get-go, thereby serving as an illustration of Horkheimer and Adorno’s claim that “the talents belong to the operation long before they are put on show” (“The Culture Industry” 96).

However, the influence of the CI goes well beyond these conspicuous phenomena and is discernible also in some of RPDR’s formal characteristics. Horkheimer and Adorno describe how the CI denies spectators the active role of the Kantian subject - who as an individual has to organise and interpret a multitude of sensory impressions. Instead, they are confronted with impressions which have been pre-schematised for them. As such, what is left are “ready-made clichés, to be used here and there as desired and always completely defined by the purpose they serve within the schema” (*idem* 98). All footage included in RPDR has been pre-organised by the editors to convey a particular commercially and ideologically viable storyline. Every scene plays its part in this preconceived structure. As an example, we can consider the portrayal of contestant Pearl’s personal transformation on *S7* (Yudelman 25-6). In the first episodes of the season, Pearl is actively framed as lazy, a frame conveyed by a constant stream of more or less explicit references to her sleepiness and lack of enthusiasm, including negative comments from judges and fellow-contestants alike. After some particularly harsh individual interventions, the climax being a stare down with host RuPaul herself, she finally stands victorious in the fifth episode. Her reaction on stage: “RuPaul, you gave me a smack down yesterday and it worked. Thank you. I appreciate it.” From that moment on the number of references to her laziness diminishes dramatically, as she continues to harvest praise from the

judges' panel and ends the season as one of the top four queens - the success story is complete.

Much is categorised for the viewer and preformatted. For example, the queens label themselves, or are labelled by their fellow contestants, into subcategories of drag - which allows some of them to fashionably refuse "being put in a box" by others - such as comedy queen, pageant queen, social media queen and club kid. Every category comes with a set of specific performative expectations. Even the public's reaction to what is shown is decided upon beforehand - as Horkheimer and Adorno formulate it: every scene "prescribes [the spectator] each reaction . . . through signals" ("The Culture Industry" 109). Pearl's lack of enthusiasm in those first episodes is supposed to trigger frustration in viewers, as one after the other queen appears on camera to comment negatively on her reprehensible attitude. Laughing judges in response to a contestant's joke signals approval of their "witty humour". The absence of laughter, silly sound-effects, concerned looks and explicit reprehension indicate "failure" (Yudelman 20, 26).

Another structural feature that must be noted is the element of repetition. To a considerable extent RPDR is composed of recyclable components, being first and foremost a species of the well-known genre of the televised reality competition. Hilarious challenges, harsh evaluations, nail-biting eliminations and heartfelt confessions are only some of RPDR's composite parts lent directly from it. Despite such abundant reprocessing the CI was able to "make it new" by fusing the same mechanical formula with drag, and in particular with the New York ballroom tradition, as documented by the already mentioned *Paris is Burning*. It is no secret that Livingston's documentary has provided RPDR with a rich pallet of colours to give a classic format a fresh look: the final runway that every episode leads up to, the seasonal "reading sessions" and balls, but also the show's very particular language. A language so specific in fact (one can find vocabulary lists online), that one of the show's contestants who did *not* seem to be sufficiently fluent (Serena ChaCha; S5), was lambasted by fellow-contestants, eliminated on the first episode, and attacked ferociously online by "fans" of the show (Brusselaers). Conversely, a contestant familiar with the whole vocabulary but applying it in a forced manner (Laganja Estranja; S6) met with comparable disdain and was accused of a lack of authenticity.

While the show is thus infused with repetition, several factors (one could include them in the "signals" referred to above) give RPDR an air of legitimacy and novelty. Two more examples. First and foremost, there is the fact that the show "dares" to give the stage to such a controversial cultural phenomenon as drag, which

provides RPDR (and through consuming it also its viewers) with a progressive, emancipatory, maybe even revolutionary identity. Secondly, the show's constant emphasis on the CUNT and stardom of its competitors signals the authenticity already mentioned above. Consequently, competitors who are "too good at drag" are regularly criticised for not showing vulnerability, for not dropping their mask, in other words: for not being "real" (for example: Chad Michaels; S4). As noted, the show includes personal conversations while the queens prepare for challenges, emotional breakthroughs on stage and fights amongst the queens, to provide an authentic feel. Naturally however, it is difficult to imagine any "true", non-staged authenticity, particularity and progressiveness in the artificial, repetitive and commercial setting of RPDR. In a spin on Walter Benjamin, we might say that the whole sphere of authenticity lies outside the CI, which does not allow for anything beyond the incessant sameness produced within its eternal framework of profit-making. Benjamin's famous aura in decay is conserved by the CI "as a foggy mist" (Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered" 102), being nothing more than "the 'spell of the personality,' the phony spell of a commodity" (Benjamin 231).

