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TOWARDS THE MAELSTROM THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES IN ACTION



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GUALTER CUNHA

General Director

JOANA CAETANO

Executive Editor

JAQUELINE PIERAZZO

LUCIANO MOREIRA

Guest Editors

Porto

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LIST OF CONTENTS

Preface	9
EXECUTIVE EDITOR JOANA CAETANO	

| THEMATIC SECTION

TOWARDS THE MAELSTROM: The Digital Humanities in Action	EDITORIAL
JAQUELINE PIERAZZO & LUCIANO MOREIRA Guest Editors	15

<u>Navigating Travel Writing and Digital Humanities:</u>	ARTICLE
<u>The “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” Project and its Visual Narratives</u>	19
MARIA BEATRIZ RODRIGUES & MARIA ZULMIRA CASTANHEIRA	
NOVA University of Lisbon	

<u>Visions of Utopia: Gauging the State of Utopian Thought through Data</u>	ARTICLE
<u>Analysis</u>	39
JOEL RAMOS FAUSTINO & JOANA PINELA University of Porto	

<u>Their Cup of Tea: Emotions and Drinking in Victorian Era Literature</u>	ARTICLE
RAQUEL SOUZA, LILE KOBALIANI & FELIPE FERREIRA University of Porto	63

<u>Viola, Lorella. THE HUMANITIES IN THE DIGITAL: BEYOND</u>	REVIEW
<u>CRITICAL DIGITAL HUMANITIES. Palgrave Macmillan, 2023.</u>	79
Z. CANSU RENDECI University of Porto	

LIST OF CONTENTS

<u>Dossier – 1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities</u> LUCIANO MOREIRA CETAPS Digital Lab Coordinator	FOREWORD 89
<u>Workshop 1 An Approach to Linked Open Data: From Wikidata to Authority Files Data</u> NILS GEIBLER Cologne Center for eHumanities	REPORT 93
<u>Workshop 2 Looking From a Distance: An Approach to Text Analysis with R</u> Luciano Moreira, Felipe Ferreira, Joana Pinela, Joel Ramos Faustino, Raquel Souza, Lile Kobaliani, Thaís Barbedo Vagas & Lizi Kolbaia	REPORT 99
<u>Workshop 3 Shared visions: Marco Polo’s Travels from Medieval Collective Imagination to Contemporary Computer-Assisted Imagery</u> FEDERICO BOSCHETTI CNR-ILC - Venice Centre for Digital and Public Humanities	REPORT 105
<u>Roundtable The Digital Humanities: A Common Ground for Experimentation</u> Carlos Ceia, Fátima Vieira, Federico Boschetti, Nils Geißler, Joana Pinela, Luciano Moreira, Raquel Souza, Hanna Pięta, Liam Benison & Joel Ramos Faustino	TRANSCRIPT 111
<u>Gallery</u>	PHOTOGRAPHS 141
	VARIA SECTION
<u>Paper Dolls: Female Stereotypes in Anglo-American Music from the 1950s and the 1960s</u> MIGUEL ALARCÃO NOVA University of Lisbon	ARTICLE 145
<u>The Great Between: Liminality and Liminal Aesthetics in the Filmography of Charlie Kaufman</u> JOEL RAMOS FAUSTINO University of Porto	ARTICLE 161
<u>Pretty, Petite, Polite Dawn: Beauty Pageants, Housewifery and the Feminine Mystique in Philip Roth’s AMERICAN PASTORAL</u> DIOGO OLIVEIRA University of Lisbon	ARTICLE 181

Preface

JOANA CAETANO

Executive Editor

It is with immense joy that a new issue of VIA PANORAMICA is published before the end of 2024. This has been a strenuous year for us all at CETAPS, but an enriching one as well. Like all research centres funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, CETAPS' team has felt the challenges of scientific evaluation. However, we have learnt to understand them also as a test of the relevance of our centre within Academia and as an agent within society itself. So many activities have been promoted within our research areas and our engagement with students and non-specialized audiences has grown exponentially. It is part of our mission here at VIA PANORAMICA to promote and divulge what new scientific research is being done at CETAPS as well as to think about what we can do to benefit a larger community than the academic one. The theme that informs this issue – Digital Humanities – combines these two dimensions by, on the one hand, fostering cutting-edge research methods and, on the other, by addressing the constant need to renew our research to confront our ever-changing needs as both social scientists and citizens.

It was with great expectation that I invited Luciano Moreira and Jaqueline Pierazzo, coordinator and manager of CETAPS Digital Lab respectively, to be this issue's guest editors. Those expectations were undoubtedly met and overcome. It is thanks to their dedicated work – as both Digital Lab leaders and guest editors – that this issue is such a well-rounded and interesting approach to the subject matter. My sincere gratitude to them both for accepting this challenge.

As executive editor, I hope this VIA PANORAMICA turns out to be a useful guide to Digital Humanities for our students and researchers as well as a testimony to the profound investment that CETAPS has done in finding new ways of doing literary analysis and creating science, while at the same time finding a new pathway to bridge our expertise and the concerns and interests of younger generations of students. As Carlos Ceia, CETAPS Coordinator, constantly says: “now is the time to be teachers and students all at once” (see the transcript of this great event which was the thematic roundtable of the 1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities, promoted by the Digital Lab). This motto has informed the conception and execution of this VIA PANORAMICA Winter Issue. However, it is a greater one to begin a new year.

THE THEMATIC SECTION

Inspired by Edgar Allan Poe’s tale “A Descent into the Maelström” (1841) about a man who survived a shipwreck and a whirlpool, our guest editors coopted the idea of turbulence and risk to describe the current resistance against digital tools within classic Academia. However, like in the story, what is a life-threatening event turns out to be also an awesome force impossible to avoid. There seems to be no other option but to adjust, fight and survive, or else succumb. In any case, in the end, we have a great story. Hence, let us find out. Read. Question. Research. Critic. Imagine. Critic again. Read again. And on we go... This subject matter is absolutely worth the effort.

This section has benefitted greatly from the work that has been done by CETAPS Digital Lab members. The articles, the review and the reports are the epitome of the team’s incredible enthusiasm and scientific commitment to their research. Although, as a researcher, I have had some experience with Digital Humanities during my PhD, I know now that the sort of work that these Digital Humanists have been doing is, in fact, much more complex and refined than I previously expected. Their contribution to this issue shows but the tip of the iceberg that is their actual work. I hope their words may instigate us to read and engage more, and finally witness Digital Humanities in Action.

THE VARIA SECTION

This section is a sort of calling card to the diverse research done in Anglo-American Studies from popular culture to canonical literature. In this issue, Miguel Alarcão delves into a study

of female stereotypes in popular music in his “Paper Dolls: Female Stereotypes in Anglo-American Music from the 1950s and the 1960s”. In “Pretty, Petite, Polite Dawn: Beauty Pageants, Housewifery and the Feminine Mystique in Philip Roth’s *American Pastoral*”, Diogo Oliveira also dedicates his research to the deconstruction of gender expectations in North American Literature. Separating these two articles, Joel Ramos Faustino addresses that marginal space, where fantastic(al) things may take place, in “The Great Between: Liminality and Liminal Aesthetics in the Filmography of Charlie Kaufman”. Music, literature and cinema, the magnificent triad.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This issue would not be possible without the dedication and hard work of the two guest editors, Jaqueline Pierazzo and Luciano Moreira; and the enthusiasm and unwavering commitment of CETAPS Digital Lab members and junior researchers. My special thanks to everyone.

I would also like to show my gratitude to the very large team of reviewers, who do not hesitate to accept to provide enriching feedback to the many authors. To the stars of the show – our authors – there are no words to describe the privilege (and responsibility) we feel to publish your research.

My final thanks to Professor Gualter Cunha, for his blind confidence and constant support.

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THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES IN ACTION

THEMATIC SECTION

Editorial to TOWARDS THE MAELSTROM: The Digital Humanities in Action

LUCIANO MOREIRA & JAQUELINE PIERAZZO

Guest Editors

Before explaining what digital humanities is or is not, its 2.0 Manifesto asserts that we are dealing not with “a unified field but an array of convergent practices” (Schnapp *et al.* 2008). It is this idea of a non-unified field coming together through common practices and objectives that is at the center of this thematic section. We embraced the image of the maelstrom, a potent whirlpool usually created by opposing currents, to emphasize and discuss how digital humanities incorporates the differences and the *difference* as part of its own condition.

Digital humanities combines critical thinking, characteristic of the humanities, with technology and computational techniques to create new objects of study or shed new light on already well-known research topics. It includes not only the use of digital and electronic resources in the humanities but also the analysis of their use and their impact on our daily lives and scholarship. Digital humanities has an ever-new, visionary, and experimental character as well as a proud miscellaneous background, which turns it into an appealing course and, at the same time, a feared curse in Academia. Digital humanities brings together different currents of thought, multiple areas of study and a myriad of points of view that, in the end, converge into an always-flowing whirlpool of people, topics, and projects, otherwise referred to as the “Big Tent”.

The “Big Tent” of digital humanities refers precisely to this miscellaneous and occasionally all-encompassing character of the field, embracing different areas, tools, and methods, making it challenging to define it as a consistent field of studies. It is, however, through this diversity that digital humanities becomes a reality, accommodating what Willard McCarthy (2003) called “methodological commons”. In a similar manner, Matthew Kirschenbaum (2012) asserts that

“digital humanities is more akin to a common methodological outlook than an investment in any one specific set of texts or even technologies” (4).

It is exactly through this sometimes-contrasting nature and that miscellaneous background that digital humanities comes together, working as a powerful whirlpool that embraces the disparities to become relevant and makes the exciting risks of failing worth taking. Indeed, digital humanities leads us to the maelstrom. Yes, a maelstrom in the sense that it combines the sometimes-apparent opposite drives of different areas, scholars, and practitioners, defying the long-established views traditionally associated with humanities scholarship to, instead, suggest a values-oriented approach based on collaboration, experimentation, openness, diversity, and sustainability. Such are the values embraced by the Digital Laboratory, the hub at the Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies (CETAPS) for the Digital Humanities, where we run our research, and which is the background for the work published in this thematic issue.

As highlighted by Matthew Kirschenbaum, English Departments pioneered in digital humanities. Among the conditions that made these departments more open to the development of the field, the author points out how, after numeric data, texts are more manageable for computers to process and how computers have been associated with composition since they became more accessible. Of course, the relationship between English Studies and digital humanities goes beyond the mere practicality of textual input. In this thematic section we hope to stimulate critical reflections on the contributions of digital humanities to Anglo-American studies and its distinct character within the field.

In the first article that opens this section, “Navigating Travel Writing and Digital Humanities: The ‘Anglophone Travellers in Portugal’ Project and its Visual Narratives” by Maria Beatriz Rodrigues and Maria Zulmira Castanheira, we realize the importance of understanding the English-speaking culture from its outer edges to its center as well as its impact in Portugal with the help of data visualization techniques. Joel Faustino and Joana Pinela, in the article entitled “Visions of Utopia: Gauging The State of Utopian Thought through Data Analysis”, bring to light the very important question and quest of digital humanities regarding the reusability and reconstruction of data, addressing territorial, gender, and global symmetries. Closing this section, the article “Their Cup of Tea: Emotions and Drinking in Victorian Era Literature” by Raquel Souza, Lile Kobaliani and Felipe Ferreira emphasizes the importance of distant reading to the creation of new objects of study as well as the impact of an interdisciplinary approach to well-known tropes in the humanities such as Victorian literary

works. Z. Cansu Rendeci's review of Lorella Viola's 2023 book *The Humanities in the Digital: Beyond Critical Digital Humanities* emphasizes the up-to-dateness of some of the issues discussed previously, reflecting the current condition of digital humanities. Taking advantage of the opportune time of this issue, which coincided with the 1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities, this thematic section concludes with a dossier of the event, celebrating its importance and preserving the important discussions held throughout the meeting.

It is with great pleasure that this thematic section seizes the fact that digital humanities is not a unified field of studies, embracing different themes and perspectives which come together in and through their opposing forces, just like in a maelstrom. This section also reflects the ever-new and somewhat avant-garde character of the field showcasing articles by mainly junior researchers. Focusing on its diversity, this section might also work as an introduction to digital humanities and its relation to Anglo-American studies. It is our hope that reading this issue will become such a transformative experience as it was editing it.

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LUCIANO MOREIRA

Luciano Moreira was born in Porto in 1982. He received his PhD in Digital Media from the University of Porto in 2021. He studied at the University of Coimbra, where he got his degree in Psychology in 2005, and at the University of Porto, where he got his MSc in Psychology, in 2012. He is a researcher at the Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, an integrated member of CETAPS and a collaborator of CIQUP.

He coordinates the CETAPS Digital Laboratory and was assigned the role of Data Management Officer at CETAPS. He teaches Research Methodologies in the Masters in Multimedia. He is a member of the Scientific Board of the International Joint PhD in Social Representations, Culture and Communication. His areas of interest include digital humanities, science communication, science and technology studies, social representations, and scientific research methods.

JAQUELINE PIERAZZO

Jaqueline Pierazzo is a Ph.D. candidate at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Porto, Portugal. Her research focuses on examining the evolution of the effect of terror in Edgar Allan Poe's works through the application of digital tools and methodologies. Additionally, she is developing a scholarly digital edition of Poe's writings of terror. Pierazzo serves as the manager of the Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies (CETAPS) Digital Laboratory. Her academic interests include speculative fiction, digital literary studies, and open research.

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Navigating Travel Writing and Digital Humanities: the “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” Project and its Visual Narratives

MARIA BEATRIZ RODRIGUES & MARIA ZULMIRA CASTANHEIRA

NOVA University of Lisbon

ABSTRACT: This article aims to present the “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” project carried out at CETAPS, focusing on its visual dimension. After decades of analysing the works using close reading methods, we have adopted Digital Humanities approaches to deal with the large amount of data generated. With these notions in mind, we have taken on data visualization tools as a way of analysing, interpreting and communicating our findings related to the travel narratives we have gathered in our database, written by Anglophone authors who travelled in Portugal. These travellers show us a different perspective on Portuguese culture, history and geography and, in order to draw meaning from their narratives, we have to look at them in an interdisciplinary way. This will be possible through the advancement of the project’s visual identity, both by developing the visuals of the associated repository and website

RESUMO: O presente artigo pretende apresentar o projeto “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” levado a cabo pelo CETAPS, focando-se na sua dimensão visual. Após décadas de análise das obras através de métodos de *close reading*, adotámos abordagens relacionadas com as Humanidades Digitais para tratar a grande quantidade de dados gerada. Tendo em conta estes conceitos, utilizamos ferramentas de visualização de dados como forma de analisar, interpretar e comunicar as nossas descobertas sobre as narrativas de viagem que organizámos na nossa base de dados, escritas por autores anglófonos que viajaram por Portugal. Estes viajantes mostram-nos perspectivas diferentes sobre a cultura, a história e a geografia portuguesas e, de modo a extrair significado das suas narrativas, temos de lançar sobre as mesmas um olhar interdisciplinar. Isto será possível através do crescimento da

and by the inclusion of digitised images of the illustrations present in the works incorporated in our database. Therefore, in this article, we will start by demonstrating the importance of illustrations and images in literary works; we will then delimit the illustrations that can be found in the “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” project, and we will finish by describing the process of scanning, categorizing and organizing the generated images. This account will allow us not only to share our findings with the public but also to pave the way for new stories, discoveries and participations.

KEYWORDS: Anglophone literature, travel writing, digital humanities, distant reading, visual narratives, storytelling

identidade visual do projeto, tanto pelo desenvolvimento da imagem do website e do repositório associados, como também pela incorporação de imagens digitalizadas das ilustrações presentes nas obras incorporadas na base de dados. Assim, no presente artigo começaremos por demonstrar a importância das ilustrações e das imagens para as obras literárias; seguiremos para uma delimitação das ilustrações que podem ser encontradas nas obras do projeto “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal”; e concluiremos com uma descrição do processo de digitalização, categorização e organização das imagens geradas. Esta exposição permitir-nos-á não só partilhar as nossas aprendizagens com o público, mas também abrir caminho para novas histórias, descobertas e participações.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: literatura anglófona, escrita de viagens, humanidades digitais, *distant reading*, narrativas visuais, *storytelling*

IMAGES AS NARRATIVE AGENTS

It is often said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Although much can be argued against this debatable statement, there is no doubt that illustrations play a crucial role in the creation of knowledge and the enhancement of the depth and complexity of narratives. Images have a unique power to convey meaning. When a book includes illustrations and incorporates visual elements, the images act not only as a support to the textual content but also as new creators of meaning, perspectives, and insights. These illustrations can deepen the reader's engagement with the text by suggesting and arousing new meanings, emotions or perspectives that might not be explicit – or even implicit – in the words.

Like written language, images are coded with layers of meaning that require analysis and interpretation, often acting as a visual language that carries symbolic and cultural meanings. According to Barthes (1977), images can be more than just *illustrations*, not only accompanying a text but also conveying their own meanings:

In other words, and this is an important historical reversal, the image no longer *illustrates* the words; it is now the words which, structurally, are parasitic on the image. The reversal is at a cost: in the traditional modes of illustration the image functioned as an episodic return to denotation from a principal message (the text) which was experienced as connoted since, precisely, it needed an illustration; in the relationship that now holds, it is not the image which comes to elucidate or 'realize' the text, but the latter which comes to sublimate, patheticize or rationalize the image. (1977, 25)

Although this reversal was important for the awareness of the relevance of illustrations in literature at the time of Barthes, it is acknowledged that, for many works, images continue to be secondary to the text. Nonetheless, this does not mean that one element has supremacy over the other. Instead, they complement and add meaning to each other, as both encapsulate significant historical and narrative meanings. Functioning as an interunit, they are better perceived when they are together.

When thinking about travel literature, it becomes even clearer that illustrations play a very significant role in the construction of books as objects of meaning. Leitch (2019) writes about how important visual elements are, focusing on the case of travel writing:

Depictions of peoples and prospects in these accounts inflect readers' sense of place, establish authors' reputation for truth-telling, and create fervour for travel, both real and imagined. In the early modern period, establishing otherness was an important function of travel illustration, but such strategies evolved as the European marketplace for print took shape. (2019, 456)

As she explains throughout the text, illustrations were fundamental in early modern writing as a means of depicting the world, different people, cultures and places. Up to 1830, the year around which photography was invented, drawings and paintings were used not only to enrich travel narratives, but also to establish a closer relationship with the reader, who was imagining experiences he had not been through, things he had never seen and places he had never been to. With the advent of photography, new possibilities for illustrations emerged:

Photography (...) became the technology par excellence to reassert eyewitness claims that had been the cornerstone of travel narratives in both textual and visual iterations. Photography could perhaps best advocate for the veracity of the subject without the intervention of the observer. (*idem*, 2019, 471)

This meant that authors now had a wider and more varied range of types of illustrations to choose from, which benefitted the richness of the literary work and the creativity of its authors. The interplaying unit of visual (no matter the type) and verbal elements constitutes and enhances the literary work, thus creating a more complex – and fruitful – reading experience.

THE HEROIC IMAGES OF THE “ANGLOPHONE TRAVELLERS IN PORTUGAL” PROJECT

The “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” project, which emerged in the 1980s (Castanheira 2001), has been continuously carried out and improved by a dynamic and ever-growing interdisciplinary team of researchers. Since the beginning of the project, almost 200 accounts written by Anglophone authors who travelled to Portugal have been analysed, filed and included in a collection. Decades of extensive close-reading work have

contributed to the formation of our database, whose timeline spans from the 18th to the 20th centuries.

However, in order to move forward and deepen our research, we decided to adopt a distant-reading approach to better deal with the large amount of collected information. As defined by Moretti: “Distant reading: where distance, let me repeat it, is a condition of knowledge: it allows you to focus on units that are much smaller or much larger than the text: devices, themes, tropes – or genres and systems” (Moretti 2013, 48-49). Taking on a distant-reading strategy would allow us to create data visualization tools and draw meaning from the works without the initial reading, but rather analysing the metadata itself: “Texts are real objects – but not objects of knowledge. If we want to explain the laws of literary history, we must move to a formal plane that lies beyond them: below or above; the device, or the genre” (*idem*, 77). To generate knowledge about a particular group of works, one must take into consideration either broader or more specific categorizations of the texts. As previously noted, “Our main objective, thus, is to rethink the way information is built and delivered, allowing a wider audience to critically explore the data through visualization tools” (Castanheira and Moreira 2024, 130-131).

For the sake of generating knowledge about our collection of works, we would have to consider the different possible categorizations of the texts, and not the textual contents of the works themselves. This process would shed light on many important topics that we ought to consider when navigating the database. For example, the keywords assigned to the works, considering the topics they cover, give us an insight into what was considered important not only by each author, but also by all of them as a “group”. Assuming all these narratives have differences and similarities between them, they can be analysed according to these exact differences and similarities, and the conclusions to which we arrive offer distinct insights compared to those drawn from the close reading of the works.

All accounts have in common the fact that they were written by Anglophone people who travelled, visited or even resided in Portugal for some time. Despite their different genders, occupations, motives or circumstances, they all decided to write about Portugal, whether that was their intention from the start or whether publication, for example, of letters to family and friends or diaries, was a decision taken later. In a way, they adhered to the concept of the monomyth:¹ “The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation*—

initiation—return (...)” (Campbell 2004, 28). The main character, whether the author himself/herself or someone else, left home in search of the most diverse forms of “initiation”, regardless of whether they were related to adventure, pleasure, trade, science, health, military missions or political affairs. Portugal was a place of discovery, a country for them to explore, dissect and analyse, and their works are a testimony to those pursuits. The overwhelming majority of them would one day return home and, even if not crowned as heroes, they had become protagonists of stories of adventure, quest, resilience and overcoming; that, in itself, can be seen as a heroic act.

Along with their writings, many of them included images of their experiences, whether they drew and painted illustrations, collaborated with illustrators or took photographs. For example, in *Peeps at Many Lands* (1920), the author herself, Agnes Goodall, painted eight watercolour illustrations to complement her narrative. Another example is William Koebel, who chose 21 paintings of Susanna Roope Dockery to illustrate his book, *Portugal. Its Land and People* (1909), while also integrating photographs. These images show us something other than what their words tell us, often reflecting a time of Portuguese history that can no longer be visited in a visual and objective way. Their portrayals of the Portuguese land, people and culture are valuable evidence of how Portugal was back then, and how it was viewed by foreigners (hetero-images, images of the Other, distinct from self-images, i.e., images of the Self).

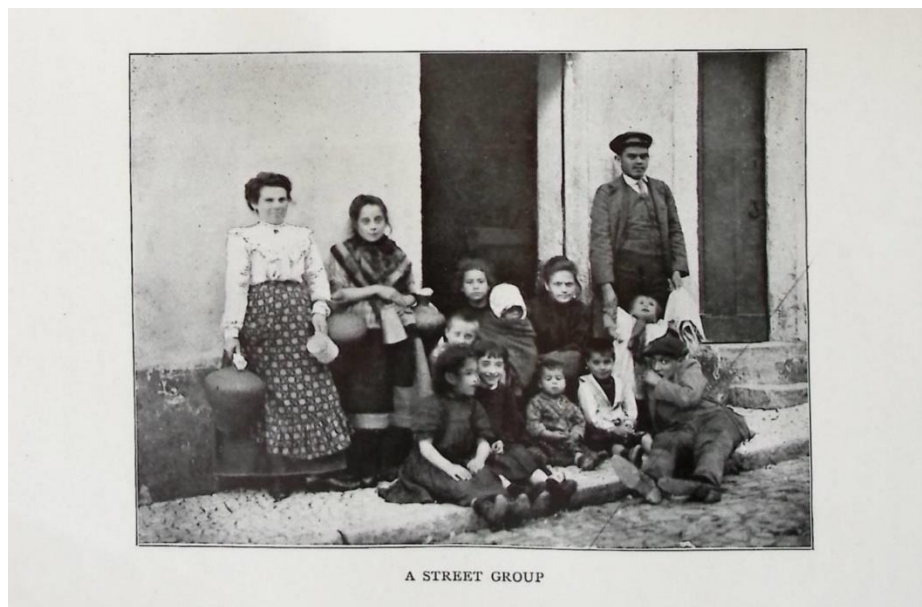


Figure 1. Photograph of a Portuguese street group at the beginning of the 20th century. (Koebel 89)

Our team gathered information about which books in our database contain illustrations, and which ones do not. That metadata was included in our repository. But one thing was lacking. How could we attempt to offer a comprehensive and accurate entry of each book if we did not provide a visual element to its illustrations, as important as the verbal text? What if we made those illustrations available to the public, including them in our digital sources?

MAKING USE OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES METHODOLOGIES

Since the beginning, our project has been greatly influenced by Digital Humanities notions. The concept of the digital humanities refers to “the change in scholarship in the humanities driven by digital tools, digitally available (big) data, digital repositories, and virtual research environments” (Heinisch *et al.* 2021, 98). Incorporating digital resources has allowed us to expand, develop and improve the dimension and depth of the “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” project, thanks to the continuous and fruitful emergence of new research questions, methodological approaches and digital strategies.