### 3. Through *RuPaul's Drag Race*: Simple Reproduction of Mind

Having briefly considered the way in which the CI is at work in RPDR itself, we have to address also, to the extent here possible, its effects on its viewership. As the subtitle of Horkheimer and Adorno's chapter indicates, the CI is an instrument of "mass deception" in the service of capital. As a product of the CI-complex, what RPDR duplicates, reinforces and strengthens (Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered" 99) is the neoliberal, consumerist mentality already well-sedimented within Western communities. It effectuates a *simple* reproduction of mind in its consumers ("The Culture Industry" 100), simultaneously facilitating the *extended* reproduction of capital itself.<sup>2</sup>

Because RPDR is shaped in accordance with the technical rationality of domination that is typical of capitalism, its spectators are inculcated with the same type of thinking that governs their working lives. People are still mobilised as cogs in the capitalist machinery, and as such, it is "the prolongation of work under late capitalism" (*idem* 109). RPDR merely provides an apparent escape from it by presenting "that same everyday world as paradise" (*idem* 113; O'Connor 178). The fact that RPDR belongs to the genre of "reality television" only reinforces the effect of the latter. The people competing on its stage, only one can win the title of America's Next Drag Superstar, belong to a structurally marginalised group, but they have been

able to emancipate themselves from their very real misery, staying positive and humorous, and, most importantly, never having ceased to believe in the opportunities America's neoliberal economy offers to everyone.

Once more, Pearl's story on *S7* can serve as an illustration. The public is urged to condemn her "laziness" and "lack of enthusiasm", her stubborn refusal to emotionally commit to the competition. Her attitude frustrates fellow-contestant Ginger Minj (*RPDR: Untucked S7E4*): "This is a f\*cking competition! If you're not bringing your A-game, I'm sorry, that pisses me off." Not the competition (read: society) or its rules are the problem, Pearl's mentality is. *RPDR*'s message is clear: one should work hard and keep a positive attitude, turn any painful experience from the past into a strength, comply with the challenges and accept the critiques and decisions thrown at one by the judges' panel, and by RuPaul in particular. Pearl's win of the season's fifth episode symbolises her cheerful submission to the rules of the game, for which she harvests praise all-around. On *E6* RuPaul comments: "It feels like the old self died and the new self has emerged." As Horkheimer and Adorno explain: "Everyone must show that they identify wholeheartedly with the power which beats them" (*idem* 124), and: "Anyone who resists can survive only by being incorporated" (*idem* 104). The public's, and contestants', acceptance of this neoliberal narrative should not pose a surprise either:

. . . just as the ruled have always taken the morality dispensed to them by the rulers more seriously than the rulers themselves, the defrauded masses today cling to the myth of success still more ardently than the successful. They, too, have their aspirations. They insist unwaveringly on the ideology by which they are enslaved. (*Idem* 106)

The deception that *RPDR* engages in "is mediated by entertainment" (*idem* 108). Any seriousness and heaviness are easily outweighed by laughter and lightness. Through entertainment "a cycle of manipulation and retroactive need [unifies] the system ever more tightly" (*idem* 95). The fact that spectators are led to ignore the structural injustice ("wrong society") they are subject to, makes laughter about all of this a gesture of self-hatred, whatever the momentary relief it might bring (Adorno, "How to Look at Television" 166-7; Leeb 83-4). Spectators lack the will, power and perspective to actively engage in the difficult antitheses to modern society present in what Adorno calls autonomous art (Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* 225). As Adorno put it not long before his death in 1969 in an interview with Hellmut Becker: "The mechanism of dependence [*Unmündigkeit*] today, is *mundus vult decipi*, that the

world wants to be deceived, raised to the planetary level” (Adorno, “Erziehung zur Mündigkeit” 146).<sup>3</sup> Gladly meeting, or reproducing, this “demand”, the CI’s products only further the “withering of imagination and spontaneity . . . through their objective makeup” (“The Culture Industry” 100; see section 2 above also). The conclusion about audiences’ enjoyment of a show like RPDR is bitter: “In wrong society laughter is a sickness infecting happiness and drawing it into society’s worthless totality” (*idem* 112).

Through this deception, spectators are led to believe that RPDR, and by extension American society for bringing forth such a “radical” product, is the ultimate example of freedom. What is perceived as freedom, however, is actually strictly bound to the system it is a function of. This impoverished notion of freedom is tightly connected with a harmful type of autonomy. Deeply influenced by the products of the CI, we consider as autonomy our “attempt to turn [ourselves] into an apparatus meeting the requirements of success” (*idem* 136). Our perception of ourselves and the world around us is filtered by the type of rationality suitable to the system, and we take on certain social roles (employee, parent, citizen ...), the exercise of which we *perceive* as freedom and autonomy, “realising ourselves” by pursuing those functions, “where we essentially feel ourselves as dependent upon society, but not indeed so much as real parts, that is, as beings that are also reliant upon themselves, since we have already been assigned a role by society itself” (Adorno, *An Introduction to Dialectics* lecture 11). We are dissuaded from thinking deeply about what freedom could actually mean *beyond* the society we live in. In fact, our interactions with the world and ourselves are dominated to such an extent by this technical rationality, that it has become near impossible to experience “anything peculiar” in ourselves or in other people, anything “truly” individual. We compulsively imitate cultural commodities such as RPDR “which, at the same time, [we] recognize as false” (“The Culture Industry” 136). As a result, the ways of drag queens on RPDR have been swiftly adopted by Western gay communities, many gay men assuming their “true selves” by imitating their typical catchphrases and gestures. Horkheimer and Adorno label this type of modern identity “pseudoindividuality”, where “the peculiarity of the self is a socially conditioned monopoly commodity misrepresented as natural” (*idem* 125).<sup>4</sup>

In an important way Adorno sees true autonomy as “a negative behaviour: a capacity to resist collective political and cultural norms” (O’Connor 134). While it is clear that RPDR offers entertainment that *signals* “freedom”, it thus fails to actually transport its viewers beyond the framework that dominates the CI, making it highly deceptive. As its cultural deviations are mediated by the market, it only strengthens

the social totality's hold on its spectators, thereby paradoxically and fundamentally being unfreedom. Any apparent novelty and deviation allowed to appear anyway within its mould confirms, in fact, "the validity of the system all the more zealously" ("The Culture Industry" 102). For RPDR to actually stimulate freedom and autonomy, it would have to transcend the capitalist context it is fundamentally bound to. However, as Adorno's most famous aphorism, from his 1951 *Minima Moralia*, goes: "Wrong life cannot be lived rightly" (39). Grim as this perspective might be, education can still have an important role in fostering a critical consciousness:

. . . that the only true realisation of independence [*Mündigkeit*] depends on a few people who are determined to invest all their energies in making sure that education is an education of contestation and of resistance. I could imagine, for example, that in the higher grades of *höheren Schulen*, but probably also of *Volksschulen*, one would collectively go see commercial movies and would simply point out to students how deceptive, how mendacious they are.<sup>5</sup> (Adorno, "Erziehung zur Mündigkeit" 145)

Since they perceived it as such based on their concrete experience, Horkheimer and Adorno consciously described the society of their time as a *near*, or at least latent, totalitarian system (Huysen 4), a characteristic of their theory that has inspired considerable criticism.<sup>6</sup> Because of this trait one has to be particularly careful, also in keeping with the Marxist roots of critical theory, not to mechanically reapply the CI-thesis top-bottom to phenomena seventy-five years later. A critical evaluation is thus warranted.

#### 4. A Critical Look at the Culture Industry Thesis

Considering the potential of the concepts discussed in "The Culture Industry", one might conclude provisionally that they are rather productive. Besides many important differences there are, after all, also many fundamental parallels between the 1940s and our time. For one, the general framework of capitalism is still well-established, and the CI is more than ever dominated by monopoly. Returning to the observation of RPDR specifically, the show does seem to be a prime example of the fusion between entertainment and advertisement, its contestants are commodified, it spreads a markedly capitalist ideology, it combines well-known elements from different sources into something only apparently new, its episodes largely consist of what could be considered signals which consistently serve a particular function within their general schema. On the other hand, even though the general framework of capitalism is still intact, there have occurred some important changes within it too, which may or may

not prompt certain revisions of Horkheimer and Adorno's theory. We have witnessed the sexual "liberation" of the 60s and 70s, in the Western world neoliberalism is ideologically dominant (a dominance reflected in the particular content of commercial entertainment such as RPDR, as shown above), intercultural differences have faded or turned into folklore, modern technology (notably the internet and smartphones) has become what some consider an extension of people's bodies.