When thinking of the digitisation of the illustrations included in the works in our database, we have adopted the methodology explained by Drucker (2021), comprised of three basic steps: materials, processing, and presentation. In order to build a project in Digital Humanities, it is imperative to take into consideration these three components:

(...) *materials*: a repository of files or digital assets; *processing*: some kind of information architecture or structure and a suite of services; and *presentation*: a display of results within an online or offline user experience. (...) At their simplest, digital projects can consist of a set files (assets) stored in an information architecture such as a database or file system (structure) where they can be accessed (services) and called by a browser (use/display). (Drucker 2021, 10)

These elements demonstrate the continuous intertwined connection between our project and Digital Humanities. Not only could this approach answer some of our research questions, but it also supported the work we had been doing until then. By following these

guidelines, we had a clearer impression of the path to follow, as well as where it could lead us.

FIRST STEP: DIGITISING AND NAVIGATING PHYSICAL BOOKS

While analysing the database, we have come across information about many illustrated works. Due to the detailed descriptions of the researchers before us, we are now able to physically locate almost every book in the database, most of which can be found in libraries in Portugal, such as Biblioteca Geral da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies (CETAPS) at NOVA FCSH, and the Gabinete de Estudos Oisiponenses (GEO).

Our work started at NOVA FCSH, home to two libraries, Biblioteca Vitorino Magalhães Godinho (BVMG) and Biblioteca Mário Sottomayor Cardia (BMSC), as well as to the library of the Lisbon branch of CETAPS. Before beginning the physical digitization, we prepared the work to be done by looking into our database to identify which books contained illustrations and which of them could be consulted in our initial research sites, that is, the two NOVA FCSH campuses, in Lisbon, Portugal. We searched the online catalogue of their libraries² to see which works could be found there and ended up digitising eight illustrated books consultable in the three locations mentioned above. In this initial stage of the digitization process, we digitised and catalogued a total of 296 illustrations. The digitised books and the locations where they were consulted are the following:

Title	Year of publication	Author	Location of consultation	Number of illustrations
<i>Lisbon & Cintra</i>	1907	Ada Inchbold	CETAPS	30 illustrations
<i>Portugal Its Land and People</i>	1909	William Koebel	CETAPS	80 illustrations

<i>The Selective Traveller in Portugal</i>	1949	Susan Lowndes and Ann Bridge	BVMG	54 illustrations
<i>All the Best in Spain and Portugal</i>	1954	Sydney Clark	BVMG	48 illustrations
<i>Fair Lusitania</i>	1874	Catherine Jackson	BVMG	20 illustrations
<i>I Gathered no Moss</i>	1939	John Gibbons	BVMG	31 illustrations
<i>Peeps at Many Lands</i>	1820	Agnes Goodall	BVMG	8 illustrations
<i>Journal of a visit to Madeira and Portugal</i>	1970	Isabella de França	BMSC	25 illustrations

The first digitised works were *Lisbon & Cintra* (1907) and *Portugal Its Land and People* (1909), which can both be found at the CETAPS library. This means that the two books could be scanned in the researchers' and multipurpose room at that research unit. We started by setting up the scanning device,³ as well as the computer program that allowed for the transmission of the digitised images to the working computer. The required physical material included a computer; the vertical scanning overhead camera; a USB cable connecting both, for power and data transfer; a black scanning mat necessary to provide a black background and clear image capture; and the book to be digitised. Our camera scanner detects the page automatically and scans it in a matter of seconds, which ensures a smooth and fast pace of work. It also includes AI technology that erases traces of fingers on the document, a very useful feature especially when it was necessary to hold the pages down, in the case of the most used and handled books.

After digitising these two books, we moved on to the books located at the BVMG. Some challenges were encountered during this process. While navigating the catalogues of the NOVA FCSH libraries, we soon realised that not all the books could be borrowed

and checked outside the library, mainly for conservation and preservation reasons: many of the physical copies are first editions and demand special handling requirements. This consequently led to the necessity of on-site scanning, meaning that the scanning device had to be taken to those facilities. Some examples of these books were *The Selective Traveller in Portugal* (1949), found at BVMG, and *Journal of a visit to Madeira and Portugal* (1970), which was the only book consulted locally at BMSC. This resulted in a longer, slower, and more challenging process of digitization: firstly, it was necessary to find a suitable table, large enough for all the material to be placed on it (the scanning device, the computer and the book). Not only did the size of the working table need to be adequate, but it also had to be positioned in a well-lit area, where sunlight was abundant, but not so direct that it interfered with the quality of the digitised image.

Although having to carry out the scanning process in the reading rooms of the libraries entailed an increased amount of time and effort, it was ultimately deemed an overall streamlined and efficient procedure, thanks to the advanced technology of the scanning device and our prior research related to where the illustrations were located, both in terms of libraries and in the specific pages or book chapters in which they could be found.

The files of the images were stored in JPG files, organized in folders specific to each work and arranged according to their order of appearance in the book. Some metadata was annotated during this digitization process, information that would later be used for the filing of the illustrations. Such information included the size of the physical images, the page on which the image could be found, and details related to the index of the illustrations. This content would be rearranged and deepened in the next step of the process, related to the metadata and the analysis of the images' contents.

SECOND STEP: WHAT *CAPTA* CAN WE TAKE FROM THESE IMAGES?

It was deemed necessary to elaborate a template for the analysis of these images, containing the fields which were to be filled with information about the images, later translated into metadata inserted in the repository, along with the images. *Capta* is a concept coined by Drucker, who argued that “*Data are capta*, taken not given, constructed as an interpretation of the phenomenal world, not inherent in it” (Drucker 2011, 8). This means that no data pre-exist, all data are taken from the interpretation of the observer in

relation to the observed phenomena, based on a co-dependent relationship. This concept changed and shaped the way we look at our group of works, as we understood that data is never objectively given, collectable in an objective and impartial way, but rather something actively “captured”, subject to our own ways of viewing and interpreting the objects of study. This was an iterative process that required an interdisciplinary and methodology approach, leveraging concepts of Digital Humanities. In the case of our illustrations, it helped us both organize and analyse the given images, allowing us to have a deeper knowledge of the works of our database and providing a more detailed insight into whoever visits our repository and website.

In this light, the following *capta* were annotated for each individual illustration: title of the illustration; caption; author of the illustration; page; book where it was found; date; location (the place which the image represents); description of the content of the image; size of the image; type of illustration (watercolour, photograph, other); black and white or coloured. The process of gathering this information was then ordered by its degree of *objectivity* or *subjectivity*, resulting in three different levels of analysis: while the title, caption, author, page or date are objective information that can be – and indeed was – easily found in the books, some other fields took more time to ascertain. Identifying, for example, the location represented in an image was more straightforward in some cases than in others. It was simple when the location was explicitly named in the accompanying paratextual information. However, when the illustration distinctly depicted a specific place, but that place was not named, efforts were made to determine its location as accurately as possible through careful analysis of visual and contextual clues.

The metadata related to the location was encoded using geolocation terms, such as toponyms and geographical coordinates. By also leveraging the controlled vocabularies of both GeoNames⁴ and Getty Vocabularies⁵, our metadata becomes connected with Linked Data, which allows for the linking and disambiguation of the *capta*.⁶ The articulation of these detailed *capta* would be useful *a posteriori* when interpreting the metadata. By describing locations with such precision and incorporating Digital Humanities strategies, we ensured that geolocations were accurate and that metadata could later be used on data visualization tools.

The most “subjective” part of this categorization process was related to the description of the content of the images. This field was open to the researcher’s

interpretation, who was responsible for outlining what could be seen in the images, enumerating their elements and describing their surroundings. Although we attempted to follow a consistent approach with each illustration, explaining the main components, features, background and foreground, each image was unique and required a different perspective. Providing a thoroughly analysed and detailed description of the image allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of it.

All image files were uploaded to the CETAPS Repository, under the “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” collection. When we now browse the page,⁷ we can open any of the “Image” entries and find detailed information about the almost 300 illustrations digitised, as well as a downloadable file containing the scan itself for each of them. This allows us not only to organise the information gathered, but also share it with whoever explores the repository. The metadata work carried out earlier related to the descriptions of the images is helpful for a smoother navigating process; when searching specific keywords, like “Sintra” or “castelo”, images that relate to these words will appear.

Although these images are all stored in the repository, it is not the only place where one can explore them. The database is also accessible through the “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” website,⁸ which is dedicated to sharing the progress of our project. Using data visualization tools, we can see trends, differences and patterns, thus generating new insights and communicating our findings effectively, as “The visualizations are often more easily consumed than the complex research data on which they depend” (Drucker 2021, 86). Anyone who accesses the website can navigate through the map present in the “Database” section and locate the images from our database, thanks to the geolocation work completed previously. This approach allows us to showcase our work to viewers in an interactive and dynamic way. They can journey around the map of Portugal through the illustrations in our books, as shown in Figure 2, making this a tangible, engaging and responsive research resource.

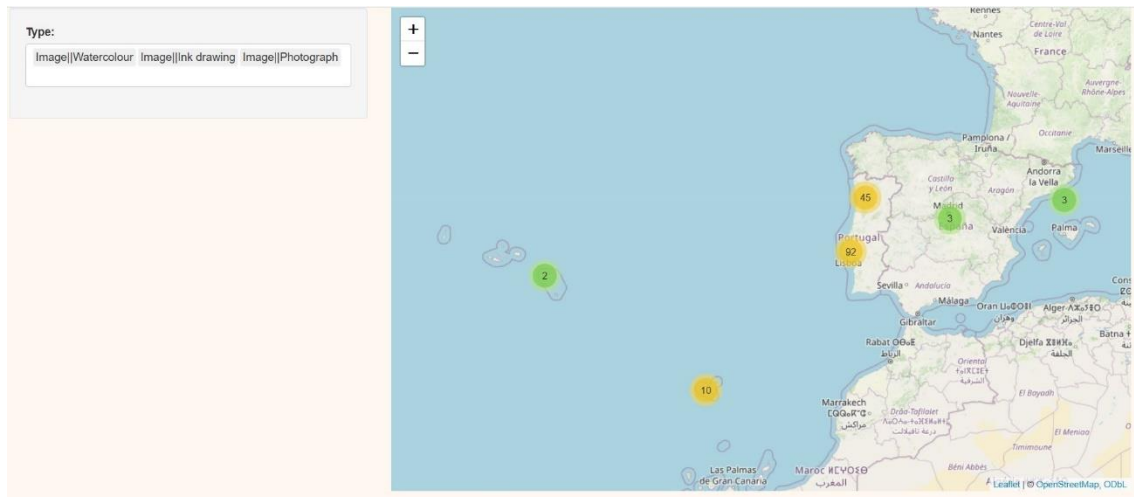


Figure 2. Data visualization tool that shows the locations of the illustrations included in our database.

The metadata that accompanies the images serves not only to complement and characterize the visual elements it refers to, but also to preserve said information. By organizing and subsequently sharing the metadata, we aim to contribute to its conservation and longevity, hoping it remains accessible to anyone who wishes to read, explore or know more about what these books and their images tell us about Portugal.

THIRD STEP: LOOKING AT THE HORIZON

Currently, our plan is to expand the project's reach by digitising and categorizing more illustrations from books, including those illustrated but not yet digitized, as well as any additional books that may be of interest to our database. These ongoing efforts will allow us to improve our collection of metadata by increasing and refining the details we include in each book entry.

We also plan to introduce a new dimension to the project, related to the publication of photographs taken in the places mentioned by travellers, which will show what they look like today. These images will allow us to compare the world of the past with that of the present. Some examples of these photographs have already been taken, mostly in easily accessible places in the centre of Lisbon, Portugal. While digitising the illustrations of the first aforementioned eight books, we annotated some that could easily be recreated due to the proximity of the places to the premises of the Lisbon branch of CETAPS. The original images were used as models for their remakes. For example, there is a photograph

of Praça do Comércio⁹ in *Portugal Its Land and People* (1909). This prompted us to go to this square and attempt to take a photo from exactly the same point of view, which shows the resemblances and changes of this location 115 years after the original photo was taken. In the future, we aim to share our findings with viewers by leveraging dynamic and captivating digital tools available on our website. We want to be able to travel not only through Portugal but also through time. These online resources will allow us to live and relive what once was and what now is at the same time, looking at the past and the present simultaneously. This dynamic interaction is an opportunity to investigate historical moments or mementoes while comparing them to the current reality. It serves as a reminder of the temporality of these travel narratives, but also of our capacity to see the world through different eyes and points of view.

Hoping to extend the participatory dimension of our project further, the website will integrate digital features for public submission, inviting contributions whilst strengthening the connection between researchers and the public at large. We hope to create a collaborative platform where the viewers can engage interactively with the project, leveraging Citizen Humanities notions:

Citizen humanities means to learn from each other. Scholars can learn from the participants' ideas and perspectives on their research, and the participants can learn the critical handling of sources and the application of research methods to classify and assess information. (Heinisch *et al.* 2021, 114)

The promotion of citizen science and interplay between investigators and readers is one of our main goals, as we have realized that through a continuous and fluid exchange of ideas, our project will grow in depth and in scope and benefit from a variety of perspectives and interpretations. Collaboration is crucial to our research, not only because our project has benefited from the work of specialists in digital technologies and scholars in the humanities and social sciences, but also in what relates to the cooperation between academics and non-academics, scholars and the general public. Public engagement can help identify Anglophone travel narratives on Portugal that have not yet come to our attention, expanding the width of our database and contributing to the broadening of the research related to its contents.

As we continue to work with Digital Humanities to gain new insights into Anglophone accounts about travels in Portugal, we make use of different avenues of participatory science and citizen humanities. One example of the close relationship we promote between Digital Humanities and travel writing is our “Storytelling” series. Published on our website, the first episodes of these stories can already be read online. Through three different contextual points of view – gender, occupation, and railway development –, we have begun creating new narratives and storylines. Thanks to data visualization tools, like the timeline included in the “Gender” storytelling page, showcased in Figure 3, which clearly shows us the disparity between the number of male and female authors in our database, we can start trying to formulate some questions and, hopefully, draw some conclusions. What does the male-centred authorship about Portugal say about this country? Could more female perspectives have given us different views, and, if yes, can we still try to bridge this gap? These questions seem to only find answers through an interdisciplinary approach to the project, one that conjugates Digital Humanities, citizen science and literary studies.

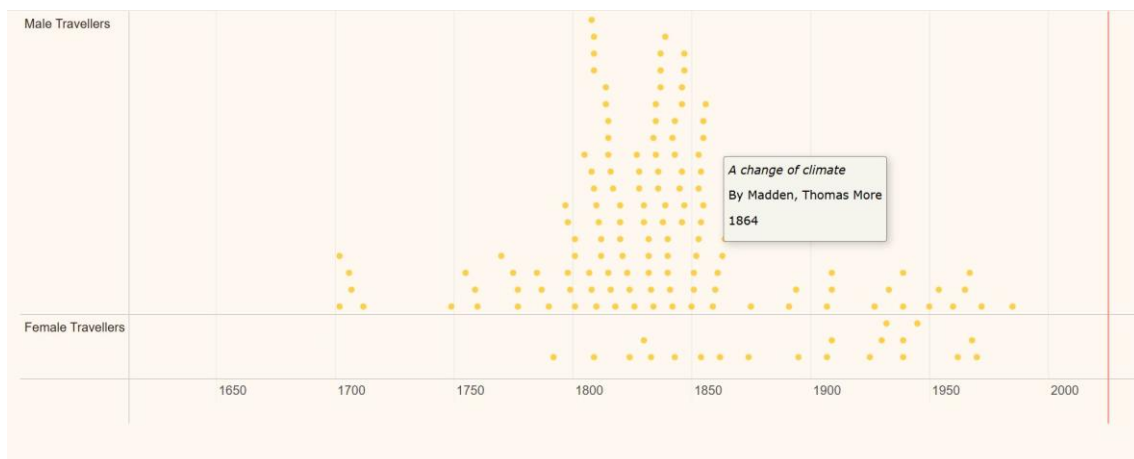


Figure 3. Data visualization tool related to the “Gender” category.

Due to its interdisciplinary approach, our project’s findings open avenues for collaboration and can contribute to discussions in a variety of fields: history, geography, literature, sociology, anthropology, gender studies, translation studies... From a cultural perspective, they shed light on how travel narratives can shape and be shaped by cultural perceptions, offering insights into the relationship between Anglophone travellers and Portuguese society – not only in the past but also in terms of how it has affected present-day relations.

Our research examines these interactions by focusing on matters related to national representations, cultural exchange and Anglo-Portuguese relations.

The project, launched in 1981 and integrated into the Anglo-Portuguese Studies area of CETAPS, one of the centre's founding research areas, represents an innovative and original initiative in the field of imagology studies and travel writing. It provides a new way to look at the genre, as it deepens our understanding of how travellers communicate experiences through personal, subjective observations and broader cultural contexts. This multidisciplinary essence drives the project forward, fostering collaboration in different fields and providing new levels of analysis. It also has potential applications in educational initiatives, as our findings help showcase how these narratives can serve as case studies for works related to historical representation, literary analysis, and travel writing studies.

FINAL REMARKS

The inclusion of visual elements in the “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” database has been a concern for us since the beginning and, in the past year, we have had the opportunity to make several developments and improvements to this dimension of the project. After successfully adding images of the covers of the editions of all the books included in our collection of the repository, we are now moving forward towards incorporating more illustrations and more books. This will allow us to not only expand the possibilities of research, but also broaden the coverage of our database. As a result, we expect to create more engaging and ample resources for users, both on our website and repository.

Digital Humanities have been crucial in shaping the methodology, theoretical framework and understanding of the project's scope: our scientific and digital approaches have permitted us to develop our research continuously, find new ways to challenge our findings and open new avenues of inquiry. By planning on creating new data visualization tools, we aim to increase the accessibility of our project further. These tools will pave the way for more opportunities for interactive relationships with the public, fostering the citizen-participatory dimension of the project.

We strongly believe that by collaborating with viewers and adopting a citizen science approach, we will be able to tell more detailed and refined stories about the travel narratives we have registered. Digital storytelling is also an essential part of our plans, as we have realised that different multimedia formats offer powerful ways to interpret the

accounts of these authors and the experiences and impressions they tell us, as well as pave the way for new citizen participatory opportunities. Our ongoing efforts to combine text with image within the framework of the “Anglophone Travellers in Portugal” project will proceed, as we hope to continue enriching its visual dimension and its digital nature, whilst telling stories through our findings.

END NOTES

¹ A word that first appeared in James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* (1939), later borrowed by Joseph Campbell to explain the narrative structure found in myths, legends and stories.

² <https://catalogo.biblioteca.fcsh.unl.pt/>

³ The professional document scanner IRIScan Desk 6 Pro was the chosen device.

⁴ <https://www.geonames.org/>

⁵ <https://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/>

⁶ Our concerns with Linked Data had already been explored through the usage of Wikidata in the categorization of the authors in the database. As a tool for Linked Open Data, it consists of a collaborative and open knowledge base of linked data.

⁷ <https://cetapsrepository.letras.up.pt/id/cetaps/113865>

⁸ <https://atp.fcsh.unl.pt/>

⁹ <https://cetapsrepository.letras.up.pt/entities/publication/b5e1dccf-b956-4fc7-a334-37078f5d4e82>

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MARIA BEATRIZ RODRIGUES

Maria Beatriz Rodrigues is an integrated researcher at CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation and Anglo-Portuguese Studies) and is currently pursuing a double Master's degree in Lusophone and Portuguese Studies at Universidade Nova de Lisboa and Université Lumière Lyon 2. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (Portuguese and French studies) from NOVA FCSH. With several years of experience as a translator, Maria Beatriz started collaborating with CETAPS on the "Anglophone Travellers in Portugal" project in 2024. Her main research interests include Lusophone literary studies, feminist literature and travel writing.

MARIA ZULMIRA CASTANHEIRA

Maria Zulmira Castanheira holds a BA in Modern Languages and Literatures (Portuguese and English), an MA in Anglo-Portuguese Studies and a PhD in Anglo-Portuguese Studies. All degrees were awarded by the New University of Lisbon, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, where she is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Modern Languages, Cultures and Literatures. She is the vice-coordinator of the Undergraduate Programme in Languages, Literatures and Cultures, the co-coordinator of the Interinstitutional PhD Programme in Translation Studies (New University of Lisbon and Universidade Católica Portuguesa), the

coordinator of the DMLC Internship Unit and a member of the Pedagogical Council. She teaches 1st, 2nd, and 3rd cycle courses in the areas of Modern Languages and Literatures and Translation. At CETAPS she coordinates the "Anglo-Portuguese Studies" research area. Within this research area Maria Zulmira Castanheira is particularly involved in the project «Anglophone Travellers in Portugal» and its database, which can be freely accessed through CETAPS website.

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Gauging the State of Utopian Thought through Data Analysis

JOEL RAMOS FAUSTINO & JOANA PINELA

University of Porto

ABSTRACT: The *Great Utopians* project consists of a collection of historical figures deemed so because their revolutionary actions have helped advance our world and improve millions of lives. It is managed by CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies) and is open to all contributions. This is a data set that, after careful analysis, may give us some interesting insights into the field of utopian thought. This paper analyzes the 77 entries of the Great Utopians collection along the lines of gender, birthplace, historical period, and field of excellence, to derive conclusions on gender imbalances, underrepresentation of utopianism both in time and in space, and the pronouncement of specific fields in what contributors of the project consider to be utopian work. We start the analysis with some preconceived notions about the

RESUMO: O projeto “Great Utopians” consiste numa coleção de figuras históricas assim consideradas porque as suas ações revolucionárias contribuíram para o progresso do nosso mundo e para a melhoria de milhões de vidas. É gerido pelo CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies) e está aberto a todos os contributos. Trata-se de um universo de dados que, após uma análise cuidada, nos pode dar algumas indicações interessantes sobre o campo do pensamento utópico. Este artigo analisa as 77 entradas da coleção “Great Utopians” segundo o género, o local de nascimento, o período histórico e o campo de excelência, para retirar conclusões sobre os desequilíbrios de género, a sub-representação do utopismo no tempo e no espaço e a afirmação de certos campos específicos naquilo que os colaboradores do projeto consideram ser trabalho utópico.



underrepresentation of women and non-Europeans in the database. With this in mind, we review relevant literature on women's historical disenfranchisement, Eurocentrism's historical origins, and the complex definition of utopia. Afterwards, we describe the method of constructing the database and creating visual outputs for further data analysis. Then, we meticulously describe our findings when analyzing proportions of gender, birthplace, historical period, and field. Finally, we discuss these findings critically, considering our initial notions and detailing data that presented us with new and unexpected conclusions.

KEYWORDS: Utopianism, gender, Eurocentrism, database, data analysis

Começamos esta análise com algumas noções preconcebidas de uma sub-representação específica de mulheres e não-europeus na base de dados. Com isto em mente, revemos a literatura relevante sobre a privação histórica de direitos das mulheres, as origens históricas do eurocentrismo e a complexa definição de utopia. Em seguida, descrevemos o método de construção da base de dados e a criação de outputs visuais para análise de dados posterior. Depois, descrevemos meticulosamente as nossas conclusões ao analisar as proporções de género, local de nascimento, período histórico e campo. Finalmente, discutimos estes resultados de forma crítica, considerando as nossas noções iniciais e detalhando os dados que nos apresentaram conclusões novas e inesperadas.

Palavras-Chave: Utopismo, género, eurocentrismo, base de dados, análise de dados

1. INTRODUCTION

Before diving into the dataset *Great Utopians* presents us with, we had to consider what we thought this collection of historical figures would look like based on our preconceived notions of the inherent biases of history and the controversy of defining utopia and utopianism.

For many, when thinking of the minds that have made extraordinary contributions to the world, the image conjured is most likely male: scientists like Albert Einstein, revered social activists like Martin Luther King, and polymaths like Da Vinci, whose names have almost become synonymous with progress and innovation. This unfortunate tendency to see men as the primary, if not sole, instigators of change is symptomatic of systemic gender inequalities, which have persisted for centuries. As Miles argues, “men dominate history because they write it” (2001, 4). This is a reminder that history is anything but an objective record, but better a narrative shaped by those in positions of power and by social and cultural norms that have constituted untraversable barriers that have limited and denied women of their pursuits and place in the world. Literature on the disenfranchisement of women highlights precisely this: the damnatory combination of gender bias and societal expectations has obscured women’s history. And while new evidence might reveal the presence of women in the past, with books, journals, and conferences solely dedicated to feminist studies, it often fails to alter pre-conceived notions of the significance - or lack thereof - of women’s contributions to society. In fact, treating women separately frequently reinforces a marginal status in contrast to male figures, already recognized as central and universal (Scott 1988, 208).

However, despite these challenges, perhaps even because of them, women have been carving out places for themselves within spaces they have mostly been excluded from, making significant contributions in a plethora of fields. Unsurprisingly, most stories of women in history are tales of resilience and ingenuity because they *must* be. Whatever accomplishments were achieved, they were so in constant defiance of systemic prejudice and gender bias. These marginal figures in the database have redefined the boundaries of the roles that were deemed appropriate for women, and it’s precisely against this backdrop that the *Great Utopians* database provides a refreshing perspective: re-defining

preconceived notions of women's accomplishments and of who a Utopian *was, is, and can be*.

Dealing with a project based in a European research center and open to collaboration from any willing to participate in its construction – contributing with figures from any corner of the globe at any point in history – we immediately imagine that Europeans will likely be dominant in the collection. This forces those analyzing said collection to consider the phenomenon of Eurocentrism. Argentine-Mexican historian Enrique Dussel argues that a Eurocentric worldview is especially apparent in how the concept of Modernity is constructed. Dussel argues that modernity is defined today by a set of main historical phenomena: the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution. This means that Modernity is defined exclusively by intra-European phenomena (2000, 27). As such – and as Modernity can be generally understood as emancipation from darkness impelled by reason and critical thinking – Europe assumes the central role in the construction of world history in such a way that it could be said “world history” only springs up in 1492, as Columbus lands in the Americas and European worldviews begin expanding globally (*idem*, 28). Modernity then comes to signify the assumption of centrality on the part of Europe and the conception of external cultures as “peripheral cultures”. “Modern civilization” comes to be quasi-synonymous with “European civilization”, and the expansion of Modernity is then analogous to the expansion of European thought, culture, and power structures (*idem*, 29).

And, since this is a database called Great Utopians, we cannot ignore the essential conceptions of utopianism and the debate surrounding the task of conceptualizing it. Utopianism has been essentially defined as “social dreaming” – the envisioning of a radically different society as compared to the one the “dreamers” actually live in and divided into what has been called its “three faces”: literary utopias, communitarianism, and utopian social theory (Sargent 1994, 3-4). While generally accepting this definition, subsequent works in utopian studies have brought attention to how defining utopia is a more complex task than one may think when first engaging with it (Claeys 2013, 9). Gregory Claeys proposed – rather than redefining the concept of utopianism – five different “languages of utopia” – that is, approaches one adopts when engaging with utopianism: literature, religion, progress, psychology, and history (*idem*, 10). Although there seem to be broadly accepted borders to what utopia is and is not, concrete definitions

are controversial. It then stands to reason that utopia, as a concept, would not only be multifaceted but would transform and reshape itself in time and space – depending on who is considering it, from where, and at what point in history. Utopian studies are thus a sort of intellectual dispersive prism: a beam of light (preconceived notions of utopia) is pointed at the prism and subsequently disperses the beam’s different wavelengths (the many forms utopia takes).

2. CONTEXT: UTOPIA 500 AND *GREAT UTOPIANS*

Utopia 500 is a project run by the Centre for English, Translation and Anglo-Portuguese Studies (CETAPS) at FLUP (Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto), founded in 2015 as a commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the publication of Thomas More’s *Utopia*. Today, its goal is “to play an active role in implementing and disseminating the notion of utopia as a driver of social change and as a source of inspiration for innovation in science and technology”.

Among its various subprojects is *Great Utopians*, envisioned as a collection of figures deemed so because their revolutionary actions have helped advance our world and improve millions of lives. The collection is subject to constant growth, as it is always open to contributions.

This collection consists of 77 historical figures spanning almost 3000 years, having left their mark on various fields, such as politics, philosophy, science, technology, and humanitarian work. On the Utopia 500 website, the subproject presents a map where the figures are displayed on an interactive world map and a collection of short biographies. It should be noted that not all 77 figures are displayed on the interactive map – only 61 are.

Great Utopians is an open project; the growth of the collection is dependent on the contributions of any who wishes to see one or several particularly famous personalities in the collection, considering that their work classifies them as Great Utopians. Contributors are meant to indicate their name and country of origin and write a sectioned biography in which the background of the person and changes their work may have caused in the world are explored to justify their classification as a utopian.

3. METHODS

Our first research task was to gather these utopians and form a curated database. The names from the collection were transposed into a spreadsheet, and further data was subsequently collected so that a fuller, more complex picture of the nature of this sample could be painted. For each of the 77 entries, data was collected relating to the following variables:

- Name
- Gender
- Polity of birth and corresponding modern country
- Place of birth and respective coordinates
- Continent of birth
- Birth date
- Death date
- Century of birth
- Historical period in which the bulk of their work was done
- Field of utopian excellence

The last two variables mentioned above necessitate some further explanation.

The historical periods in which entries are divided are the following:

1. Antiquity
2. Middle Ages
3. Early Modern Period
4. 18th century
5. 19th century
6. 20th century
7. 21st century

Distinguishing between the century of birth and the relevant historical period seemed appropriate for two reasons.

Firstly, the distinction seemed adequate for those historical figures who, born at the tail-end of one century, would only leave their mark upon the world in the following. Observing the database, one can see that though there is a significant number of personalities who were born in the 19th century, the core of the work and legacy of many of them only took shape in the next one, in such a way that they are generally considered to be emblematic people of the 20th century. Personalities in the database which can exemplify this are, for example, Albert Einstein and Franz Kafka, both born at the tail-end of the 19th century, yet leaving their mark upon the world during the 20th century.

Secondly, the division of periods follows the traditional historiographical approach up to the Early Modern Period – afterwards dividing the chronology by century – for the simple reason that the overwhelming majority of entries date from the 18th century onward. Dividing entries by relevant *century* instead of *historical period* would present later data analysis based on chronology with enormous time gaps, which would unnecessarily clutter some data visualizations. The large number of entries whose work dates from between the 18th and 21st centuries made it apparent that there was a need to divide what historiographically has been considered the Modern or Contemporary Age into its respective centuries, as simply categorizing these entries as being from the Modern Age would deprive research of a finer portrayal of the later centuries of the chronology.

The fields into which entries were assigned are the following:

- Arts
- Charity
- Environmentalism
- Exploration
- Humanities
- Politics
- Polymathy
- Social justice
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

- Utopianism
- Women's rights

Such a division of fields of utopian excellence was made based on the biographies that contributors had written for the project. While assigning a single category to an entry is challenging, their assignment came from what contributors wrote was the main reason for the person being added to the collection. Thus, an entry such as prominent Portuguese feminist Adelaide Cabete goes into the category "Women's rights" and not "STEM", even though she was a gynaecologist and obstetrician; the central *utopian* aspect of her life's work comes from her advocacy for women's right to vote and for women's health, and not from her academic contributions to her field – at least in the view of the contributor who added her name to the collection. On that same line of thought, dividing "Politics" and "Social justice" may seem strange, and further dividing "Social justice" and "Women's rights" may seem stranger still. This comes from the researchers' consideration that a significant number of people dealing with social justice within the field of politics makes it a category specifically tied to that field, offering a more complete view of the database. Similarly, a significant number of entries related to utopians who dedicated their work specifically to women within the field of social justice demonstrates the need for a category specifically dedicated to women's rights.

Thus, for clarification, each category could be described in the following fashion:

- **Arts:** entry advanced their art form through their revolutionary artistic work;
- **Charity:** entry was dedicated to humanitarian work against all adversity;
- **Environmentalism:** entry worked on environmental protection through activism, lobbying, and/or education;
- **Exploration:** entry dedicated themselves to exploring unknown corners of the globe, pushing the boundaries of world travel and/or connecting distant civilizations;
- **Humanities:** entry contributed to pushing the boundaries of the various fields of the humanities;

- **Politics:** entry was dedicated to a political cause – be it the improvement of socio-economic conditions, national liberation, fighting dictatorship or statecraft – by being an activist, public intellectual, or public official;
- **Polymathy:** entry contributed to several seemingly unconnected fields by their sheer genius, in such a significant way that categorizing their work becomes virtually impossible;
- **Social justice:** entry was dedicated to the defence and advancement of marginalized sections of society;
- **STEM:** entry's work greatly advanced their field in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics);
- **Utopianism:** entry dedicated their work to the field of utopianism, whether by studying utopian thought or creating intentional communities;
- **Women's rights:** entry was especially dedicated to advancing women's rights.

Once the database was completed, the second research phase began, which was dedicated to data processing. We wished to produce data visualizations to comprehend the nature of the database better and subsequently problematize its function as a representation of the nature and collective visions of utopianism and utopian thought.

To do this, we first retrieved and imported the database into an R environment – Rstudio, which was chosen based on previous work our team had done with interactive map making at the CETAPS Digital Lab – and an interactive map was produced, whereupon pointers indicated the place of birth of the entries based on the coordinates provided. For this task, we applied a selection of different libraries and packages, such as *leaflet*, *htmlwidgets*, and *leafpop*.

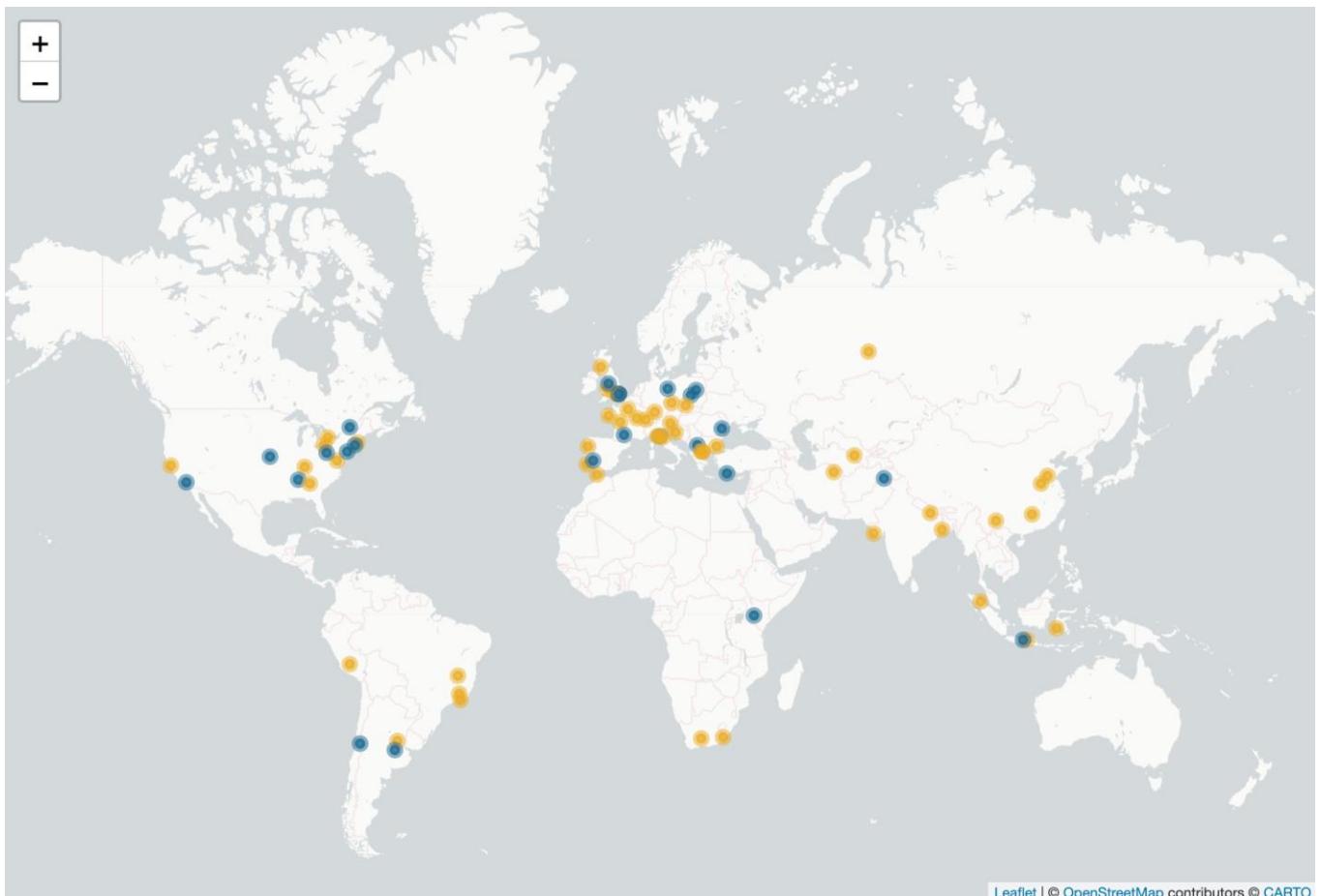
Afterwards, various data visualizations were created using Flourish – an online graphic design platform that offers a wide selection of data visualizations – to analyze the dynamics of the sample based on gender, chronology, and the fields to which each entry had been assigned. These visualizations included pie charts, grouped column charts, proportional column charts, and alluvial diagrams.

4. RESULTS

After importing the database into RStudio and running the map script, we were left with a world map [Fig. 1] in which yellow markers indicate male entries and blue markers indicate female entries.

The first thing to become readily apparent when observing the map is Europe and North America's dominance in the number of entries. Yet, more than revealing where entries are, this map shows where they are not. The evident absence of entries from North Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, the Middle East, Central America, and the entirety of Oceania becomes obvious at an initial glance. We take note of these regions especially because they are not sparsely populated (as observing the lack of entries from Russian Siberia or Northern Canada is not surprising, since population numbers are minute in these areas).

Fig. 1 World map of entries

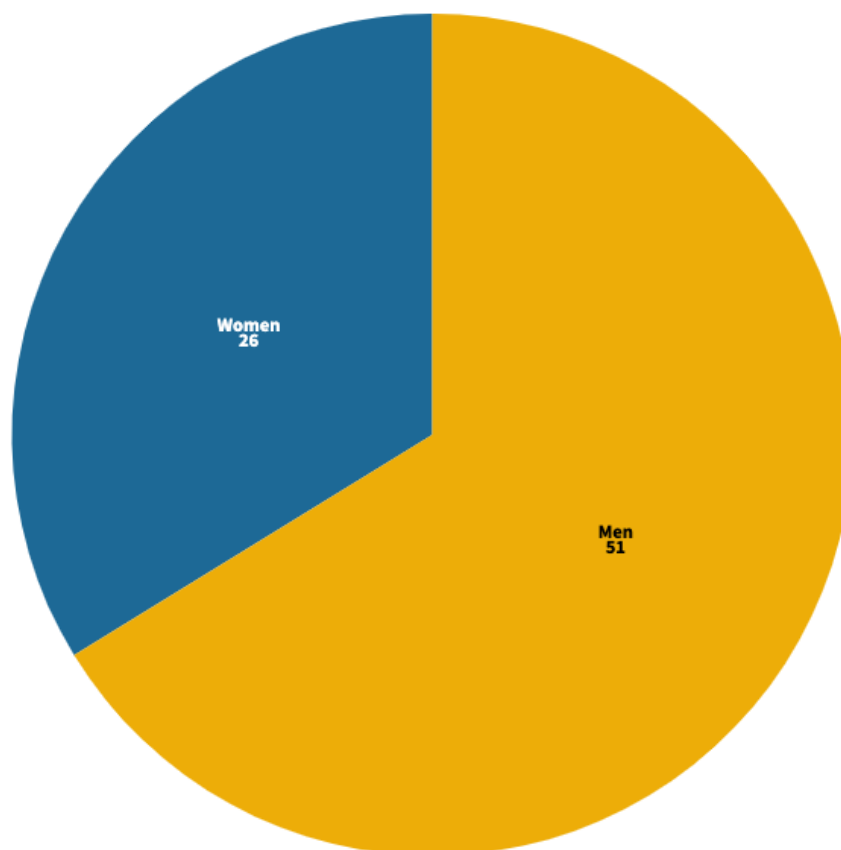


Hence, the Global North seems to have a clear dominance in the database. Such dominance becomes even more apparent once we focus on the gender variable. There is a near-absence of utopian women in the Global South compared to their male counterparts.

Observing the map made it clear that it was necessary to visualize the statistics the database could offer us.

When employing Flourish, we started by ascertaining the number of entries based on gender [see **Figure 2**]. The overwhelming majority of entries are male, 51, about 66.2% of the database, while women, 26, make up about 33.8%.

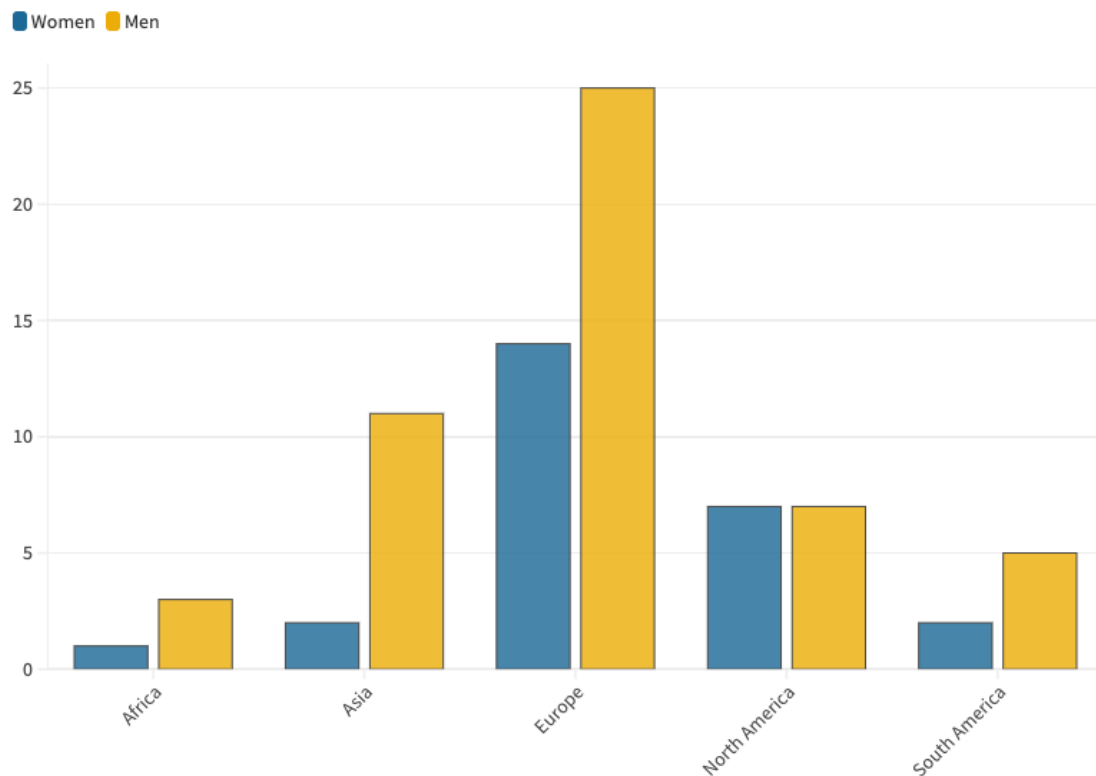
Fig. 2 Total number of entries by gender



We then followed up with the distribution of entries by continent of birth [see **Figure 3**] between women and men. In the overwhelming majority of cases, male entries outnumber female entries. Such is the case in Europe, which has the highest overall

representation, with men (25) outnumbering women (14); in Africa, where, even though it has the lowest overall representation for both genders, men (3) slightly outnumber women (1); in South America, which also represents a small number of entries, men (5) overtake women (2); and in Asia, where men (11) significantly outnumber women (2). The only continent where we find an even distribution is North America, with 7 entries for each gender.

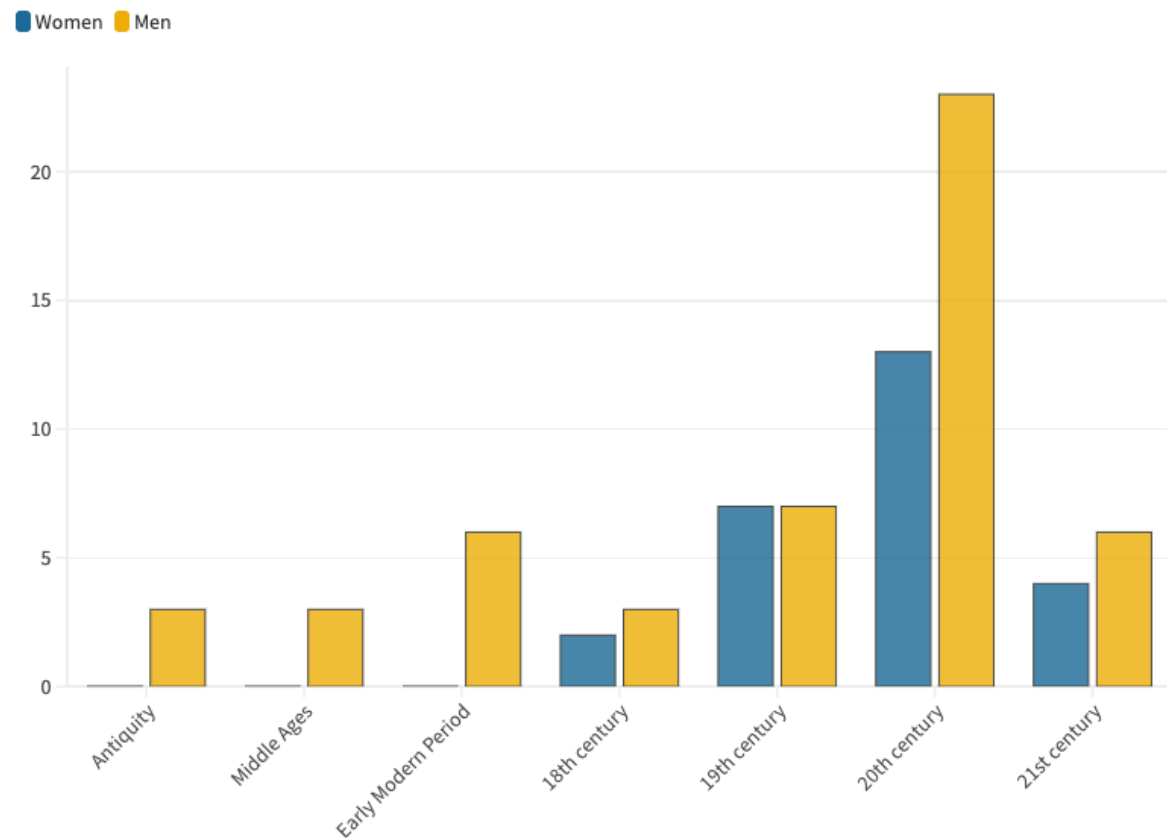
Fig. 3 Entry distribution by continent of birth



Considering this geographical distribution of entries, we also thought creating a graph representing entry distribution in time would be convenient. Thus, we made a graph dividing entries by the historical period in which relevant work was done [see Figure 4], illustrating all contributions across historical periods. The male entries dominate the earlier periods, with entries exclusively for men in Antiquity (1), the Middle Ages (3), and the Early Modern Period (6). Only in the 18th century did we see the first entries for women (2), although men still take the lead (3). The 19th century showcases a balanced

distribution of entries for both men and women, with 7 entries each. However, a significant gap is observed when we move onto the 20th century, marked by a substantial increase in male entries (23) and 13 female entries. Interestingly, there is a dip in the 21st century, with only 6 entries for men and 4 for women.