The last development seems to turn a specific part of "The Culture Industry" into an anachronism, at least to a certain extent. In response to Walter Benjamin's claim that mechanical reproduction allows for a more active, critical role of the public (228), how it allows everyone to be an artist (232), Horkheimer and Adorno point out how for the mass media "no mechanism of reply has been developed, and [that] private transmissions . . . confine themselves to the apocryphal sphere of 'amateurs'" ("The Culture Industry" 96). Anno 2021, with platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and Twitter, the sphere of replies and reactions seems to have exploded. There is an enormous online circuit of commentary on RPDR and its contestants, which exerts considerable power over the latter. In no way, however, does this seem to affect the foundations of the CI-thesis, since this circuit is still, in any case, "organised from above" (*ibidem*). YouTubers, for example, who are as individuals already pervaded by the existing social totality and moreover do not control the platform itself, operate in a context infused with capital, dominated by clicks, subscribers, sponsored products and advertisements - making any large-scale dissent beyond that horizon highly improbable, near impossible or powerless.

Nevertheless, the key characteristic that one may indeed take issue with, and which this analysis of RPDR implicitly exposes, is the often-criticised pessimistic and allegedly totalitarian framework that the CI-thesis entails (e.g. by Habermas and Eagleton).<sup>7</sup> When transporting RPDR into its sphere, one easily forgets that maybe not *all* is negative. Potentially positive characteristics tend to be overlooked, because they are ultimately not capable of overcoming the deeply deceptive framework that the CI-thesis places them in. Or in other words: put in this framework, Sasha Velour's call for change that opened this essay was bound to be suspect from the very beginning. While it is thus not hard to make a case for the claim that any (formerly) antithetical phenomenon absorbed by capitalism only strengthens the existing order, and that this happens continuously, it seems dubious to deny that RPDR has had a very real positive influence on people's lives *within* the pernicious system. The visibility of drag, its celebration by capitalism and its extension to straight audiences have furthered Western societies' acceptance of the LGBTQ+-community in general and of

drag in particular, making it easier for people to express their “pseudoindividual selves” through queer consumption. While from the perspective of Horkheimer and Adorno that might be nothing more than capitalism’s supreme deception, and while RPDR might also limit the space available for non-mainstream drag (Montgomery), many people around the globe *experience* it as a very real, practical liberation. For that reason, Shane Gunster’s recommendation to approach the CI-thesis as “the exploration of certain tendencies within ‘reality’” (66) seems fertile.<sup>8</sup> As Gunster suggests, it would be useful to do more empirical work on the subject of reception, in order to find out how viewers experience RPDR and how they actually react to it (65). It would be a productive continuation of an effort to complement the coarse-grained framework that the CI-thesis offers with a more fine-grained analysis and test them against each other.<sup>9</sup> Maybe it is there that we will find some way of not crushing Sasha Velour’s enthusiasm.

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Dr. Miguel Ramalhete Gomes for his comments on earlier versions of this essay.

<sup>2</sup> As Stefan Müller-Doohm states in an interview with the German Hessischer Rundfunk (HR): "According to Adorno, the categorical imperative of the culture industry is 'Become what you are'" ("Hat Adorno Trump" 15:26-15:31, my translation). Original: "Die kategorische Imperativ der Kulturindustrie ist laut Adorno 'Werde was du bist'."

<sup>3</sup> My translation. Original: "Denn der Mechanismus der Unmündigkeit heute ist das zum Planetarischen erhobene *mundus vult decipi*, daß die Welt betrogen sein will." The German word *Unmündigkeit* is difficult to translate. *Mündigkeit* refers to the capability of voicing opposition (*Mund* is German for 'mouth'), which implies an autonomous individual capable of resisting authority. *Unmündigkeit*, then, is the negation of that capacity, implying a dependent, dominated and silent individual.

<sup>4</sup> Adorno himself described these conditions as follows: "Nowadays it is the case that public opinion itself, through the mass media, the Culture Industry and by innumerable mechanisms, is directed, steered, in such a way, that the individual consciousness and its experience really do not have the opportunity anymore to resist it" ("Hat Adorno Trump" 17:21-17:46, my translation). Original: "Heute ist es doch so, dass die Öffentlichkeit selber, durch die Massenmedien, die Kulturindustrie und durch ungezählte Mechanismen, in einer Weise gesteuert wird, und gelenkt wird, in der das einzelmenschliche Bewusstsein und seine Erfahrung eigentlich gar keine Chance mehr hat, dagegen an zu kommen."