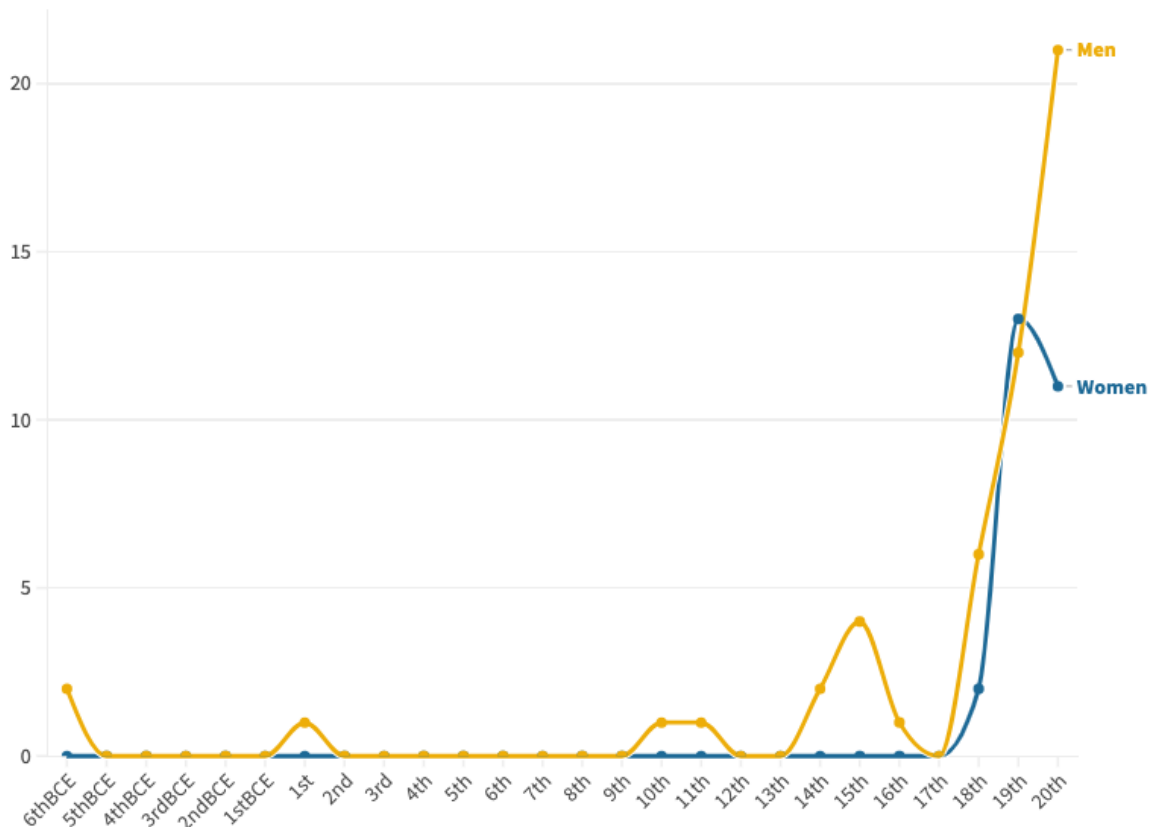
Fig. 4 Entry distribution by historical period in which relevant work was done



Entry distribution by the century of birth can be seen in **Figure 5**, up to the 20th century. As we have seen before, entries in earlier periods are almost non-existent. There are a few recorded entries for men in the 6th century BCE (2), 1st century CE (1), 10th and 11th centuries (1), 14th century (2), 15th century (4), and 16th century (1), while the graph remains flat mainly for women, recording no entries until the 18th century (2). There was then a rise in both men's and women's entries in the 18th century, with 6 and 2 entries, respectively. Curiously, there are more women in the database born in the 19th century than men, with 13 and 12 entries, respectively. However, the 20th century denotes a

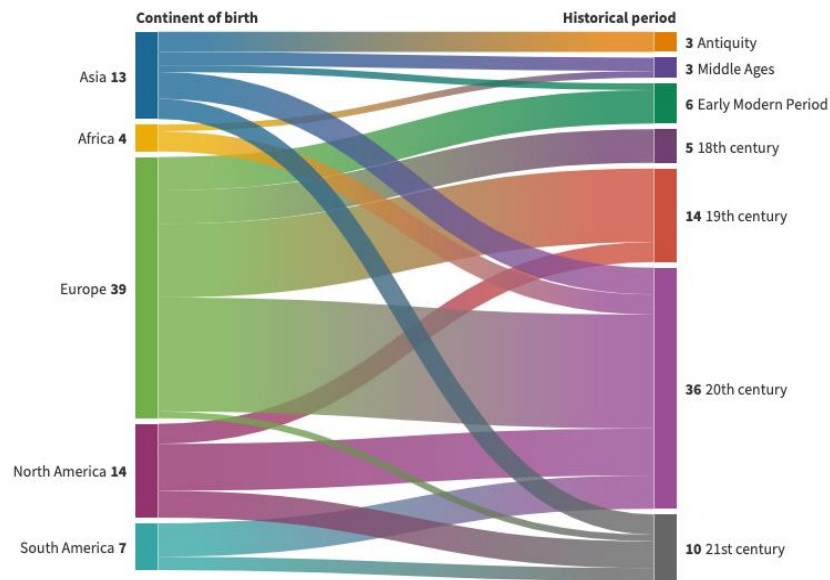
significant chasm between the genders, when most of the people born were male (22) and women dropped to 11.

Fig. 5 Chronology of entries by century of birth



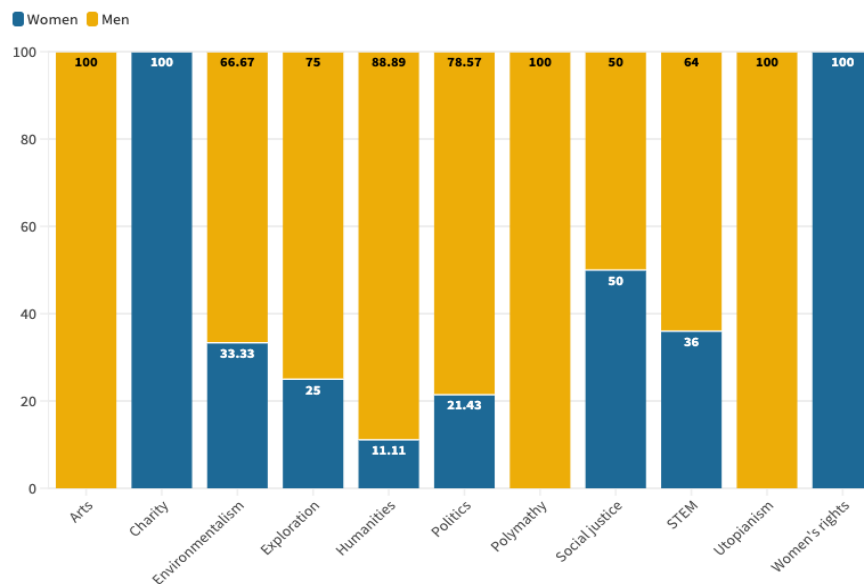
It was then decided that analysing the dynamics of geography and chronology within the database would be relevant. For this, we created an alluvial chart depicting the region of entries and the respective century in which the utopians produced their work [Fig. 6]. It became clear that Europeans had a dominant position from the Early Modern Period to the 20th century. Yet, such dominance becomes less pronounced over time. Every entry from the 18th century corresponds to a European utopian, and out of 14 entries from the 19th century, 11 are European. The 20th century is the first period since Early Modernity when Europeans are not the majority of entries (17 out of 36), yet are still the more numerous group. The 21st century marks a clear change along the lines of waning European dominance; out of 10 entries relating to utopians who have done the bulk of their work in the 21st century, only 1 is from Europe.

Fig. 6 Connection of entries between continent of birth and historical period



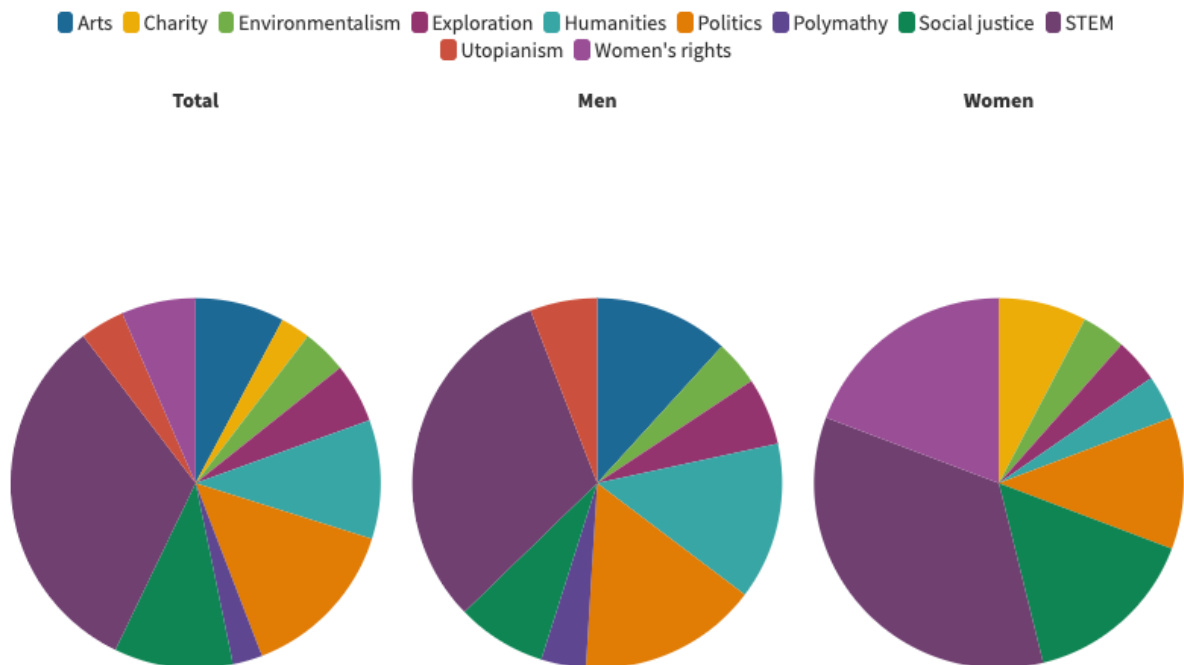
We also conducted an analysis of gender distribution by field [Fig. 7], which revealed men account for the overwhelming majority in almost every single field. Notably, fields such as Arts, Polymathy, and Utopianism are entirely male-dominated, with no female representation. Besides fields such as Charity and Women's Rights, which have no male representation, and Social Justice, where both men and women are equal, men account for the majority in all other fields.

Fig. 7 Gender distribution by field



Subsequently, in **Figure 8**, we can now see the field distribution by gender. Although these two graphic representations might seem similar at first, through **Figure 10**, we can ascertain the dominant fields in each of the entry sets based on gender. Observing these charts, it becomes clear that STEM fields are ubiquitous in their dominance, representing about a third of all entries for each of the 3 sets we produced (32.5% in general, 31.4% for male entries, and 34.6% for female entries).

Fig. 8 Field distribution by gender

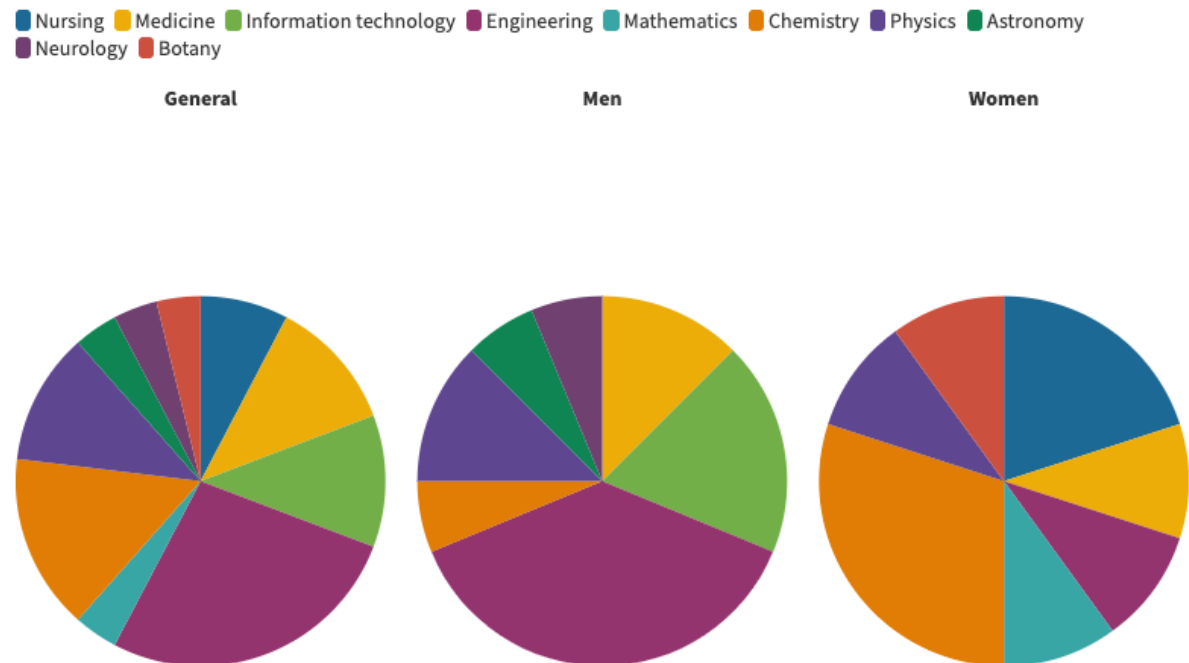


Since the STEM field is ubiquitously dominant in both male and female entries, we created another graph specifying the STEM field for the general, male, and female entries [see **Figure 9**]. In the general sample, Engineering is the dominating field with 26.9% of all entries, followed by Chemistry (15.4%), Medicine, Physics, and Information Technology (all with 11.5%).

Looking at the sample of male entries, it is easy to note that Engineering is still largely dominant, accounting for over a third of the entries (37.5%), with Information Technology coming in second (18.8%). Also notable is that the fields of Nursing, Botany,

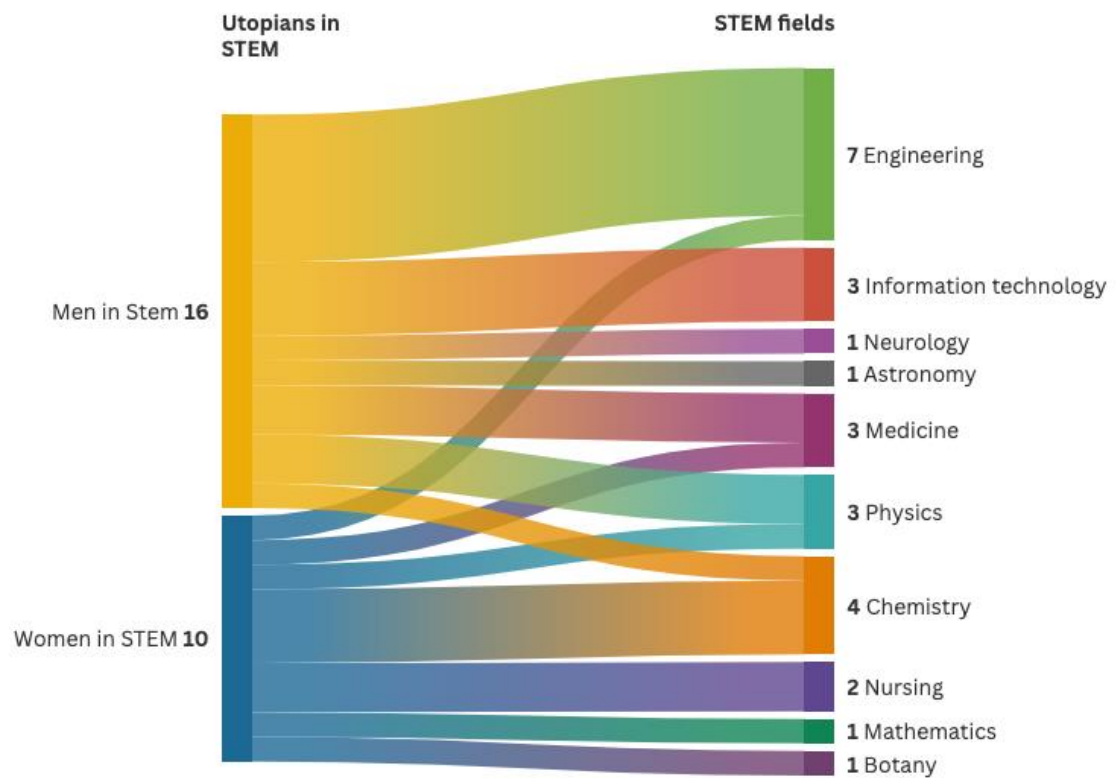
and Mathematics are entirely absent from the male subset. Within the female sample, the fields of Chemistry (30%) and Nursing (20%) comprise the majority of the represented fields. Information Technology, Astronomy, and Neurology are absent from this sample.

Fig. 9 STEM field distribution by gender



Lastly, in **Figure 10**, we can see that out of 10 specific fields in STEM, 7 have female contributions, yet only 4 have contributions from both genders. Of those, 3 are dominated by male figures – with the case of Engineering being especially illustrative of this, with only 1 female entry out of 7. Only Chemistry seems to escape the general rule, with 3 female entries out of 4. Despite this, both genders represent an equal number of fields within STEM, with each gender having representation contributing to 7 different fields of study.

Fig. 10 Connection between entries in STEM by gender and STEM field



5. DISCUSSION

The data we have gathered and processed has partially solidified preconceived notions we had when looking at the database alone. Yet, intersections of gender, chronology, geography, and field within the database have highlighted rather curious and unexpected trends and exceptions.

For the most part, these representations illustrate, first and foremost, a clear gender imbalance in the dataset. This, of course, goes hand in hand with patterns of exclusion when it comes to women, whose representation rises only in more recent historical periods.

Moreover, geographical distribution not only reinforces this existing gap but reveals apparent regional disparities, reflecting socio-economic, cultural, and political landscapes.

Chronology seems to be a source of inequality in the database as well as an overwhelming majority of them come in the last three centuries, in a timeline that spans almost three millennia.

Finally, one of the surprising trends of the dataset is the significant number of entries categorized as “STEM”, which may indicate an evolution of the role of STEM fields in utopian thinking.

5.1. Women in STEM

There is a tendency for women to be alienated by the sciences. So, how do the women in our database defy that?

When analysing the dataset, one of the results that surprised us most was how the overarching field with the most significant representation of women was STEM. Today, there is still a considerable gender gap in STEM fields that has persisted throughout history. However, this imbalance does not reflect the lack of major contributions made by women but, better yet, the lack of recognition given to their work and contributions. (Garbuz 2023, 272).

It is from the 18th and 19th centuries - the period when female entries appear in the dataset – that women began to make their mark in STEM a recognizable one. However, society’s perception of women as wives, mothers, and daughters alone made it difficult for women to fit the role of a scientist. Many female scientists were able to move away from the reclusive sphere of the home but had their work constantly overshadowed by their male peers.

Long-held stereotypes and prejudices have held women to different standards than men for centuries (Miles 2001, 4). When it comes to STEM, women are typically expected to veer off into biological and social sciences, whereas men are expected to take on physical sciences, such as technology and engineering (Smyth and Nosek 2015, 2). There is, however, a defiance of that tendency in the database. In the short sample that we have, not only is there a great diversity in the STEM fields where we find the female entries, but there are “shoes” they alone fill, such as Mathematics, Botany, and Nursing, of which there are no male entries.

Women then do not seem to be represented in any way that completely limits them to previously established stereotypes about their role as scientists. This small yet varied

sample of STEM fields that women occupy is, if anything, indicative of the database's future representative growth.

5.2. Geography, Chronology, and Underrepresentation

Both the map and the chronology built from our database present us with what can be considered puzzling gaps.

The geography of entries is clearly biased toward Europe, with nearly half of all entries being from the Old Continent. Vast areas of the world that, historically, have given humanity some of its greatest thinkers and leaders, are immensely underrepresented: such is the case for the Middle East, North Africa, India, and China, which could potentially be as dotted by entry markers as Europe – if not more.

Similarly, the chronology is profoundly imbalanced as well. The vast majority of entries show up in the 18th century, with a clear peak in the 20th century, while the entire database universe points to a chronology that starts about 2800 years ago. To have a majority of entries come in the last 300 years seems to show there is a bias toward Modernity.

These imbalances in both time and space are possibly connected, and data indicates that: the fact is, since the beginning of the period marked by the dataset, it takes two millennia for the first European entry to show up. Up until then, Asian and African utopians are in clear dominance.

This may point to the idea of the construction of Modernity being defined by the sort of ideology Europe constructed in its period of expansion. The bias toward Modernity is natural – after all, contributions are made by people born in the Modern Age – yet the tendency toward thinking of utopia in its Modern conception may bring with it the tendency to also think of it in its *European* conception. A conception of history as a naturally phased construction of Modernity guided by European principles makes it so it is thought that the validity of utopian thinking is based on a *Modern* and, subsequently, *European* matrix (Dussel 2000, 27-29). Working toward a mindful critique of these naturally occurring biases may contribute to future submissions which will make the database richer, filling the great chasms in both its world map and its timeline.

5.3. STEM and Utopia

One thing that may be surprising when analyzing this data is the predominance of STEM entries in a database that has utopianism as its thematic matrix.

At its inception, utopia was defined by its function as a response to social ills. More's *Utopia* and Campanella's *City of the Sun* function as radical critiques and subsequent reactions to what – as they saw it – were the issues affecting 15th and 16th-century Europe, respectively. These utopians built imagined reformulations of their contemporary society.

We do see this will to radically address the social ills of the world in our database when we see the prominence of fields such as Politics, Social justice, and Women's rights. Yet, STEM takes center stage, as a third of the entries have been designated as utopians in their advancement of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. While those who fight to address injustices and the issues of human beings living together are still considered to be doing utopian work, those who work in bettering our health, pushing the boundaries of human material achievement, and expanding our library of knowledge on the natural world are seen as also being key contributors in the construction of utopia, for believing that humans are always capable of living, doing and knowing more. This is evidence of one of Gregory Claeys' "Five Languages of Utopia": the language of progress (2013, 10). It may be that this reflects a change in how we see STEM fields that, what once seemed to be a collection of abstractions meant for academics, has now taken a nuclear role in the construction of the future.

6. CONCLUSION

The Great Utopians database shows there are at least tendencies to what is considered "utopian". A project such as this is particularly valuable in ascertaining collective visions of utopianism because it is "open access", meaning the entries reflect the thought process of contributors on what constitutes utopian work.

As such, it becomes challenging to attempt to balance the collection on the basis of gender, geography, and chronology through concrete means. The only way this imbalance can be overcome is through achieving a more comprehensive understanding of

history and its inherent biases, and such a task goes far beyond this project's scope. What can, indeed, be done is make it clear to future contributors that these biases exist, giving them the mission of not only contributing to the expansion of the collection but of bringing the largely forgotten voices of history to the project as well.

Analyzing the database confirms the idea that utopia is a multifaceted concept with no clear-cut demarcations on what is and is not utopian. What the contributors of our database see as utopian action ranges from scientific advancement to artistic excellence, from realist political activity to utopian community building, from charity and humanitarian work to exploration and military action. What unites all of the men and women represented in this collection is that, at one point, their goals would have been considered unrealistic, near impossible even, which lends validity to Lyman Tower Sargent's definition of utopia as "social dreaming". A utopian seems to be currently construed as one who dares to think that the world may be radically different, and acts with that vision in mind, changing the face of humanity in the process.

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JOEL RAMOS FAUSTINO

Joel Ramos Faustino earned a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Languages-Translation (English and German) at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. He is currently enrolled in the second year of the Master's Degree Program of Anglo-American Studies at that same faculty, for which he is currently writing a thesis on the role of magic in medieval fantasy literature. At the same time, he is working as a Junior Researcher in Anglo-American Studies at CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies), where he has worked - among other projects - with the 'Great Utopians' database within the Utopia 500 project. His main interests include medievalism, fantasy literature, and aesthetics.

JOANA PINELA

Joana Pinela has a bachelor's degree in Languages, Literature, and Cultures (English Studies) from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. She is a second-year Master's student in Anglo-American Studies in the same faculty. She is writing her dissertation on the work of North American poet Diane di Prima and on questions of the utopian and dystopian body. She is also working as a Junior Researcher in Anglo-American Studies at CETAPS's (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies) Digital Lab, where she has worked- among other projects- with the *O Vegetariano* database, within the ALIMENTOPIA/Utopian Foodways project. Her interests include utopian studies, feminist literature, and poetry. She has also published an article entitled "The Loba's Howl: A Comparative Reading of Allen Ginsberg's Howl and Diane di Prima's 'The Loba Recovers the Memory of a Mare'" in VIA PANORAMICA.

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Their Cup of Tea: Emotions and Drinking in Victorian-Era Literature

LILE KOBALIANI, RAQUEL CORREIA DE SOUZA
& FELIPE JACOB DE JESUS FERREIRA

University of Porto

ABSTRACT: Victorian society, characterised by industrial expansion, economic growth, and a strong emphasis on imperialism, was equally renowned for its adherence to tradition and a preserved way of life, in which personal and collective emotions were often kept beneath the surface, rather than openly expressed. However, as art always mirrors the *Zeitgeist*, Victorian-era literature has not failed to identify such nuances. The goal of this article was to explore the connection, from a digital humanities perspective, between drinking habits and emotional expression in Victorian literature, focusing on alcoholic beverages but also other drinks like tea, coffee, and lemonade. Our study uncovered patterns that reveal how drinking practices shaped personal and social emotions. The corpus of analysis consists of ten major Victorian novels through distant reading methods and sentiment analysis conducted in R. We observed that emotions related to drinking were largely negative, with alcohol playing a significant role

RESUMO: A sociedade vitoriana caracterizou-se pela expansão industrial, pelo crescimento económico e por uma forte ênfase no imperialismo. Era igualmente conhecida pela sua adesão à tradição e a um modo de vida conservador, em que as emoções pessoais e coletivas eram frequentemente mantidas sob a superfície, em vez de serem expressas abertamente. No entanto, como a arte reflete sempre o *Zeitgeist*, a literatura da era vitoriana não deixou de identificar essas nuances. O objetivo deste artigo foi explorar a ligação, a partir da perspetiva das humanidades digitais, entre os hábitos de consumo de álcool e a expressão emocional na literatura vitoriana, centrando-se em bebidas alcoólicas, mas também noutras bebidas como o chá, o café e a limonada. O estudo revelou padrões que revelam como as práticas de consumo de álcool moldaram as emoções pessoais e sociais. Observámos que as emoções relacionadas com as bebidas eram em grande parte negativas, com o álcool a desempenhar um papel



in how emotions were portrayed. Interestingly, almost half of the passages reflected negative emotions, challenging the common belief that Victorian literature often leans toward more positive expressions. The findings also suggest that drinking was closely tied to both public and private emotional experiences, mirroring larger societal concerns about morality, social status, and gender in the Victorian era. This research offers a deeper insight into how emotions are represented in Victorian literature and points to the need to explore further the links reflected through art, between emotions, drinking behaviours, and gendered social norms during this period, which can have significant comparative relevance to modern-day.