<sup>5</sup> My translation. Original: ". . . daß also die einzige wirkliche Konkretisierung der Mündigkeit darin besteht, daß die paar Menschen, die dazu gesonnen sind, mit aller Energie darauf hinwirken, daß die Erziehung eine Erziehung zum Widerspruch und zum Widerstand ist. Ich könnte mir etwa denken, daß man auf den Oberstufen von höheren Schulen, aber wahrscheinlich auch von Volksschulen gemeinsam kommerzielle Filme besucht und den Schülern ganz einfach zeigt, welcher Schwindel da vorliegt, wie verlogen das ist . . .". The school types were left untranslated, since they do not have clear English equivalents. *Volksschule* refers to a particular, by the time of the interview already dissolved, type of compulsive education in Western Germany, that ran until the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. With *höheren Schulen* Adorno is most likely referring to the Gymnasium, a type of school partially parallel to the higher grades of the *Volksschule*, that prepares its students, often from well-off families, specifically for academic education.

<sup>6</sup> Horkheimer and Adorno's social theory mirrors what they thought to be the state of society under monopolistic capitalism. Adorno indeed hardly sees a way out, but it is important to state here that for

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him “society has *become* a totality [my emphasis]. Its totalistic character is not an inevitable or desirable development” (O’Connor 28; see also Jarvis 95).

<sup>7</sup> Jürgen Habermas, for example, criticised Horkheimer and Adorno for having “surrendered themselves to an uninhibited scepticism regarding reason” (129). The main focus of Terry Eagleton’s straightforward critique is the latent totalitarianism of Horkheimer & Adorno’s theory: “For Herbert Marcuse and Theodor Adorno, capitalist society languishes in the grip of an all-pervasive reification, all the way from commodity fetishism and speech habits to political bureaucracy and technological thought. This seamless monolith of a dominant ideology is apparently devoid of contradictions - which means in effect, that Marcuse and Adorno take it at face value, judging it as it would wish to appear. If reification exerts its sway everywhere, then this must presumably include the criteria by which we judge reification in the first place - in which case we would not be able to identify it at all, and the late Frankfurt School critique becomes an impossibility. The final alienation would be not to know that we were alienated” (46-7). Andreas Huyssen, in comparable fashion, warns that “historical specificity . . . gets lost in such generalizations” (4).

Shane Gunster, however, rightfully warns us exactly against understanding the CI-thesis “as a totalizing indictment” (66). For one, if we would understand Horkheimer and Adorno as positing an admittedly deeply problematic complete and eternal reification, even excluding the possibility of the basic “labour of the negative” which is the motor behind Adorno’s critical thought, the whole project of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* would indeed be a fundamental contradiction. Adorno’s defence of education cited in this essay would have been equally contradictory, just as it would have been impossible for Max Horkheimer to write already in his 1937 “Traditional and Critical Theory”: “Truth has sought refuge among small groups of admirable men” (237-8). The portrait sketched by Eagleton also seems to be at odds with Adorno’s own understanding of the dialectical method, to which change and non-identity are central (see note 9 below also). Andreas Huyssen confirms that at least in later years Adorno’s thought on this topic seems to have been one in terms of a “double consciousness” (10). In a radio lecture that he gave shortly before his death Adorno said: “It seems that the integration of consciousness and leisure time is not yet complete after all. The real interests of individuals are still strong enough to resist total manipulation up to a point. This analysis would be in tune with the prognosis that consciousness cannot be totally integrated in a society in which the basic contradictions remain undiminished” (qtd. in Huyssen 10).

<sup>8</sup> However, the related claim that the CI-thesis “is an ideal type” (Gunster 65) is clearly false. Adorno elsewhere explicitly dismisses this Weberian category as “a pre-dialectical model of knowledge which reflects the perspective of traditional logic” (Adorno, *An Introduction to Dialectics* lecture 16), yet he *does* connect “the social whole” or “totality” explicitly to “the social tendency within which . . . particular instances of knowledge can be grasped for their own part” (*idem* lecture 12).

<sup>9</sup> For “. . . on the one hand, dialectical thought must always try and measure up the data with which it is concerned against theory . . . ; on the other hand, dialectical thought must equally keep theory open to those specific experiences by which it is nourished and sustained, and in this regard must equally avoid becoming something merely rigid and definitive” (Adorno, *An Introduction to Dialectics* lecture 10).

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

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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)

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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: . . . .

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**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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**1.1. 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)

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

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

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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)

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#### 1.7. Mais do que uma obra na mesma citação parentética

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

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### 2.1. Livros

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

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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 Kellogg. *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.

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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.

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Eaves, Morris, Rober Essick, and Joseph Viscomi, editors. *The William Blake Archive*. Library of Congress, 28 September 2008, [www.blakearchive.org/blake/](http://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](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/projects/arachne/vol2_2schmidt.html). Accessed 12 Mar. 2007.

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