KEYWORDS: Victorian Era, Drinking Habits, Victorian Emotions, Sentiment Analysis

significativo na forma como as emoções eram retratadas. Curiosamente, quase metade das passagens refletia emoções negativas, desafiando a crença comum de que a literatura vitoriana se inclina frequentemente para expressões mais positivas. Os resultados também sugerem que o consumo de álcool estava intimamente ligado a experiências emocionais públicas e privadas, refletindo preocupações sociais mais amplas sobre moralidade, estatuto social e gênero na era vitoriana. Esta investigação oferece uma visão mais profunda da forma como as emoções são representadas na literatura vitoriana e aponta para a necessidade de uma maior exploração das ligações refletidas através da arte, entre emoções, comportamentos de consumo de álcool e normas sociais de gênero durante este período, o que pode ter uma relevância comparativa significativa para os dias de hoje.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Era Vitoriana, Consumo de bebidas, Emoções Vitorianas, Análise de Sentimentos

INTRODUCTION

The act of drinking, whether it is a cup of tea or something stronger, connects a person to two distinct spheres of the self: the personal and the social. On an individual level, drinking evokes memories triggered by familiar tastes and smells. Socially, it is shaped by societal expectations, reflecting the moral values of the time. Depending on the culture, the feelings that come with drinking affect the individual and can change them dramatically. In highly traditional societies, like the one of the Victorian era, one element that held significance beyond its superficial value was undoubtedly drinking. To understand these correlations, this paper dives into the emotions tied to drinking in the Victorian Era, performing a distant reading of some of the most popular literature from that time.

Based on our research into the drinking habits of the Victorian Era, we were able to identify the main beverages consumed by the English population of that time. These included alcoholic beverages (such as beer), tea, coffee, and lemonade. Each beverage had a notable connection to the emotions experienced by the characters in various novels. We identified three emotional responses linked to the consumption of these drinks, which were categorised as positive, negative, or neutral.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to these findings, it is possible to see that in Victorian England, one of the most important types of beverages was alcoholic. Their consumption was directly connected to social class, status, gender roles, and the country's historical context, which directly influenced people's emotions at the time and evoked positive, negative, and neutral ones. In the book *Drinking in Victorian and Edwardian Britain Beyond the Spectre of the Drunkard*,¹ we learn that, in Victorian Britain, people drank for many reasons beyond simply seeking intoxication (Hands 2018, 15). According to Thora Hands, there were multiple layers of meaning when it came to drinking that were connected to people's social class and gender. By moving beyond a narrow problem-solving approach, her research raises the significance of the topic, as it offers a comprehensive framework

for analysing contemporary drinking habits and the ongoing challenges of navigating the social, cultural, and commercial factors that shape alcohol consumption – issues that were just as relevant in the Victorian era.

Hands' book offers excellent insight into the reasons for Victorians consuming alcohol. According to her research, alcohol – especially beer – was a regular part of daily life in Victorian society. It was enjoyed at social events, meals, and even during work breaks, especially as a way for the working class to relax after a long day. Traditions like "dinner beer" helped people unwind, and drinking customs were shared across all social classes. Working-class men often gathered in pubs, where beer became tied to masculinity, while upper-class dinners used wine to show off social status.

Beyond leisure, drinking also helped people bond socially, whether at parties, gatherings, or even the workplace. For many, alcohol was an escape from life's stresses, offering relief from anxiety, frustration, or boredom. For women, especially in higher social circles, drinking came with shame and secrecy, as social norms expected them to hide it. While drunkenness was a reality, drinking during this era was not just about getting drunk. It was an internal part of society, reflecting more profound social, cultural, and even medical beliefs, along with complex emotions like pleasure, anxiety, and social pressure. Through Hands' findings, it is possible to see that there were correlations between the alcoholic consumption of Victorian people and their emotions, which was certainly reflected in the popular literature of that time. Alcohol consumption, even though it had great significance, on both personal and social aspects of life, was certainly not the only popular form of beverage connected to the Victorian era.

Besides the alcoholic drinks, common in the Victorian era, our analysis also showed that tea was one of the most mentioned drinks. According to the study conducted by Caitlin Khan in 2018 and published as *Identity in a Teacup: Tea's Influence Over the Lives of British Women in the Nineteenth Century*, there are connections between Victorian-era literature and the act of drinking. In her study, it is possible to see how the ritualistic tea drinking process influenced the lives and status of women of that era (Khan 2020, 3). Initially, tea was a luxury reserved for the wealthy due to its high cost and limited availability, which were impacted by long sea voyages and restrictive trade policies with China. The drink gained popularity in England through Catherine of Braganza, wife of King Charles II, and became especially favoured among upper-middle-class women.

Tea drinking was often a private ritual held in sitting rooms, known as closets, which associated it with intimacy. This practice was also connected to the emotion of freedom, as women typically wore dresses without corsets during these occasions. Additionally, tea gatherings fostered creativity and emotional expression, as women were responsible for organising and decorating the space for the event. Tea also served as a significant status symbol, reflecting one's social standing.

Emotionally, tea was responsible for tying specific groups, such as women, together while also creating a common bond between people of the same social class. Through time, it became more than just a drink; it evolved into a ritual that reflected social status across different classes. For the upper class, the ceremonies and etiquette around teatime quickly replaced the drink itself as a status symbol. As tea became more accessible, the elaborate rituals and presentation became the actual markers of wealth and respectability. With the rising popularity of tea, other drinks, such as coffee, which had a high significance in the past, were overshadowed.

Coffee was another drink consumed in the Victorian Era, but it certainly came with challenges. The drink was particularly popular before the Victorian era, as Coffee houses served as a space for men to gather, engage in social debates, and discuss some of the most significant political matters (Cowan 2007, 193). By then, the British East India Company prioritised the tea trade over coffee, as international competition for coffee had intensified with the rise of coffeehouses across Europe. This led to the decline of coffee houses despite their rise in the 18th century. Moreover, Andrew Smith (2024) states that the Beer Act of 1830 boosted beer production, but coffee consumption declined for other reasons, including rising coffee prices due to the emancipation of enslaved people in the British West Indies. Consequently, in the Victorian era, coffee became overshadowed by tea, as its consumption grew, prices remained stable, making it more appealing than coffee during this time.

Moreover, our study found that lemonade also held great significance in the Victorian era, much like other beverages, as it was deeply embedded in the social life of specific groups. While tea is famously associated with *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the whimsical tea parties also featured a variety of sweet treats. In his study *Sweetness and Femininity: Fashioning Gendered Appetite in the Victorian Age*, Michael Krondl (2022) emphasises the link between femininity and sweet indulgences, such as lemonade,

which was key in shaping gendered social rituals.

In Victorian society, sweetness was linked to femininity, with women expected to embody it both in behaviour and what they consumed. Sweet foods and drinks became a way for women to express "sweet" and "dainty" emotions, shaping their social image. Sweet foods and beverages, like lemonade, were central to how women performed traditional femininity. Simple daily details, such as drinking lemonade, further reinforced societal expectations of women, pressuring them to conform (Kronl 2022, 67). Nevertheless, lemonade transcended its influence over a single group, gaining broader social significance. Lemonade evolved into a popular beverage enjoyed by all classes. It was sold at markets, theatres, and street stalls, symbolising leisure and shared social experiences (Emmins 1991, 7). Lemonade became a drink tied to emotional comfort in different communities, appearing in the literature of the time as a representation of pleasures across society.

As with all beverages, they often carried social significance, closely tied to the emotions of those sharing them within a specific group. In each society, the expression of these emotions has varied and continues to do so. Our research shows that although the Victorian Era is a well-known period and its literature is extensively studied, there is a significant gap in research on exploring emotions during this period. The most prominent name on this topic is Rachel Ablow, whose chapter in the book *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel* (2012) is a primary source for this research.

When mentioning emotions in the Victorian era, it is likely to make us think about the sentimentality of the period. The emotional expression of Victorian society was often intertwined with idealised virtuous behaviours, moral integrity, and ethical duty (Ablow 2008, 194). However, research conducted at the University of Warwick in 2017 has demonstrated, after analysing 8 million books from 1776 to 2009, that Victorians used a happier vocabulary in their books than modern society (Sgroi *et al.* 2017, 46). To reach this conclusion they used computational linguistics to signify the emotion implicit in billions of words. Although the novels of this period constantly presented sentimentality and even a cheerful state, historians agree that the nineteenth century was marked by "the decline of emotions" as a central element of civil society (Ablow 2008, 193). Victorian's emotions were usually gendered split. As men could easily navigate public and private spaces, they had emotions that could shift between these spheres, while women,

mostly confined to the home, had emotions bound to this specific place. Hence, it can be implied that feelings in the Victorian era were significantly associated with the differentiation between public and private, female and male.

In the nineteenth century, reading novels was a way of training emotions. It was assumed that reading made it possible to develop a sentimental education that was valuable in other stages of life. Spackman and Parrott concluded, after evaluating 3 different literary periods, that Victorian novelists are the least intense, which “may indicate that authors from this period held that emotions can and ought to be controlled” (Spackman and Parrott 2001, 570). Grace Moore states that much of our current understanding of emotions derives from the self-examination prevalent in the Victorian Era, as Victorians explored the nature and origin of their feelings. Despite being a common practice, some writers questioned emotions’ obviousness and were more interested in creating moments when the characters were incapable of describing their feelings or identifying their sources (Moore 2018, 602-603).

Drinking is one of the most significant aspects that can trigger, evoke, or create new emotions. Even though societal and environmental factors are influential, this process is inevitable because of how the memories are created and stored. When consuming the beverage, its smell and taste become imprinted in the individual's mind and can later be triggered by exposure to the same stimulus. Moreover, the study by Smith explored the effects of different drink aromas (lemon, beer, whisky, gin, and water-control) on mood, attention, and cognition, showing that certain aromas have specific effects on one’s mood (2004). Therefore, the senses, memories and, consequently, emotions are directly connected, and even in such an emotionally preserved era as the Victorian one, literature is a true mirror of these types of formations and connections. Therefore, exploring these emotions is a complex and delicate task, necessitating a specialised approach that can be effectively facilitated through digital humanities methodologies.

When analysing emotions evoked by drinking within the literature, one of the most used techniques is self-reporting questionnaires because of their easy application and understanding (Dorado *et al.* 2016, 38). Nevertheless, this kind of approach has some limitations since emotions are difficult to describe and they vary in different cultural contexts. Therefore, it seems relevant to integrate Digital Humanities tools to promote

broader methods of emotion classification, although it is important to highlight that these might not be as accurate as those expressed by humans. These digital methods are instrumental to analyse a significant amount of data that would be impossible to classify by close reading. “Previously neglected”, Sentiment Analysis (SA) has been more discussed recently (Rebora 2023, 17). It emerges as an option to extract emotions by converting them into a machine-readable language, allowing the creation of visualisations as graphs and plots to analyse the content. They are divided into two kinds: Polarity-based, which determines whether the passage expresses a positive, negative, or neutral sentiment. The other technique is the Valence-based sentiment analysis, which attributes a degree to the emotions instead of just assigning a positive or a negative value. Since it is a developing field, SA has experienced some inconsistencies in relation to its methods and theories. In the study *Emotions of London* (2016), Heuser, Moretti, and Steine used sentiment analysis and crowdsourcing to identify which emotions were associated with each part of London. The study proved that machines and humans diverge significantly when categorising more subjective emotions like fear (Heuser Ryan et al. 2016, 6). The machine under-identifies more implicit feelings, especially those related to personal or cultural understanding. While humans classified 12% of the passages as frightening, computers only considered 1%. In their study, the authors identify that both humans and computers agree that most passages are neutral and that 21% are related to happy emotions.

METHODS

Data

We selected ten books and novels comprehended from the period known as the Victorian Era, which is typically defined from 1837 to 1901. The selected books are *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Dracula*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Oliver Twist*, *A Study in Scarlet*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, *The Woman in White*, and *Wuthering Heights*. They were extracted from curated website lists that catalogue the most prominent books of the Victorian Era. These books were chosen explicitly so this study could include works from different literary genres and years, as well as texts written by female and male authors. Additionally, the

selected books reflect the historical and societal background of the Victorian Era. Due to the vast amount of literature produced during that period, it was necessary to exclude some books and authors that were undoubtedly relevant to Victorian literature. Another limitation of this study is that it only considers canonical works, excluding many books and novels that are not part of the canon.

Procedure

Once the books were selected, we created a dictionary which included different kinds of beverages consumed in the Victorian Era, utensils, and verbs which could be used as synonyms for *drink*. After that, we imported it to an R environment and utilised the library *Quanteda* to create a corpus of each book and tokenise them. Using a function called *Kwic*, we were able to locate the selected words and separate them into excerpts with an offset of 30 tokens (30 tokens before the one word selected and 30 tokens after). We filtered the data generated and created a subset with all relevant passages related to beverages in these books. After filtering using the dictionary, we created a subsetting of the relevant ones. A total of 567 passages were gathered. Finally, we applied a Polarity-based Sentiment Analysis, using the *Quanteda.sentiment* package extension, to analyse the selected passages. We utilised *Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary* (2015), available in the library, which defines a comprehensive list of words, verbs and expressions already catalogued in *positive*, *negative*, *pos_negative*, and *neg_positive*. Then, a function called *textstat_polarity* was used, which returns the polarity of each excerpt in the corpus. This polarity is a numeric value that varies between negative and positive numbers. We then classified those excerpts based on this value in positive (polarity over 0), negative (polarity under 0), and neutral (polarity equal to 0).

RESULTS

For reference to the results, in Figure 1, the graph provides a sentiment analysis of each passage in *Dracula* (1897), one of the analysed books. The passages are in chronological order, which makes it possible to visualise the distribution of emotions throughout the book.

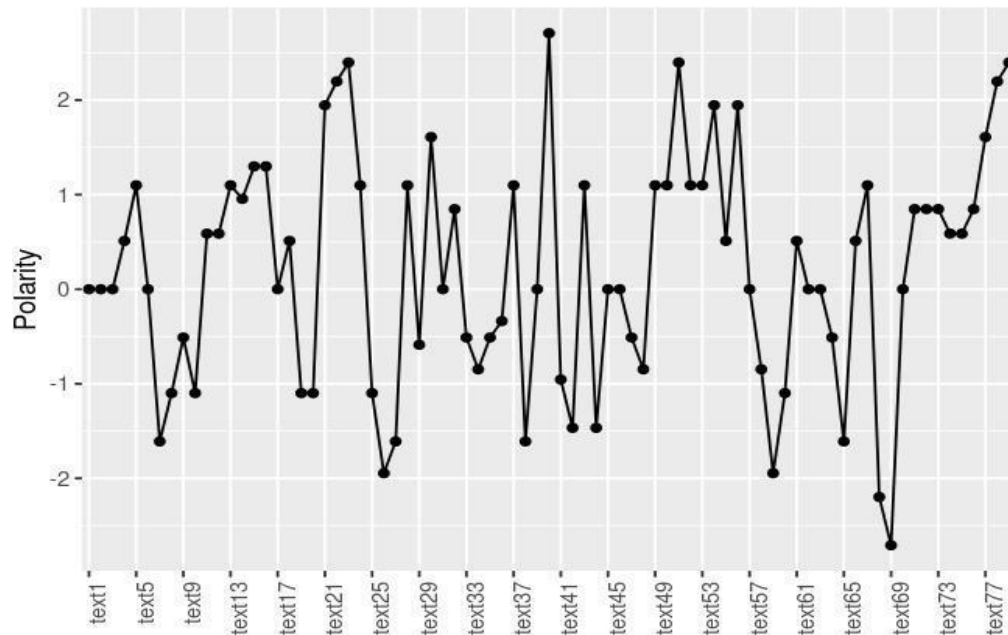


Figure1- Sentiment Distribution of Passages in Dracula

The Sentiment analysis allowed us to observe distinct patterns of positive, negative, and neutral emotions across the passages. The percentage of these emotions in each book individually is represented in Table 1.

Book Title	Total of Passages	Positive (%)	Negative (%)	Neutral (%)
<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>	29	48.28	37.93	13.79
<i>Dracula</i>	79	49.37	34.18	16.46
<i>Jane Eyre</i>	84	36.9	42.86	20.24
<i>The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i>	15	33.33	40	26.67
<i>Oliver Twist</i>	107	37.38	42.06	20.56
<i>A Study in Scarlet</i>	17	20.41	47.06	23.53
<i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i>	41	26.83	48.78	24.39
<i>The Tenant of Wildfell Hall</i>	107	28.97	52.34	18.69
<i>The Woman in White</i>	16	43.75	43.75	12.75
<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	72	25	48.61	26.39

Table 1- Percentages of emotions in each book

Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1838) and Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) are the books with more beverages-related passages. *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) has fewer passages, but it is necessary to take into consideration that it is a novel with fewer pages than a regular romance. The sentiment analysis revealed that, despite its Gothic nature, *Dracula*, when analysed individually, is the book with more positive emotions (49.37 %), followed by (48.28 %) found in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1864).

The Tenant of Wildfell Hall (52.34%) is the book with the highest proportion of negative emotions, followed by (48.78%) found in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890). The books with the highest proportions of neutrality are *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (26.67%) and *Wuthering Heights* (1847) (26.39 %).

When considering all the Victorian books selected, Sentiment Analysis reveals that within the 567 passages, 35.45% of them are related to positive emotions, 44.27% to negative, and only 20.28% of passages are neutral. This highlights a general tendency towards pessimistic emotions since almost half of the analysed passages are negative. In Figure 2, the graph represents the average polarity by book, and it is based on the strength of the sentiments in the passages. At the same time, the percentages illustrated in Table 1 show the distribution of these emotions per book. That is why the average in Figure 2 does not match the percentages directly. The passages are not equal in strength. Many mildly positive passages would bring the average closer to neutral, while fewer but very strongly positive would pull the average score up. In this case, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is the book with the strongest positive emotions.

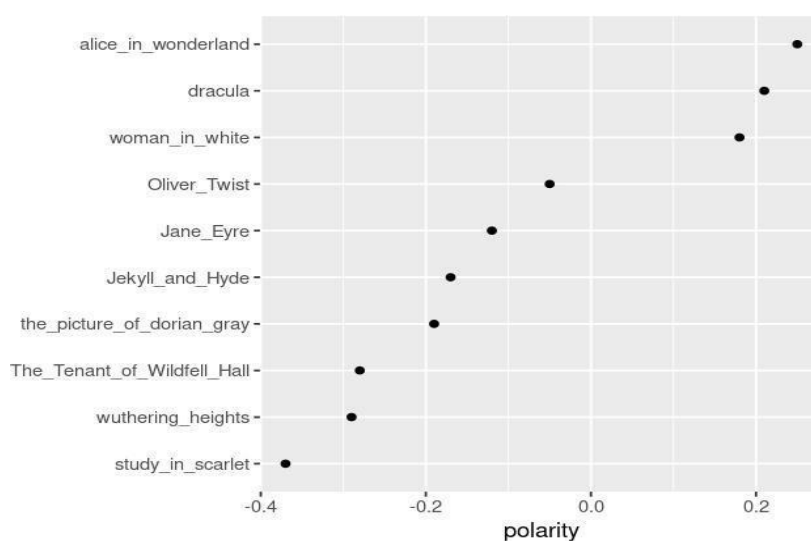


Figure 2-Average polarity by book

DISCUSSION

The Sentiment Analysis of the selected texts demonstrates some findings that differ from the existing literature. While the study conducted by Sgroi *et al.* (2017) proved that the Victorians used happier vocabulary, our research demonstrated that almost half of the passages we selected (44.27%) relate to negative feelings. It must be emphasised that we only analysed passages related to beverages. In contrast, the authors mentioned above considered the books as a whole and compared them with other literary periods, which was not done in our study. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that our sample is considerably less extensive and comprehensive compared to the one used in other studies. Heuser, Moretti, and Steiner's (2016) study also suggests a prevalence of positive emotions over negative, although, in their analysis, neutral emotions had a higher proportion. These outcomes implied that when relating to beverages and drinking habits, Victorians tended to associate them with more negative emotions. Our study also differs from the work of Heuser, Moretti, and Steiner in other aspects, as their results indicate an absence of emotions, while neutrality only represents 20.28% of our total sample.

One surprising result from our analysis is that *Dracula* contains the highest percentage of passages that associate positive emotions with drinking. This likely happens because many scenes where characters share food and drinks with Count Dracula occur before they realise that he is a vampire, thus those moments do not immediately trigger negative feelings. As the polarity graph shows in Figure 1, the emotions in the early part of the book are mostly neutral or even slightly positive, which makes sense since characters like Jonathan Harker have not yet discovered Dracula's true nature. However, as the story progresses and Dracula's influence grows stronger, the emotional tone turns darker, especially around events like Lucy's death. This shift reflects the increasing tension and despair as the characters begin to understand the full extent of the danger. By the end of the novel, though, the tone shifts back to a more positive note – reaching a score of over 2 on the graph – indicating the characters' triumph over Dracula and the resolution of the conflict.

When looking at the other polarity, although not considered the most Gothic work of Brontë's sisters, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* has more passages associated with negative feelings about drinking. This might happen because the novel addresses issues related to alcoholism. The author depicts Arthur Huntingdon's character as an abuser due

to his alcohol addiction. Indeed, further investigations into the plot and sentiment alignment should be conducted. However, our analysis implies that there might be some relevant connections between these two aspects.

CONCLUSION

So, what was their cup of tea? This is precisely what this paper seeks to examine: the relationship between drinking habits and emotional responses in the Victorian era, as reflected in the literature of that time by using digital humanities tools. Our primary goal was to investigate how different beverages – such as alcoholic drinks, tea, coffee, and lemonade – were depicted in Victorian novels and how their consumption influenced the characters' emotions. Through a distant reading of ten major Victorian novels, we applied polarity-based sentiment analysis to classify emotions into positive, negative, and neutral categories. Using digital tools such as Quanteda made it possible to efficiently process a large volume of text and identify emotional trends across multiple works, revealing that almost half of the beverage-related passages were linked to negative emotions.

Using digital tools proved crucial for uncovering the nuanced emotional landscapes tied to Victorian drinking habits, although it did have limitations. Automated sentiment analysis tools can overlook context and subtle emotions, which are often deeply embedded in the social and cultural fabric of literature. Expanding the analysis to a larger sample of texts or integrating human interpretation, such as crowdsourcing, could yield even richer insights.

However, there is room for further research. For instance, exploring the emotional dynamics of public versus private drinking in Victorian society could give more insight into the era's moral expectations. Additionally, examining how emotions connected to drinking varied across gender lines remains relevant. Overall, this study underscores the importance of combining traditional literary analysis with digital humanities tools to uncover new dimensions of Victorian literature, particularly regarding how emotions are expressed and shaped by societal customs such as drinking. This research is especially significant because external factors, including differing societal values and lifestyles, continue to influence human emotions. As long as sensory experiences, like the consumption of beverages, evoke distinct emotions tied to cultural practices, the

relevance of these customs will persist. Examining the past not only helps us understand what “their cup of tea” was but also provides valuable insights into what could shape ours today.

END NOTES

1 The following two paragraphs refer to the work written by Hands in her book *Drinking in Victorian and Edwardian Britain Beyond the Spectre of the Drunkard* (2018).

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LILE KOBALIANI

Lile Kobaliani holds a Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from LCC International University in Klaipeda, Lithuania, where she worked as an admissions counsellor after graduation. She is currently a second-year Master's student at the University of Porto (FLUP), pursuing research for her dissertation titled "The Discourse of Utopia and Dystopia in American Feminist Poetics: A Study of Emily Dickinson and Louise Glück." Lile is also a Junior Research Fellow at CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies), where she manages several projects, most notably ALIMENTOPIA, along with various repositories and events. Her academic interests include utopian and dystopian studies, comparative literature, cinema, poetry, and feminist studies. Lile has presented her research at international academic forums, including the 2023 International Urban Symposium's Forms of Inequality and the Legitimacy of Governance conference in Rome, Italy. In addition to her academic work, she has contributed articles to various international magazines. Ciência ID- 261A-9EC3-0DD7

RAQUEL CORREIA DE SOUZA

Raquel Souza holds a bachelor's degree in Communication Science from Universidade Lusófona do Porto. Her passion for cultural studies, particularly American culture, led her to pursue a Master's degree in Anglo-American Studies at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Porto. She is developing her thesis on the influence of American culture on horror films. Raquel is currently a member of the Center for Translation and Anglo-Portuguese Studies (CETAPS), where she works as a Junior researcher in Anglo-American Studies, contributing to the production of databases, and research papers and participating in

academic conferences. She is actively involved in projects at CETAPS Digital Lab, where she combines humanities research with digital tools. Ciência ID- ED1C-6449-89AC

FELIPE JACOB DE JESUS FERREIRA

Felipe Ferreira is a Computer and Informatics Engineering finalist student at the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Porto. He is from Brazil and moved to live and study in Porto 3 years ago. His passion for technology came from his father, a system analyst, who taught him the importance of programming and learning how to interact with machines. Felipe is currently a member of the Center of Translations and Anglo-Portuguese Studies (Cetaps) Digital Lab. There, he works with data analysis and visualisations to help his peers with the production of research and papers. He is also responsible for creating and managing the website developed to showcase specific projects. Ciência ID- 8B1E-1728-4AE1

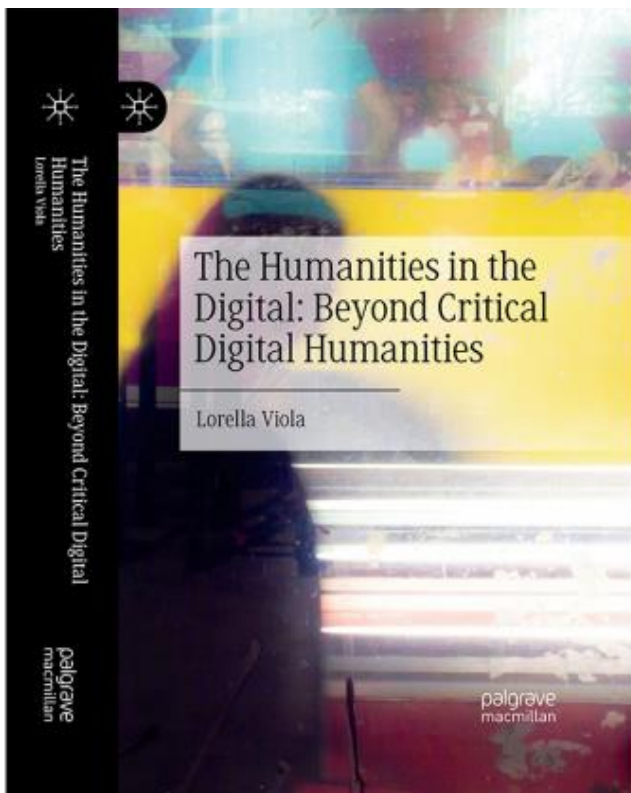
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Viola, Lorella. *The Humanities in the Digital: Beyond Critical Digital Humanities*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2023.

Z. CANSU RENDECI

University of Porto



The digital transformation has profoundly affected research (...). The 'Digital Turn', as it is called, has almost forced scholars to integrate advanced quantitative methods in their research, and in the humanities at large, it has, for example, led to the emergence of completely new fields such as of course digital humanities. – Lorella Viola

Lorella Viola's *The Humanities in the Digital: Beyond Critical Digital Humanities* advocates for a paradigm shift in how knowledge is created and shared in the digital age. Published as an open-access volume, the book challenges traditional divisions and offers a novel framework for digital scholarship. The book introduces the post-authentic framework, emphasizing the need to move beyond traditional divisions, such as digital versus non-digital, and critiques existing positivistic approaches to digital tools. Viola argues that digital tools are not neutral and require critical human intervention at every stage to ensure ethical and transparent knowledge production. Despite offering valuable theoretical insights, the book focuses more on critique than practical applications, suggesting the need for future research to bridge theory with real-world digital humanities practices.

In *The Humanities in the Digital: Beyond Critical Digital Humanities* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2023; ISBN: 978-3-031-16949-6, eBook ISBN: 978-3-031-16950-2; 173 pages), Lorella Viola pushes the boundaries of digital humanities scholarship with her post-authentic framework, which challenges traditional divisions, promotes a holistic understanding of digital transformation in knowledge creation, and advocates for the critical and ethical use of digital tools. Engaging and forward-looking, the book sets ambitious goals for future research endeavours, directed at advanced scholars in Digital Humanities, Critical Humanities, interdisciplinary researchers, and research institutions, encouraging them to engage deeply with conceptual debates, ethical considerations, and the critical examination of their digital practices and frameworks.

First, the author's main argument highlights the need to move beyond binary divisions between critical and traditional digital humanities. In Chapter One, "The Humanities *in* the Digital", Viola proposes a split within the humanities; namely, between Digital Humanities (DH) and Critical Digital Humanities (CDH) (8, 9). While supporters of CDH argue that the digital and analogue divide is meaningless and call for a more critical approach to the digital, CDH inadvertently reinforces this division by establishing itself as a separate field. To clarify what CDH entails, Viola cites Grimshaw, who advocates for a more radical approach that justifies the need for a new field — a space dedicated to critique, opposition, and resistance against digital capitalism, which Grimshaw refers to as Critical Digital Humanities. Similarly, Viola also challenges the term "interdisciplinary", because she finds it limiting. In this sense, her approach leans towards an ontology that bridges postmodernism and digimodernism, which she prefers to call "post-authentic". This shift is meant to point to a paradigm shift; but contrary to popular phrasings, this shift is *in* the digital rather than *towards* it (29).

Moreover, Viola focuses on the current model of knowledge creation, which is based on divisions between disciplines and the compartmentalization of knowledge, claiming that it is outdated in the face of the digital transformation of society. The author contends that society has shifted into a fully digital context, where the digital is not merely a tool for enhancing traditional knowledge practices but a central, integral part of how knowledge is produced and shared.

Viola frames her discussion in Chapter One by introducing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing its role as a catalyst for the digital transformation, which later permeated every aspect of society. The pandemic necessitated a shift in our understanding of the "digital", as individuals were compelled to adapt to a new reality

where everyday activities, including both professional and personal tasks, became digitized. This transition is linked to the evolution of digital humanities. Much like the pandemic served as a catalyst for broader societal change, Viola argues that digital methods are similarly transforming the humanities, acting as a driving force for change within the field, noting that knowledge creation happens within society (6). In addition to creating knowledge, she advocates for a revolutionary rather than an evolutionary approach to the digital. An evolutionary approach adds digital to the existing model of knowledge creation as a helpful tool, whereas a revolutionary approach rethinks the digital entirely and its impact on how knowledge is created (7).

Thus, the post-authentic framework she introduces is a critique of the prevailing positivistic and deterministic views of digital methods. Viola argues for a more fluid and symbiotic approach to knowledge creation. This framework highlights the inherent biases, limitations, and subjectivities of digital technologies, underlining the need for critical engagement with digital objects and processes. In the words of the author:

The post-authentic framework I propose in this book is a conceptual model for knowledge creation in the digital age. It rejects the idea of the digital merely crossing paths with disciplines—intersecting, merging, or meeting in a way that implies separate entities are coming together but leaves the overall model of knowledge unchanged. (2023, 29)

In Chapter Two, “The Importance of Being Digital”, Viola continues by contextualizing the shift in humanities into the digital realm. She emphasizes here how digital technology has irreversibly transformed society and knowledge creation. She also mentions the binary opposition of digital versus non-digital, as the digital now penetrates every aspect of the research and creation in humanities. She later moves on to explore the pervasive impact of digital technologies on how individuals understand knowledge, where she also introduces and advocates for an integrated, first-and-foremost digital approach rather than merely compartmentalizing knowledge into discrete disciplines. This exploration of the author extends to further chapters as well. In Chapter Three, “The Opposite of Unsupervised”, she continues to critique the assumptions behind unsupervised machine learning techniques as well as other data-driven methodologies, while highlighting the restrictions of automation in capturing various cultural and historical

aspects, which originally shape the created knowledge. In Chapter Four, “How Discrete”, she also examines the nature of digital objects and critiques their treatment as static or finite entities, highlighting digital objects’ evolving and symbiotic nature and introducing biological metaphors like symbiosis and mutualism to explain how digital objects and knowledge creation processes are interconnected.

The author does indeed touch upon a point that might be considered to fall within the lines of the aesthetic. In Chapter Two, she frames Walter Benjamin’s conceptualization of the “aura” in a way that incidentally, both critiques and expands upon how the digital has been historically perceived in opposition to the analogue, specifically in the realm of digital humanities versus mainstream humanities (38). In this sense, much like Benjamin’s notion of the “aura” is diminished in production, while the unique presence of an original is left behind, digital humanities appear to frame the “digital” as a non-human, agentless, and inauthentic entity that undermines the authority of the original. This raises a critical question: how does digital reproduction differ from mechanical reproduction?

In Chapter Three, “The Opposite of Unsupervised”, Viola emphasizes how the reductionist assumptions underlying unsupervised machine learning techniques are similar to the treatment of digital heritage objects, which are often regarded as simplistic and merely uncritical entities. Still, there have been scholars to challenge such a binary view. For instance, scholars such as Jones *et al.* argue that focusing solely on whether a digital object is authentic or not overlooks the broader work that digital objects do. Digital objects are far from being mere reproductions; they are complex and dynamic entities. This reflects a shift away from the idea of authenticity as something to be aspired to. Instead, such a declaration acknowledges the layered and interconnected nature of digital objects (Viola 2023, 40, 41). In this context, the “aura” in the digital age suggests that digital objects should not be dismissed as just inferior reproductions – they must be understood as parts of a network of power, processes, and entities.

To reshape the understanding of digital objects and digital knowledge creation, Viola borrows a couple of terms from biology in Chapter Four “How Discrete”: symbiosis and mutualism (44, 47). This is because the traditional fragmentation of knowledge into separate disciplines must be converted into a perspective, which deems it as fluid and dynamic. Symbiosis, a biological concept meaning “living together”, becomes a metaphor for how digital objects and knowledge-creation processes are interconnected and

constantly renegotiated. Digital objects, then, should not be viewed as static, agentless entities, for they are evolving forms shaped by various actors, decisions, and interactions. Adding mutualism to this conceptualization would oppose the competitive dynamics often seen in knowledge creation, particularly between disciplines. Since mutualism emphasizes collaboration and mutual benefit, applying it to digital objects and knowledge creation, would underline a conceptual shift in which disciplines and digital processes do not compete but instead engage in a mutually enriching relationship.

Viola also touches upon topic modelling before she introduces her “post-authentic” approach. To be more specific, she critically engages with the limitations of topic modelling as a method for analysing large corpora of texts (92, 94). She argues that while topic modelling formalizes distributional semantics, which aims to capture meaning through the context of word clusters, it oversimplifies the complexity of language. The core issue here is that topic modelling treats language as a series of discrete elements, ignoring the continuous, context-dependent nature of linguistic meaning. While the algorithm efficiently identifies patterns in word distributions, it fails to account for the inherent ambiguity and infinite productivity of language, which is also shaped by historical, social, and cultural contexts. This results in the extraction of patterns that may lack significance because the method does not address the underlying cause-effect relationships that give words and topics their meaning. Furthermore, the arbitrary nature of how topic modelling assigns a fixed number of topics often leads to artificial representations of the documents’ content. The algorithm builds models that fit the predefined number of topics, yet these models can vary significantly with even minor changes in the parameters. This variability can undermine the reliability of topic modelling as it highlights that patterns will always be identified, but their significance is not guaranteed. In this sense, while topic modelling can provide statistical insights, it does not always lead to a deeper or more meaningful interpretation of the content being analysed.

Finally, in Chapter Five, “What the Graph”, the much-awaited post-authentic framework is introduced. Digital objects here are dynamic and evolving artefacts that interact with and shape their environments. In applying the post-authentic framework to topic modelling, the process must be treated as far more than a mechanical, automated task too (94, 95). Thus, Viola identifies key stages such as pre-processing, corpus preparation, and deciding the number of topics as essential points for critical intervention.

Her approach emphasizes that topic modelling, which typically treats texts as discrete data, must be contextualized within a broader understanding of digital objects as dynamic, contextually embedded entities. Chapter Five is also the moment when Viola mentions the cultural biases that are embedded in the visual representation of data through graphing and network analysis tools, which underlines the need for further critical approaches in the field.

The digital tools we use to visually represent data may not always be neutral; instead, they can embed specific worldviews that reflect power imbalances and reinforce narratives in knowledge creation. How technological tools, often developed in Western contexts, can subtly perpetuate cultural hegemony when applied to diverse datasets is not a brand-new topic of discussion. By using different visualization tools at hand as examples, the author raises concerns about how these tools prioritize certain forms of legibility and clarity that may not align with non-Western or minority perspectives (78). This critique reminds us of Mark Warschauer's concept of the digital divide, which refers to unequal access to digital technologies, such as computers and the Internet, among individuals, communities, or countries. Both phenomena highlight how disparities in access and design can reproduce existing power structures. Just as the digital divide limits access to technological tools and the benefits they provide, the cultural biases embedded in digital tools restrict the ways non-Western or minority perspectives are represented and understood. This can even extend to the way in which tools shape the research questions we end up asking. If researchers rely on digital tools that prioritize certain types of information over others, they risk unwittingly aligning their research with dominant narratives, which can marginalize alternative perspectives.

One of the key strengths of the book is its critical perspective on the artificial divisions in knowledge creation. Viola's argument throughout the book can be summarized as the need for digital research to move beyond binaries, which reflects the complexity of modern scholarship. The emphasis on digital mediation positions the book within progressive views that see digital humanities as a fluid and evolving space for multidisciplinary work. The focus on transparency, reproducibility, and critical examination of digital tools contributes to ongoing discussions about how technology both democratizes and complicates knowledge production. Thus, a reflective and active engagement with computational methods is encouraged, while simultaneously reminding

scholars to be mindful of the historical and cultural context. The importance of human agency is underlined by rejecting the idea that digital methods are entirely objective, advocating for human intervention at every stage. Additionally, by urging ethical and transparent research practices, the book stresses the importance of documenting and clearly reporting decisions, fostering a more responsible approach to digital scholarship.

Still, the post-authentic framework has certain limitations due to its reduced focus on the practical aspects of digital humanities since it favours theory over practicality. While addressing algorithmic bias and power imbalances, there is less engagement with how digital humanists are actively tackling these challenges through collaborative and interdisciplinary efforts. The approach demands considerable time and resources, as critical engagement with digital tools at every stage involves extensive human intervention, which may come across as excessive for those working with large datasets or limited resources. Furthermore, the case-by-case nature of the framework limits scalability, making it harder to apply to more extensive or more diverse collections. The rejection of computational objectivity encourages critical reflection, but it also risks introducing subjectivity, as human decisions in data handling can lead to biased interpretations if not carefully managed.

The Humanities in the Digital: Beyond Critical Digital Humanities ultimately offers a critical reflection on the binary divisions within digital humanities, urging a more fluid and integrated approach to knowledge creation. By introducing the post-authentic framework, Viola redefines digital knowledge creation, challenging traditional binaries and emphasizing ethical engagement in the digital age. The book highlights biases within digital systems while aligning with ongoing discussions about algorithmic bias and data ethics. However, its limited focus on practical applications may reduce its broader impact. Introduced in Chapter Five, the post-authentic framework establishes a strong theoretical foundation, though its delayed introduction might frustrate readers seeking earlier practical insights. Nevertheless, the framework encourages a shift in how scholars engage with digital tools, advocating for their central role in both literary research and knowledge creation. The emphasis on ethics, transparency, and inclusivity pushes scholars to confront the biases in digital archives and promotes greater collaboration between disciplines. Much like Poe's sailor in "A Descent into the Maelstrom", who survives by observing and understanding the chaotic forces of a massive whirlpool instead of resisting them, Viola challenges digital humanists to plunge into the whirlwind of data with critical insight. In

Poe's tale, the sailor is caught in a deadly maelstrom, then discerns patterns in the turbulence that allow him to align with its forces and eventually escape. Similarly, scholars must confront the challenges, instead of avoiding them, to transform the way knowledge is created, and a more inclusive and creative understanding is developed.

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Z. CANSU RENDECI

Z. Cansu Rendeci has two bachelor's degrees in Translation and Interpreting Studies (specializing in Conference Interpreting) and Advertising Design and Communication from Yeditepe University, Türkiye. She also has a master's in Public Relations and Publicity and an associate degree through distant learning in Social Media Management. Currently, she is completing her PhD dissertation in Media Studies, focusing on ethnic humor and counter-narratives in social media. Since 2017, she has been giving lectures at various Turkish universities in advertising, public relations and interpreting skills, while also working as a freelance conference interpreter since 2011. She has several publications and serves as an English Editor for *SBedergi*. Currently, she is a research fellow at the Digital Lab at CETAPS.

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TOWARDS THE MAELSTROM THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES IN ACTION

1ST CETAPS MEETING ON
DIGITAL HUMANITIES
DOSSIER

THEMATIC SECTION

EXTRA

Foreword:

The 1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities

LUCIANO MOREIRA

CETAPS Digital Lab Coordinator

On the 29 and 30 of October 2024, the CETAPS Digital Laboratory organized the *1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities* at the Department of Anglo-American Studies of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto (FLUP).¹ It is meaningful that we have met in an English Department, in a room furnished with books, given the historical relationship between English Departments and the Digital Humanities (Kirschenbaum 2012).

Over two days, representatives of both branches of CETAPS and representatives of two well-established digital humanities centres with complementary expertise shared experiences and discussed ideas for the future. From Venice, we received Federico Boschetti, and from Cologne Nils Geißler.² We had preliminary talks over the Internet to prepare for the meeting, but it was a true pleasure to meet both in person and get to know their human qualities alongside the technical and scientific ones.

On the morning of the first day, after the welcoming words of CETAPS coordinator Carlos Ceia, we had a short presentation of each centre, and we discussed the opportunities to collaborate in the short and long terms. To be sure, not all the ideas will be implemented, but we set up a shared horizon that may inspire our next steps.

In the afternoon, we started with the first of three workshops summarised in this dossier. Put together, they represent quite well the cycle of research in the Digital Humanities. Niels Geißler delivered a workshop entitled *An Approach to Linked Open Data: From Wikidata to Authority files data*. Openness is a core value of the Digital Humanities (Spiro 2012), one core value dear also to the CETAPS Digital Lab (Moreira *et al.* 2023; Moreira 2024), and critical to promoting Open Science.

However, as Drucker (2011) reminds us, data is not given but built from interpretative standpoints. Thus, early in the morning of October 30, the Digital Lab and the Junior Researchers

in Anglo-American Studies delivered the workshop “Looking from a distance: an approach to text analysis with R” based on the research paper that they would come to present at *2nd International Conference Data & Digital Humanities* in December (Moreira *et al.* 2024). The sensitive process of building data became visible, with a case study that echoes one of the concerns of the Digital Humanities with feminism (see Gold & Klein 2023).

The rest of the morning was spent on the workshop by Federico Boschetti, *Shared Visions: Marco Polo’s Travels from Medieval Collective Imagination to Contemporary Computer-assisted Imagery*. We completed the circle of research, moving from Digital Humanities to Public Humanities.

The meeting ended with a roundtable entitled *The Digital Humanities – A Common Ground for Experimentation* that sat together our special guests, Federico Boschetti and Nils Geißler, and CETAPS’ coordinator, Carlos CEIA, the CETAPS Digital Lab leader, Fátima Vieira, and the junior researcher Joana Pinela (representing JRAAS). With the moderation of Luciano Moreira and Raquel Souza, the roundtable looked back at the two-day meeting and discussed the digital humanities as a common ground for experimentation, which is to say, for taking risks.

This is the *possible* record of the meeting. Here, I cannot express the experience of seeing young and senior researchers with different backgrounds sitting and learning together, making the tent of digital humanities a reality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wouldn't have been able to put up this “Big Tent”³ without the collaboration of the organising committee, the support of CETAPS direction, the Department of Anglo-American Studies, and the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. To all, thank you.

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END NOTES

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² Federico Boschetti holds a PhDs in Classical Philology (2005) and Brain and Cognitive Sciences (2010). He is a researcher at the CNR-Institute of Computational Linguistics, where he coordinates CoPhiLab and teaches Digital Humanities. He also collaborates with the CNR-ILC unit at Ca' Foscari University of Venice and co-leads the CLARIN Knowledge Centre for Digital and Public Humanities. Nils Geißler studied Information Processing and Philosophy in the BA at the University of Cologne (currently: MA Information Processing - with participation in the a.r.t.e.s. Research Master Programme) and has been working as a student/research assistant at CCEH in various projects since 2014 (mainly: Capitularia, Modelling between Digital and Humanities: Thinking in Practice, NFDI: Text+). Unfortunately, Mark Algee-Hewitt from the Stanford Literary Lab had to cancel his participation due to last-minute personal reasons.

³ If puzzled by the expression, see the Editorial to this thematic section to understand the image.

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An Approach to Linked Open Data: From Wikidata to authority files data

NILS GEIBLER

Cologne Center for eHumanities

ABSTRACT: The workshop consisted of three main parts, starting with a brief introduction to Linked Open Data by recapitulating the main stages of its development and explaining some core principles and technologies. The second part focused on the approach used by the FID Philosophieⁱ to combine Wikidata and authority files. Finally, the third part was done hands-on with a Jupyter notebook in Google Colab, going through the aforementioned approach step by step using Python.

KEYWORDS: Linked Open Data, FID Philosophie, Wikidata, Python

RESUMO: O workshop consistiu em três partes principais, começando com uma breve introdução ao Linked Open Data, recapitulando as principais etapas do seu desenvolvimento e explicando alguns princípios e tecnologias fundamentais. A segunda parte concentrou-se na abordagem usada por FID Philosophie para combinar Wikidata e authority files. Por fim, a terceira parte foi dedicada a aplicações práticas da abordagem teórica indicada com recurso ao Jupyter notebook no Google Colab e a Python.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Linked Open Data, FID Philosophie, Wikidata, Python

A BRIEF HISTORY AND INTRODUCTION TO LINKED OPEN DATA (LOD)

The World Wide Web (WWW) was born in 1991, linking (web) sites all over the world.² Shortly after, the first vision of a more “meaningful” (i.e., add machine-readable descriptions) web emerged and was written down (1994-2000): the Semantic Web.³ In 2006 and 2010, the principles of Linked Data (LD) and Linked Open Data (LOD) were stated,⁴ which would perceive resources not only as websites but emphasise a more abstract view, also encouraging open publishing. With the Google Knowledge Graph, finally a practical and economically successful example entered the stage in 2012.⁵ This seems to have given way to thinking of the Semantic Web not as “one big thing” but as something that could be handled and created in portions, independently, and that could be reconnected at will – by applying the principles and technologies of LOD. One of the core technologies of LOD is ontologies, which provide classes and properties for connecting entities within such graphs with respect to a certain domain or field and also may provide means to point to similar or same entities in other graphs.⁶

THE *FID PHILOSOPHIE'S* APPROACH TO LINKED OPEN DATA

The *Fachinformationsdienst Philosophie* (FID, Engl. Specialised Information Service) is a cooperative (infrastructure) project of the University and City Library of Cologne (UCL) and the Cologne Center for eHumanities (CCeH). It provides researchers (from the discipline of philosophy) with several services to facilitate their research. Among those services is the PhilFinder.⁷ It acts as a central hub to connect the different services of the FID and provide a quick entry into literature research. This is accomplished by creating websites depending on profiles, e.g. for persons, and by combining biographical data and available resources from the FID’s specialised library as well as the broader catalogue of the library network in one place. As the FID itself does not have the resources and means to store data or build a database on its own, the idea was to build upon existing open resources. This resulted in using Wikidata as

a hub to get basic data regarding as many entities as possible and become able to easily add new entities.⁸ Wikidata also provides specific identifier properties that link to representations of the same entities in other resources.⁹ One of these resources is the Gemeinsame Normdatei (GND, Engl. Integrated Authority File)¹⁰ of the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB, Engl. German National Library), which is used as an authority file in the German-speaking area – thus, GND identifiers are reused in several databases and projects. It also provides authority data regarding works and persons (mainly German-centric). So, one may perceive the GND as a more specialised knowledge base than Wikidata, which may provide us with less but better data. The FID combines both knowledge bases in a way by prioritising the GND over Wikidata for overlapping data, i.e. data fields that are present in both, and using Wikidata only as a fallback. This approach could also be used for combining data from other knowledge bases. The Python implementation presented in the workshop already includes the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF)¹¹ and the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF)¹² as an approach to include international authority files. Thus, creating different profiles with different prioritisation of resources may be used to set different accentuations for cultural and language areas – in contrast to prioritising the GND for the German-speaking sphere.

For clarification: The FID does not request raw GND data, but uses the lobid-GND-API¹³ to get already refined data via a more accessible format.

THE HANDS-ON PART OF THE WORKSHOP¹⁴

A recent presentation of the FID's approach in the network of FIDs brought up the idea of implementing PhilFinder's core component ("Nexus") in Python. This would facilitate prototyping and enable a more comprehensive and focused point of reference for sharing and discussion. The workshop has been an ideal opportunity to put this into action: by implementing it in Python as well as in presenting the approach. An established way of presenting Python code is the use of Jupyter notebooks with combined cells of code and

explanatory, documentary notes. The notebook is divided into four main parts: a setup workflow that is used to install the dependencies and hide more complex code, a first workflow that explains the basic components and suggests modifications (i.e., setting and altering queried triples, used properties, resource priorities), a second workflow that uses an implementation of the so-called “Nexus” class (which implements a prioritised aggregation of data sources with Wikidata as a data hub), and a third workflow that only queries Wikidata without using another resource. All workflows provide a visualisation (timeline for names and dates) and a download of the obtained data in the end and start with querying Wikidata via SPARQL¹⁵ to get a specified subset.

The workshop concluded with the participants formulating their own queries to Wikidata based on their research interests. They learnt to modify the code and queries accordingly and to search for the appropriate Wikidata classes and properties.

END NOTES

¹ <https://philportal.de>.

² Cf. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Semantic-Web> and Berners-Lee and Fischetti, *Weaving the Web: the WWW was first conceptualised in 1989*.

³ Ibid, see also Hitzler, ‘A Review of the Semantic Web Field’.

⁴ Cf. <https://www.w3.org/DesignIssues/LinkedData.html>.

⁵ Cf. <https://blog.google/products/search/introducing-knowledge-graph-things-not/>.

⁶ Noy, ‘Ontology Development 101’.

⁷ philportal.de/philfinder.

⁸ Cf. a comprehensive blog post by Joachim Neubert from 2017, which documents a workflow on reconciliation with other sources and enrichment of Wikidata: <https://zbw.eu/labs/en/blog/wikidata-as-authority-linking-hub-connecting-repec-and-gnd-researcher-identifiers.html>.

⁹ Cf. a list of all external identifiers: <https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Special:ListProperties/external-id>.

¹⁰ <https://www.dnb.de/EN/gnd>.

¹¹ <https://viaf.org/>.

¹² <https://id.loc.gov/authorities/names.html>.

¹³ <https://lobid.org/gnd/api>.

¹⁴ See <https://github.com/pbd84/LOD-workshop-20241029> for both the slides and the Jupyter notebook.

¹⁵ A query language for graph data, cf. <https://www.w3.org/TR/rdf-sparql-query/> and <https://www.w3.org/TR/sparql11-overview/>.

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NILS GEIBLER

Nils Geißler studied information processing and philosophy with a BA at the University of Cologne (currently: MA information processing - with participation in the a.r.t.e.s. Research Master program) and has been working as a student/research assistant at the CCeH since 2014 in various projects (mainly: Capitularia, Modeling between Digital and Humanities: Thinking in Practice, NFDI: Text+).

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Looking From a Distance: An approach to text analysis with R

Luciano Moreira, Felipe Ferreira, Joana Pinela, Joel Faustino,
Raquel Souza, Lile Kobaliani, Thaís Barbedo Vigas
& Lizi Kolbaia
University of Porto

ABSTRACT: In this workshop, we explored a research example on the field of utopian studies and, within it, feminist criticism to illustrate text analysis with R language using metadata from the Lyman Tower Sargent Bibliography. Participants were introduced to the research topic, the R Studio environment, and guided through the iterative process of text analysis (word frequency and network analysis) with the Quanteda library. We aimed to show that visualizations are, more than results, part of a process that triggers new, more complex research questions.

KEYWORDS: R Language, Utopian Studies, Feminist Criticism, Text Analysis

RESUMO: Neste workshop, explorámos um exemplo de pesquisa no campo dos estudos utópicos e, dentro dele, da crítica feminista para ilustrar a análise de texto com linguagem R, usando metadados da base de dados “Lyman Tower Sargent Bibliography”. Os participantes foram introduzidos ao tema de pesquisa, ao R Studio, e orientados pelo processo iterativo de análise de texto (frequência de palavras e análise de rede) com o recurso à Quanteda Library. O nosso objetivo foi demonstrar como as visualizações são, mais do que resultados, parte de um processo que desencadeia novas e mais complexas questões de investigação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Linguagem R, Estudos Utópicos, Crítica Feminista, Análise de Texto

INTRODUCTION

The 1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities brought together scholars to explore how computational methods are shaping academic research. Among the highlights of the event was the Digital Lab and Junior Researchers in Anglo-American Studies (JRAAS) team's workshop, which explored the potential of digital tools to analyze the structure and development of academic disciplines. Using feminist utopian literature as a case study, the workshop demonstrated how digital humanities may uncover thematic trends and structural imbalances within academic fields. This effort drew on the previous study "Looking From A Distance: Digital Humanities Insights into the Field of Feminist Utopian Criticism" (Moreira *et al.* 2024) which was presented at the "2nd International Conference on Data & Digital Humanities", at the University of Minho in December 2024.

The primary dataset for the workshop was the Lyman Tower Sargent Bibliography,¹ a collection of over 20,000 references curated by CETAPS' ARUS project. This bibliography, widely recognized as a critical resource in utopian studies, spans reference works from across the globe and several decades. However, it also reveals striking imbalances. Roughly 70.6% of its entries are in English, underscoring a lack of representation for non-English-speaking scholars. Moreover, feminist themes are underrepresented despite their significant contributions to the field. These disparities set the stage for the workshop, which used digital tools to investigate how such imbalances shape the construction of academic knowledge.

Feminist utopian literature, which was at the heart of the workshop, is a genre that critiques patriarchal systems while imagining alternative futures. This body of work provides a space for reflecting on societal inequalities and envisioning transformative possibilities. The metadata offered by the ARUS repository represented the genre's ability to explore intersections of gender, race, and class. Yet despite its richness, feminist utopian literature is yet to receive the academic attention it deserves. The genre's underrepresentation reflects broader systemic biases within scholarly research, a topic the workshop addressed by analyzing how these patterns manifest in bibliographic datasets.

A key method introduced during the workshop was distant reading, a concept developed by literary scholar Franco Moretti (2000). Unlike close reading, which involves analyzing individual data in detail, distant reading focuses on identifying larger patterns across extensive datasets. This approach fits within the broader goals of digital humanities,

which emphasize not just digitization but also critical reflection on what is digitized and how it is studied (Fitzpatrick 2012; Gold & Klein 2016). Participants applied distant reading to the Lyman Tower Sargent Bibliography, using computational methods, to examine thematic trends and identify systemic biases.

IMPLEMENTATION

The workshop offered participants hands-on experience with R, a programming language frequently used in digital humanities for data analysis and visualization. Attendees used tools such as `quanteda`, `dplyr`,² and `ggplot2` to work with a subset of the bibliography, focusing on feminist utopian literature. This subset included 453 works and 3,062 tokens. Through activities like tokenization, data visualization, and statistical analysis, attendees identified thematic patterns and relationships within the data. Outputs such as word clouds, frequency tables, and network diagrams provided a visual representation of the genre's contributions to utopian studies.

The analysis revealed several noteworthy trends. Feminist themes were connected to broader topics like science fiction, social critique, and future-oriented narratives. These findings affirmed the centrality of feminist utopian literature within utopian studies while also highlighting the systemic barriers that limit its recognition in the academic field. For example, despite its thematic richness, feminist literature occupies a relatively modest share of the bibliography, raising questions about how academic disciplines have historically marginalized certain voices. These discussions resonated with Moretti's (2016) call for digital humanities to challenge traditional research methods and expand the scope of scholarly inquiry.

The workshop's interactive format allowed participants to engage deeply with both digital tools and the theoretical questions they raised. Activities included importing and cleaning data, running statistical analyses, and generating visualizations to illustrate the dataset's structure. For instance, participants created network diagrams that mapped thematic relationships and word clouds that highlighted frequently occurring terms. These exercises not only introduced participants to practical techniques but also prompted them to reflect on how digital tools can reveal insights that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Alongside technical training, the workshop encouraged critical discussions about the implications of using digital methods in research. Participants explored challenges such as algorithmic bias, the limitations of existing datasets, and the complexity of combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. For example, feminist themes, as a minority perspective in the dataset, prompted debates about how different approaches to metadata could enhance their visibility. This dialogue underscored the potential of digital humanities to reshape the ways in which academic fields are represented and studied.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the workshop's key insights was the ability of digital tools to uncover biases embedded in academic repositories. The relatively small representation of feminist topics in the Lyman Tower Sargent Bibliography reflects larger systemic inequalities within the academic community. By addressing these imbalances, the workshop demonstrated how digital methodologies can challenge conventional narratives and make room for a more inclusive and representative academic landscape.

While the workshop focused specifically on feminist utopian literature, its findings have broader implications for understanding how academic disciplines are constructed. By analyzing large datasets, computational tools like R allow researchers to identify patterns, uncover imbalances, and reflect critically on the factors shaping academic fields. These insights can inform efforts to create more equitable and inclusive scholarly practices.

As the session drew to a close, participants discussed how they could apply what they had learned to their own research. Topics ranged from analyzing bibliographic data to exploring thematic trends and questioning structural inequities in their respective fields. The workshop combined theoretical exploration with practical application, leaving attendees better equipped to engage with digital methodologies in meaningful ways.

The workshop at the "1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities" was an important step in advancing the dialogue around computational methods in scholarship. By focusing on feminist utopian literature and its broader academic context, the workshop offered a compelling mix of technical training and critical reflection. As digital humanities continue to grow, initiatives like this will play a vital role in shaping how we study and understand academic disciplines, ensuring that new methods not only expand knowledge but also challenge rooted inequalities.

END NOTES

¹ <https://cetapsrepository.lettras.up.pt/id/cetaps/94026>

² <https://dplyr.tidyverse.org/>

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Shared Visions: Marco Polo's travels from Medieval collective imagination to contemporary computer-assisted imagery

FEDERICO BOSCHETTI

CNR-ILC and Venice Centre for Digital and Public Humanities

ABSTRACT: In this workshop, participants explore the intersection between Medieval and contemporary representations of Marco Polo's travels. The discussion focuses on the creation of an interactive exhibition where visitors engage with miniatures from MS. Bodl. 264. By selecting specific details from these miniatures, visitors describe them for targeted audiences—such as children, the elderly, or visually impaired people. These descriptions, combined with AI, generate new images inspired by the originals and the participants' unique perspectives. This process blends historical collective imagination with modern, computer-assisted creativity, inviting new interpretations of Marco Polo's legacy.

KEYWORDS: Digital Humanities, Public Humanities, Generative Artificial Intelligence, Multimodality

RESUMO: Neste workshop, os participantes exploram a interseção entre as representações medievais e contemporâneas das viagens de Marco Polo. A discussão tem como foco a criação de uma exposição interativa onde os visitantes interagem com miniaturas do MS. Bodl. 264. Ao selecionar detalhes específicos destas miniaturas, os visitantes descrevem-nas para públicos-alvo – como crianças, idosos ou pessoas com deficiência visual. Estas descrições, combinadas com a IA, geram novas imagens inspiradas nos originais e nas perspectivas únicas dos participantes. Este processo combina a imaginação coletiva histórica com a criatividade moderna assistida por computador, convidando a novas interpretações do legado de Marco Polo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Humanidades Digitais, Humanidades Públicas, Inteligência Artificial Generativa, Multimodalidade

INTRODUCTION

2024 marks the 700th anniversary of Marco Polo's death, an event that has inspired conferences, publications, and exhibitions in Venice. The workshop “Shared Visions” builds on a prototype for an exhibition centered on three miniatures from the *Travels of Marco Polo* contained in MS Bodl. 264. This prototype was developed at the Venice Centre for Digital and Public Humanities (VeDPH), Department of Humanities, Ca’ Foscari University of Venice.

GOALS OF THE WORKSHOP

The main goal of the exhibition, as well as the workshop, is to invite visitors (and workshop participants) to engage in a slow observation of the images and focus their attention on significant details. By expanding the concept of the guest book, visitors are encouraged to leave messages for others, share the results of their personal interpretations and subjective perspectives, and generate new images that amplify their impressions.

In addition, the workshop aims to provide the participants with practical knowledge and tools in three main areas. First, it offers an overview of detection instruments, such as wearable eye trackers and tablets with specific tracking software. Second, it introduces prompt strategies for crafting effective inputs to generate meaningful AI-produced images, emphasizing clarity, relevance, and creative potential. Finally, it covers statistical techniques for analyzing participant-generated messages.

BRIEF STATE OF THE ART

Research on visitor engagement in museums highlights the brevity of time spent observing individual artworks, often measured in mere seconds (Smith & Smith 2001). In recent years, visitors have increasingly spent time taking selfies with artworks, highlighting the growing desire to interact and engage personally with the works (Tinio 2013). The integration of AI

technologies in cultural heritage settings is enhancing visitor engagement. In particular, Generative AI enables users to interact creatively with artworks, producing new visual representations based on the original images and textual prompts (Elgammal *et al.* 2017). Monitoring visitor behavior through wearable eye trackers (Garbutt *et al.* 2020) promotes a neurohumanistic approach to studying the aesthetic experience, encouraging the integration of neuroscience and the humanities to explore how individuals engage with art on a cognitive and sensory level. Finally, statistical analyses (Jurafsky 2023), such as the Principal Component Analysis applied to textual messages, help identify relevant patterns in visitor's observations.

MATERIALS AND PROCEDURES

Workshop participants are provided with digital reproductions of miniatures illustrating three cities: Venice (218r), Campion (230r), and Mien (251r). After collectively selecting one of the three miniatures, they are tasked with cropping a significant detail and writing two brief notes: the first to convey their impressions to an educated adult, and the second to describe the image to a child.

Using ChatGPT-4, participants then generate a new image by supplying the cropped detail along with one of their subjective descriptions. Secondly, they are asked to write a short evaluation of the generated image, reflecting on its relevance and alignment with their original interpretation.

Finally, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is applied to the texts written by the participants with the aim of identifying patterns and correlations in their descriptions. This analysis focuses on examining language use, uncovering differences and similarities in how participants perceive and articulate visual details for distinct audiences (e.g., adults versus children).

CONCLUSIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE

The workshop simulates the behavior of visitors to the actual exhibition and provides participants with the opportunity to experience and follow all the steps involved, including the

evaluation and analysis of the data produced. Materials of the workshop are gradually available on https://github.com/CoPhi/shared_visions_workshop.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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FEDERICO BOSCHETTI

Federico Boschetti has a PhD in Classical Philology (University of Trento-University of Lille III, 2005) and Brain and Cognitive Sciences: Language, Interaction and Computation (University of Trento, 2010). Since 2011, he has been a researcher at the CNR-Institute of Computational Linguistics "A. Zampolli", where he coordinates

the CoPhiLab and teaches courses on Digital Humanities at various levels (university and high school students and teachers). Since 2019, he has been assigned to the CNR-ILC research unit at the VeDPH of the Ca' Foscari University of Venice. He has been co-responsible with Franz Fischer (VeDPH) of the “Digital and Public Humanities Textual Scholarship” CLARIN Knowledge Centre (DiPText-KC) since 13 October 2021, and he collaborates for CLARIN-IT to H2IOSC, the Italian consortium of research infrastructure devoted to the Humanities. His main research interests are in collaborative and cooperative philology.

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The Digital Humanities: A Common Ground for Experimentation

Carlos Ceia, Fátima Vieira, Federico Boschetti, Nils Geißler, Joana Pinela,
Luciano Moreira, Raquel Souza, Hanna Pięta,
Liam Benison & Joel Ramos Faustino

LUCIANO MOREIRA: Good afternoon. Thank you all for being here. Some of us have been here for two days; some are here for the first time. Thank you for coming. Now, we have more representation of academia, which shows interest in Digital Humanities. Interestingly, we are in the English department because the English departments pioneered Digital Humanities.¹ And it's very hard to define what it is about. It's one of the most challenging things that we face in the field, precisely to say what it is about. Some people even question if we can define Digital Humanities or even attest to its existence.² We think we can define it as an approach, that's the way we see it. An approach where we are united by a set of values that we share, and those values create, in the end, a community that has shared interests.³ We can also say, as we dig for the next volume of VIA PANORAMICA,⁴ that it's quite a stormy place, to put it this way. A place that shakes things up. And I think that this roundtable will show a little bit how exciting the field is. So, without further delay, we would like to introduce you to the panel.

RAQUEL SOUZA: The first introduction is Professor Carlos Ceia. For those who don't know him, he is a Full Professor of English Studies at the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, NOVA University of Lisbon, in Portugal. He is a member of the NOVA FCSH Council, and he currently holds The International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies Chair on Digital Humanities in Education. He is the director of the Centre for English, Translation and

Anglo-Portuguese Studies in Lisbon, where he coordinates the research area on Teacher Education and Applied Language Studies. And as well, we have Professor Fátima Vieira. For those who don't know her, she is Vice Director for Culture at the University of Porto. She is a full professor of English at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, where she started teaching in 1986. She got her Doctoral degree with a thesis about William Morris and the British Utopian Literary tradition. She was the chair of the Utopian Studies Society in Europe from 2006 to 2016. She is the coordinator of the University of Porto's branch of CETAPS, where she is the leader of the Mapping Utopianisms research area and, of course, the leader of our Digital Lab.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: And with us, we also have two invited guests. Federico Boschetti holds a PhD in Classical Philology and a PhD in Brain and Cognitive Sciences. He is a researcher at the CNR, the Institute of Computational Linguistics, and a member of the Venice Research Center for Digital Humanities and Public Humanities. He coordinates the CoPhiLab and the CNR-ILC research unit hosted at the DPH at the Department of Humanities in Venice. He also co-leads the CLARIN knowledge center for Digital and Public Humanities and has taught Digital Humanities courses in Pisa and Venice. Also with us is Nils Geißler, who has studied Information Processing and Philosophy at the University of Cologne, with participation in an arts research master's program and has been working as a student research assistant at the CCeH, which stands for Cologne Center for eHumanities, and in various projects since 2014, including Pessoa Digital, which also includes the NOVA University Lisbon. Currently, he is working in specialized information service philosophy as a developer and in data domain editions in the consortium of Text+ of the national research data infrastructure. So, thank you all for being here and for these two exciting days of experience that we shared together. Our first question is precisely what led you to Digital Humanities and what makes your research center unique?

CARLOS CEIA: OK, shall I start? Thank you so much. Thank you for asking me the biggest question possible. CETAPS has been involved in Digital Humanities for some years now, especially because Professor Fátima started showing it all to us, persuading us to pursue this path. We are very happy that now it is something that we all know—those of us inside this

room—we all know that this is definitely our future, our next future, and our biggest investment is exactly in Digital Humanities because it is something to which we can all contribute from our expertise. We can add something to introduce new knowledge from our backgrounds. Since I started as a teacher many decades ago, I remember being a high school teacher when we first received a computer in my hometown. So, I've worked with computers since the beginning of my career, and I am not afraid of technological developments. However, the biggest issue in Digital Humanities is exactly what's going on right now. I'm not worried about people in this room; I'm worried about people who are not in this room and who have never entered a room full of people who work in this area. Right now, we are somehow divided. Those of us in the humanities believe this is already here, we have to do something about it, we have to learn how to use it in our daily academic routine. And there are all those people, all those colleagues and students who do not believe it, who think that this is a fashion, it's temporary, and somehow, they won't be touched by Digital Humanities; they will keep doing the same thing, using the same methods for the rest of their lives. So, this is, I believe, our biggest challenge: to persuade students, teachers, and researchers that Digital Humanities can help us do our job better and faster. At least these two adjectives, for me, are very important. To the best of my knowledge so far, that's what I've learned: I can do it better and faster. And another characteristic that I really like is that we do not have to do it alone. It makes no sense to do this alone. So, the old days of the lonely researcher in the library, to me, those days are over. And I really like this spirit of working together, always in an interdisciplinary mode, which I really like. We are always learning with colleagues, students, and researchers from other fields. We are never alone when we are working within Digital Humanities. We can learn from each other. And what I do these days is so different from what I've done ten or twenty years ago. Now I'm learning with my colleagues from the hard sciences. I teach in a PhD in Education where we have teachers from the Faculty of Sciences and Technology (NOVA FCT), experts in Mathematics and Sciences, and I have colleagues from Psychology (ISPA). So, we are always working together, and we are always trying to see what we can learn from each other using the most recent technologies and trying to help us change a little bit of what we usually do. Especially in academic writing and research as well. These two areas are changing so fast that I'm amazed every day... I'm teaching and learning at the

same time right now. That's why I just realized that I cannot cope with the daily advances of technology; I'm learning and teaching at the same time. That's why I tell my students: I'm teaching what I've just learned yesterday. So, that's basically my current status as a teacher. And I like it. It's a big challenge.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: So, in my case, I would say that my curiosity for Digital Humanities was first sparked by a project which is called, I believe, Republic of Letters. When I was shown that you could look at Voltaire... So, the project is all about Voltaire. There's another one also about Rousseau. But I was shown the results of that project concerning Voltaire. So, you could see Voltaire, during all his life, sent out letters and received letters from people from, I don't know, how many... Well, from three continents, I believe. And so, of course, if I am a specialist, for instance, in Voltaire, I will never ever be able to read all the letters. Well, I may be able to read the letters that he wrote and that he sent out to the other people. But what the project did was to show, well, Voltaire sent this letter to the United States and that person sent out, spread the ideas, Voltaire's ideas, by sending out the letters to other people. Or perhaps some of the ideas that we think that were Voltaire's, in fact, they came from other people. And in fact, when I was shown this network of collaboration, I realized that the Digital Humanities or Computing Humanities, which was its first label, was more than what we were doing at CETAPS, because we have many archives, but which were just used as archives. Then I realized, well, this is all about collaboration, because you need people from other disciplines, and you need many people doing the same thing. So, it's all about collaboration. And it's all about research, new research methods, and all about having the sort of information that opens up new avenues by offering us information that makes us formulate other questions. So why do I think that the work that we are doing here at CETAPS is unique? It's because after we realized that, we started a Digital Lab. Jacqueline Pierazzo, it's a pity that she's not here, but she was fundamental, she was then starting her PhD, and it was also in Digital Humanities, so the amount of information that she brought was impressive, also for our meetings. And then Joana Caetano, she used Digital Humanities. Of course, Luciano Moreira, I mentioned his name several times, was crucial. Why do I believe we are unique, at least as regards to the other centres that I know? It's because we are really offering training, we are providing training

to young researchers. And this morning, we had presentations by our JRAAS - Junior Researchers in Anglo-American Studies. We're talking about six students that are now in their second year of their Master's, and after six months of training, it's really impressive the amount of intuition, I would say, that they already have. Joel was sitting next to me, and I was asking him, what do I have to do? And, of course, for him, it was already natural and intuitive, and this is important. I would say we are unique also because we are discussing important topics, and I would just take two. The first is, what sort of training do we need to provide our students if we want them to be the next generation of Digital Humanists? We discussed that yesterday, and I believe that we all agreed that they still need to have, at least I would say, at BA and MA level, training in the Humanities, in our case, in Anglo-American Studies, and then we'll just have six months, a year, two semesters, three semesters, for instance, of Computing Sciences, or perhaps Brain and Cognitive Science, because that's your training as well. Will it be enough so that we can have the future humanists trained? And the second has to do with public humanities. CETAPS is now preparing an MA in Public Humanities, and this will for sure be the future. So, what sort of training do we have to provide our students with, so that they can also work in that field as well? For the moment... What I have to say is that I'm excited, and for me, I really felt that I needed something new. I have to say that I always feel that I learn much more when I attend conferences, when speakers are from geography, I'm sure that everyone feels the same... When I there is a philosopher speaking, a geographer, or even a biologist, I attend, and I learn so much. So now I'm really excited because this is completely unknown territory for me, and it's like starting again.

CARLOS CEIA: Yeah, all the time, every day.

FEDERICO BOSCHETTI: From my point of view, the term *Digital Humanities* is somewhat misleading because it detracts from the essential emphasis on collaboration and cooperation, which I believe are the most significant aspects of the field. Let me clarify: while collaboration can occur in a traditional context, cooperation in its truest sense is challenging to achieve without the support of a digital infrastructure. These terms—*collaboration* and *cooperation*—are borrowed from pedagogical studies, where collaboration typically refers to the

organization of a group working toward a unified, monolithic goal. Cooperation, on the other hand, involves dividing a project into subtasks that can be tackled independently, with the results recombined in novel ways, often exceeding the original intentions of the creators. This ability to produce something that serves third-party needs is crucial for ensuring the scalability of projects. In this framework, digital infrastructures enable researchers to address questions spanning multiple levels—micro, meso, and macro. For example, a new methodology can be tested not only on isolated samples but also applied to entire archives or corpora. This scalability aligns closely with FAIR data principles—findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability—where interoperability, in particular, has deep implications. It not only enhances the preservation and conservation of digital artefacts but also significantly advances the scientific paradigm itself, fostering new possibilities for research and discovery.

NILS GEIBLER: I think the Digital Humanities is a chance, a place to come together for different humanities disciplines to work on common standards, maybe, in the digital part, to not work on standards each, or inform each discipline on its own, but work together on standards, so you don't have to do things again and again. And also, if you just... (pulling a smartphone out of his pocket and holding it up) I mean, USB-C is really a nice thing, because before that you had a lot of different cables to power your cell phone, and now you just have a USB-C cable. There's Apple still, but you can use USB-C and some of those cables are only for powering devices, and some are also for transferring data. So, we can use common standards in different fields and come together and discuss those standards and what is needed for certain things. In Linked Open Data, if we speak about a person, what is essential for a person, what birth date, death date, what I just showed you yesterday. For me, it's quite essential if we talk about a historical person, because if we want to know if we are talking about the same person, then we can just look at when that person lived, and we have a good measure to disambiguate if we are talking about the same person. So, if we only talk about names, we have a lot of names that are the same, but if we have a certain identifier and we add some more data, some more context, we know what we are talking about. And then, this means if we use the same standards, we can be more sure and exchange data faster and more... What is the other term? Faster and better. So, we can all use that.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: Thank you. We go now to a second round of presentations. I'm Luciano Moreira, I should have said that at the beginning, for those who don't know me. Between us, we also have Raquel Souza, who is with me, co-moderating this roundtable, and we have Joana Pinela. Joana Pinela is also in this panel because she is a member of JRAAS. JRAAS stands for our Junior Researchers in Anglo-American Studies. Her voice is, in a way, the voice of the group. So, it's precisely to Joana that I would like to ask a question. So, Sophia de Mello Breyner, we went yesterday to the Botanic Garden. She has a beautiful poem where she says "*Navegavam sem o mapa que faziam*" - they sailed without the map they were making. I would like to ask Joana, how many times did you feel lost?

JOANA PINELA: Quite a few. I have to be honest, when I was going into Digital Humanities, my curiosity and my interest started as a matter of opportunity. I didn't really know anything about Digital Humanities. So, right from the start, I was lost. I just saw the proposal and the call for the scholarships. And even though I didn't know anything about the area, it was for my Master's, because I'm an Anglo-American Master's student, so, I went for it lost, sort of. I've always thought of myself as a sort of the preconceived, stereotypical notion of a humanities student: doesn't like numbers, can't work numbers, let alone code or even organize events. I've never done anything like this. So, doing this has been somewhat challenging, because it does seem like we have so many new things coming at us that sometimes it is intimidating to work through them, but we are a team. And so, it does help to navigate those things together. In fact, in our newsletter last month, the editorial was precisely about this. I used the Moby Dick quote: "I try everything, I achieve what I can".⁵ And that is precisely what we do here. Even though sometimes it feels intimidating and daunting, we try.

RAQUEL SOUZA: As you can see, we are all involved in Digital Humanities in a certain way, but based on the workshops you conducted here and the brief description you gave about your research centers, I would like to ask you how the Digital Humanities take part in your own research and your practice, because I can see, each one of you, has a very different approach on the Digital Humanities.

CARLOS CEIA: Ok, I can start. At the beginning of this century, I tried to publish a dictionary of literary terms. It started initially with some dozen entries. I contacted a publisher in Lisbon, and as the dictionary grew larger and larger, he told me, "Well, this will be very expensive; we give up, we won't publish the dictionary". We don't have many editions of literary terms in Portuguese. We have two, totally out of date. The idea was that I needed to update this dictionary in several editions because Literary Studies are not static; they are evolving all the time, and we need to have new terms all the time. I didn't persuade the publisher to publish the book. Ok, you don't want to publish it, my response was: I will make it online, with free access for everyone, and I can update it anytime I want. It will be available for free for everyone in the Portuguese-speaking world. Today, it has more than 20 million visits, many from Brazil. It's open access, with 1,500 entries so far, more than 180 collaborators from Portugal and Brazil, and it is not finished. I will finish one day, maybe when I'm retired, but one of the good things is the fact that it is a triumph of Digital Humanities, even before I knew that I was doing something for Digital Humanities or reading about Digital Humanities. But it's a good example of what the future holds, in the first place. It is open access, which is great; nobody has to buy this dictionary. I know it's used in all schools; I keep being informed that everyone around this country and in Brazil is using it, which is good. It's free, and I can update it at any time. Any reader, any user, can leave a comment and help improve any entry, so it's not just a book of one publisher or one editor; it's a book of all writers and all readers, which is how I conceive of a dictionary. If your dictionary wants to be updated all the time, it has to include the reader's opinion, when it's a good one. I've received a lot of spam as well; you've got the spam, you've got the good comments, and I feel that the readers are part of the dictionary. It's not just my dictionary; it's everyone's dictionary, and everyone is using it, which is what we want. So, this is just a practical example of something that is collaborative work in Digital Humanities; it's always updated, it's free, and anyone can collaborate. I've been asking my students over the years to write new entries. Right now, I've got a scholarship for one of our master's students; he's helping me reorganize it and write a couple more entries. So, it's the work of a lifetime. I haven't made any money from it, which is a good thing because it does not belong to me; it's

true public service. So, this is one practical example I can provide that proves that Digital Humanities changes the whole game.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Well, my first experience was with the Portuguese vegetarians, so we had this project which was funded by FCT, on food utopias actually, and we studied a journal, which was published here in Porto, from 1909 to 1935, that is for 36 years. We had a team, and we described – but we did not use AI, of course, because we were not familiar with the AI tools then –, we fully described every article, every letter, because there were letters also being published in the journal, and every image, and we constructed an Excel. And this is the sort of raw data that we in the humanities just keep for ourselves. So, if you ask me, could you please write a paper on what sort of recipes vegetarian women would publish in that journal? It will be very easy for me, because I go to my Excel, and I just use that information. And then, actually, someone from the Faculty of Engineering paid me a visit, and he told me about raw data, and about this project that has raw data shared with everyone, and then I said, well, this means that anyone can use it, and this is a product of very much effort. But then, finally, we decided, yes, we want to share the data. And so we did it, and there's a master's thesis that has just been published and its author resorted to this data. So, this was the first thing. The second thing we did for the same project has to do with citizen science. We thought that perhaps we could have a citizen science project by inviting people to share the readings that they had of utopias, they would have to read literary utopias and insert into the database information about those texts, and answer a few questions. Where do people have their meals? Where do people live? Do they have meals together, or do they have meals at home? What sort of food do they have? And so, we invited people, and we had, I don't know how many entries we have now, but we had quite a few entries. And so, for instance, if I want to see, to know, how many vegetarian communities we have in literary utopias, I can go to the database and get an accurate answer. And that was the first proof that it really worked. My experience also went through the supervision of Jacqueline's thesis and also Joana's thesis. I learned a lot from them. And now I'd just like to say that I'm really interested in social reading. So, this idea, I have already told Luciano what I would like to do, what I really want to do is experiment with publishing a text, and then invite people to make comments so that they can read other

people's comments and see what comes out of it. So, we'll see, we'll try to use utopia, of course, because that's my field.

FEDERICO BOSCHETTI: I work at the CNR-ILC and I collaborate extensively with universities, particularly with scholars whose research centers on intertextuality. When working in the realm of intertextuality, the first requirement is to have corpora — consistent corpora that can, in turn, comprise multiple sub-corpora. The consistency of corpora —where identical phenomena are described in a uniform manner and distinct phenomena are distinctly categorized — is a crucial factor in enhancing research methodologies. This consistency facilitates a shift of paradigm from merely selecting individual samples to support a specific theoretic position, often from a rhetorical standpoint, to a broader and more comprehensive study of phenomena within their full context. By examining phenomena holistically, researchers can move beyond isolated examples to uncover patterns and relationships that provide a more nuanced and robust understanding of their subject matter. From this perspective, a rigorous scientific approach involves systematically identifying phenomena and evaluating them using metrics such as counting false positives, false negatives, true positives, and true negatives. Researchers cannot simply identify a phenomenon and illustrate it with a few prominent examples; instead, they must provide a systematic account, such as demonstrating that five cases support one direction while 25 cases might point to alternative interpretations. This systematic approach requires establishing frameworks — or systems — for organizing and analyzing digital resources, which is why interoperability becomes crucial. Interoperability facilitates connections between literary and linguistic resources and enables their integration into digital analysis tools. As we saw during the workshop, linguistic analysis of data requires robust infrastructures: training sets, linguistic resources, annotated corpora, and so forth. Another critical topic is the annotation process itself, which involves the creation of descriptors by scholars. It is important to emphasize that researchers should not be constrained by existing standards, as scholarly inquiry must often move beyond predefined frameworks. Standards, while essential at both the starting and concluding stages of a project, should not limit the process of discovery and exploration in the middle. This presents a key challenge: researchers must delineate boundaries while simultaneously innovating beyond

conventional cognitive schemes. Standardization, particularly of input data, remains indispensable. However, researchers should actively contribute to shaping the standardization process to ensure that their specific needs are recognized and incorporated into broader community practices. For example, within CLARIN, we are currently advocating for the specific requirements of philologists to be acknowledged and integrated into the broader framework used by linguists. Standards cannot remain static; they must accommodate residual or evolving aspects that can be formalized and standardized in subsequent stages. This iterative approach ensures that standards remain dynamic and responsive to the needs of the research community.

NILS GEIBLER: And you will always have someone or need somebody who is going to translate into those standards, right? And have some common place where everyone meets. For me, I have that example from my BA thesis. I made a model of some sort of a pet project that gathered dust in the last few years. It was a model of martial arts and how to practice martial arts, how it is practiced. So, it's immaterial, and it's intangible, but it's some sort of cultural object. A cultural practice. And I tried to model it and use that model to annotate videos of people doing martial arts. And I created a small database, a graph database, in RDF. Using CIDOC CRM. I had that running on my institute's server running. The way I showed you yesterday, using SPARQL, I could query the stuff and get things out again. So, this was working but at some time the server was shut off because it wasn't used anymore and there were no other projects in that area of that certain use case. But I still had the data in my online repository, GitHub, you might know that. And now, I was quite alone with that because there are very few people looking at it from that perspective: martial arts as a cultural practice. But now I met a guy who is doing some very similar stuff for Kung Fu. Kung Fu is more well known and it has a lot more different techniques. Anyway, I was now able to just take my RDF data and just give it to him. And now we can do stuff with it, and we can just reuse it, and for me, it's a great example of how using such standards is effective. We can reuse it and just pull it out again and do things with it.

RAQUEL SOUZA: Now this is to Joana. Can you explain what we do, representing all the JRAAS and our relation with Digital Humanities?

JOANA PINELA: One of the very first projects that I worked on was *O Vegetariano*. I worked on the database that you mentioned, and most recently, I created a database with a compiled list of names from all the subscribers. There were 1027 and the goal was to be able to retrieve as much information as possible.⁶ So birth date, death date, the place where they were at the time of the subscription, the country, of course, and also the occupation. I wouldn't have been able to create the database if I hadn't already had the information that the team from the Foodways Project curated. Because we are talking about people born in the early 19th century, so retrieving this information is very difficult, and I already had a difficult time finding more information, but it would have been a lot harder if I didn't have some of their occupations for example. If I didn't know someone was a doctor, I wouldn't have been able to know whether or not it was them, so that was really helpful. The database is now also available on the repository. Most of what we do is we create databases so we make them as complete as possible, we keep working on them, and then we put them in an open access platform where people can go and check the information as much as they like. With this database, I also created a map, which is still a work in progress, and it should be available soon on the new Alimentopia website⁷ that the team has developed, which will act as an archive where you will be able to access the map. It's what we have been working on and it's been very fulfilling to do that.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: Thank you. There is a comment that I would like to make about what Federico said about the standards because it reminds me of what Latour said about the science of metrology, the science of measurement, and he says it's the last of the sciences so we work always ahead and we rely on it to move and to push research further, so we depend on standards in a way to challenge the standards to make the standards evolve.⁸ That's quite fascinating. It puts us in this idea of what is our direction. I remember a quote by Henry David Thoreau, I think, in *Walden*, and he puts there a question that always puzzled me, and I think

that it's quite a good question to put to the panel. He says we have now railroads, I'm quoting by heart, so it's not exactly like this, but he says we now have railroads that take us to Tennessee. The question is who among us wants to go to Tennessee? We now have wires that put us in contact with London but what do we have to say to London? So, no matter what the direction is, why do we want to run this path? What pushes us?

CARLOS CEIA: That's a good question. I feel the same way when I see how AI is evolving and how it can be applied to Literary Studies and educational studies in the many areas I work with. I'm always thinking, what can I do with this? Now that I know these tools, how can I use them? Why are they changing my own practices within these two main fields? I think we will find answers. We will find that we can do new things with the tools that AI is offering us right now. Here are two examples. One of the improvements we have made in Literary Studies is the creation of web pages for authors. Take a look at, for instance, the official web page for Charles Dickens or James Joyce. It's amazing the kind of extensive information we have access to now that we didn't have 20, 30, or 50 years ago. Now, we have their whole lives available for everyone to research, explore, and read their works. These web pages are not just for classical writers; they are for any writer. The work done with Pessoa, for instance, with Pessoa Digital, is amazing. For major writers, at least, we have access to their entire written and published works and more. This is something that we, within Literary Studies, can take immense advantage of, allowing us to do new things with the accessible information. In the past, I had to travel extensively just to check a couple of documents, but now we have digital libraries available to us; we just need a computer. This kind of information is absolutely amazing for those of us working in Literary Studies and is changing our practices. Now, let me talk about education. We are changing everything again. Maybe sometimes we are not using the best practices, but we are trying to change our educational practices using digital resources. There is a big project that our government, not exactly this government but the previous one, started. It's called RED in Portuguese, which stands for Recursos Educacionais Digitais (Digital Educational Resources). This project is funded by the European Commission for all countries in Europe, and the resources they are producing are amazing. We are helping the Ministry of Education to produce these resources. The point is that we have this responsibility to produce

new digital resources for all schools, private and public, for all students. It doesn't matter if they have a computer or not, or if they have good or bad internet access; we are producing educational resources for all disciplines, not just for the humanities. This is a new responsibility from our point of view, so we must be aware of this. We must participate and collaborate because this is a new world. The issue is that our public schools, at least, are not using these resources. They are available to all, but they are not being used. There might be some prejudice here, some bias there. They don't believe this is the new world. They might say, "I don't have good internet access," but you can use it. Ask your students to check on their phones or at home, wherever they can, but use it. We have produced the digital resources, but they are not being used as we would like. I've seen beautiful things done for all disciplines, especially within our Portuguese and English disciplines. I was a counsellor for one of them, and it was an amazing start. We at the university are working with publishers because we have to engage with them as well. They are following this path. Right now, we have at least two very big platforms, Escola Virtual and Aula Digital, offering lots of very good digital resources for all teachers and students to use. The next step is persuading all teachers to use these digital resources in primary and secondary schools. Hopefully, this will improve because the resources are already there. We've been producing for publishers, but the digital resources are already there. So, if our teachers want to use them, they cannot complain. There are so many things available right now. There are no excuses not to use digital resources. They are not meant to substitute teachers; they are meant to complement what they are doing. Some colleagues think this is a threat to their teaching, but it is not. A good video presentation of any difficult, complex content can always be a great help for any teacher. Fortunately, we have lots of digital resources available right now. Now we have to persuade our colleagues to use them and create good conditions in schools. They need good internet access. They already have their computers. As you know, every single student in Portugal has a computer. Every single teacher in Portugal has a computer, provided by the state. Some of them are not very good, but it doesn't matter. They have computers, they have the internet. There are no excuses for not introducing digital education alongside formal education. Let's see what happens.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: I tried to list all the things that were mentioned, or most of the things that

were mentioned over these days. So, I'm talking about approaches or Digital Humanities approaches, sentiment analysis, network analysis, spatial analysis, digital mapping, data visualization, social reading, digital preservation, authorship, and attribution. These already point out so many new avenues of research that, of course, I would say that this is why I'm so excited about it. But Carlos mentioned that people feel threatened by the digital. It is true, some people are. But what we have to remind them is that we are still, first and foremost, scholars of humanities. So, we have to make people understand that the sort of work and the sort of questions that we are formulating, although we may now be resorting to different methodologies and approaches, are still pertinent to our human condition. They are still the same sort of interrogations about our world. And this is the message that we really need to convey. We have to say this is not a threat. No, you are going to know more. But, of course, what I also believe is that we do need to foster discussion on the subject, not only within CETAPS, but also with colleagues from other areas, those who work mostly in the humanities – and also social sciences, but I would say that the problem is mostly with the humanities. We need this sort of discussion to be fostered so that people do not feel threatened, I would say. But I must confess I forgot the question you asked me.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: What drives you?

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: So what drives me is really all the things that were mentioned here, and I was so excited yesterday and today, this morning, and of course what drives me is, for instance, what happened today with the JRAAS, when I saw you all talking already like that – and of course I know that you are standing for your colleagues, so it's the same – when I saw you, I thought that you are already talking as a digital humanist. And this is what really drives me as well.

FEDERICO BOSCHETTI: At the beginning, you raised an important question: while we may have the means to reach Tennessee, why should we go there? I believe this question is crucial for understanding the relationship between Digital Humanities and Public Humanities. We might consider Digital Humanities as the humanities *in potentia*, whereas Public Humanities

can be seen as the humanities *in actu*, borrowing these concepts directly from an Aristotelian-Thomistic framework. When we create corpora, we often treat them as treasures, carefully assembled and stored as though they are safeguarded for posterity. However, history has shown us examples where such treasures were lost — take the case of ancient literary works that were preserved in secondary collections but ultimately forgotten because no one engaged with them. This raises a critical issue: instead of merely preserving resources created in Digital Humanities, we need to ensure their active use. Not all resources will be used exhaustively, but they should be leveraged to create purpose-driven applications and foster networks of interest. This, I believe, is the central role of public humanists: to promote and facilitate the meaningful use of digital resources, transforming their potential into active contributions to society and scholarship.

NILS GEIBLER: In two parts what drives me is, first, it's quite simple. I really like to look into different projects. In Digital Humanities, if you work on projects, you always have insights into new projects and new research, and it's always like a visit to a museum. For me, personally, it's really nice to see something and get it from the experts. And the other part is, I like structuring things and giving structure to things, and it's maybe, in a way, being lazy, so after you structure things, you can use that structure. Yeah, I'm still advocating for the standard things and stuff. So, you are able to, I mean, why do we have that road to Tennessee? We can now send an autonomously driving car down that road, and let it fetch something for us. And if we have the numbers of houses, the addresses, we can send it to a certain address and so on, and things come together, kind of, and we can use what we have structured before. And this is really nice.

JOANA PINELA: Talking about education, earlier this year, our team conducted a workshop with students from the seventh grade to the twelfth grade, and for that workshop, we used digital tools, so they were to use their phones, they filled out Google forms, and they were receptive to it, the teacher was receptive to it. Later on, we wrote a paper on this activity, and based on Doctor Luciano's research, we also know that teachers in Portugal are not trained enough in digital tools.⁹ So it's not just a matter of persuading them – because they're not

trained, they fear it. And because they don't understand it, there's a fear that it may substitute their work. And there's also a sort of misunderstanding of the students themselves because teachers think of students as phone and internet-addled, and they're not. They used their phones, but it didn't overrun the workshop; they didn't go on social media during the workshop; they did use their phones, and they used digital media, but they were restricted, and it worked really well. So that was one of the experiences that we had that was really exciting for us, and we had a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun writing the paper, which we already presented at a conference. It's going to be published later this year, and it was one of those experiences that really told us that going forward, Digital Humanities can be really incredible in terms of improvement.

RAQUEL SOUZA: Professor Carlos Ceia said something very interesting, that for many people, Digital Humanities is just fashion. It's going to be something that's going to disappear. I would like to know, in your opinion, how Digital Humanities is going to evolve and how these new researchers, like Joana and I, can help with this evolution. Because I believe each of you has new researchers, as we have JRAAS at CETAPS, or maybe you also have goals for the new generations of researchers to learn Digital Humanities. So, how do you think this combination can evolve with Digital Humanities?

CARLOS CEIA: That's a huge question. I cannot see the future, but I can see that the present is sometimes frightening because of the things we've just witnessed. We've just launched a preview of the new language model by OpenAI, which is a thousand times more powerful than ChatGPT. I've been trying this out, even with my students, and it's amazing. I thought it wouldn't be able to understand what we do, but I recently had an experience in class with my future teachers. I gathered all of them in an auditorium for teacher training and demonstrated this technology. It's not available on the internet right now; you must buy a bundle, like monica.im or you.com. These are the two that I know. I bought monica.im, which is absolutely incredible. It costs just nine dollars a month, so it's perfect. It includes ChatGPT-4o, Claude 3.5 Sonnet V2, Gemini 1.5 pro, DALL-E 3, Llama 3.1 405B, and access to o-1-preview, the most advanced language model invented by humankind so far. It's absolutely crazy what it can

do. This is both frightening and exciting at the same time due to its capabilities. From now on, I told my students, let's see what it can do. I asked this new model to do something that I was certain it couldn't understand. I asked it to prepare the organization of a report for our teaching practicum, which is unique to Portuguese education. We are the only ones who have this kind of practicum report. So, I asked it to create this type of report for our teaching practice, with a structure that is very restricted and rigid in our educational environment. To my surprise, it built the most perfect structure I've ever seen for a practicum report. I've never seen anything so complete and sound. One of the students, a future philosophy teacher, asked, "What am I doing here?" while we were sitting for a course on methodology. That's the right question. I told them they are here because they are human, and we need them to work from their own words. These developments in AI put us all at a new starting point. I have to change the way I begin my research, my teaching, and my assessment techniques. I cannot start by telling them to pair a good index with an introduction and a review, as we know for a scientific report, because they can all do this perfectly now. This is the new starting point. Now, they must have their own point of view. They cannot simply repeat the same thing, or we will all be producing identical reports. The human factor will make the difference from now on, and that will be more relevant than ever. We have to start working much further ahead than where we used to start with our students, colleagues, and even our research. We can conduct research faster and find things more easily, but we should not trust 100% of what we get. There are still many mistakes, even with this super new language model. For example, I asked it for information about one of Gil Vicente's plays, and it invented new characters and details that are not part of the real plays. So, don't trust any language model completely, no matter how powerful it is. However, you can start much further ahead than before. The human factor, the human reading, and the organization of information will never be lost. We don't have to feel threatened because the human factor—our thinking, creativity, human touch, and emotion—will always be needed. Emotion is important for academic writing as well, as long as you don't overuse adjectives and subjectivity. You will have to find your own voice more than ever because finding a personal start for academic writing will be the next challenge. We all need to find our own voice when writing academic papers because AI can do it for us, and it can do



it in the same style for everyone. Finding your own voice in academic writing is the next big challenge, as that's what differentiates us, humans, from text generated by computers.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: As a research centre, what we have to do is to offer research infrastructure to our members. And this is what I believe that we should go on doing. All sorts of research tools, including digital tools, of course. So, I would say that in the future, the way I see it, we need to go on training better digital humanists, always with this idea in mind that we are training people with a solid humanities background, in English and American studies, who learn how to use tools. And I do believe that we'll be training people that will have jobs, because we know there are many reports on the jobs of the future. And at first, we thought that the jobs that will be extinct would be manual jobs. Now we know that manual jobs will go on, but there are many technical jobs that are going to disappear. For instance, we already know that some courts in the United States do not have lawyers anymore. They have already replaced, or they are making experiments, by replacing lawyers with AI. They just ask AI to analyse, for instance, a situation and to see if there are any precedents or similar previous situations. And then they just try to solve it by referring to previous cases. The same with engineers. One of these days I attended a meeting with engineers and architects. AI, in ten years, will be able to give us a plan for a new building.

CARLOS CEIA: And learn a new profession, “prompter engineering”. This will be the future.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Yeah, someone who knows how to give the prompts, the prompts we'll need to be given, we still need prompter in the future. That's what I was going to say. We still need people to give the prompts. Because, of course, AI is not creative, as you were saying, just to put different points together, different dots together. The human being is still the one who is really able to be creative. And, of course, we need critical thinking. AI, I believe, will never be able to have critical thinking. So, I would say that by training digital humanists, we'll be training people who will have jobs, I hope.

Nils Geißler: I would ask the question, what is the difference between prompting and “prompting a book”, or books, or a library? So, checking books, doing your research, and so on and so on. Where's the big difference in that? I mean, yeah, it's obvious what the difference is, but in some way, it's still a method to go into a library, get answers, and get data input, and then can be processed. Yeah, AI may process that already, and give us some text, but we still have to validate that right now and do something with that.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Can I just say something about these prompts? We had Mark Amerika, I don't know if you attended his session, we had Mark Amerika here, I don't know, last year, at Casa Comum Reitoria, and he was here and he was selling his book. And this book had been entirely written by AI, and then he said: “Well, it has not been written by AI, it was by me, because I gave the prompts.” It cost about \$40, something like that. And then he said: “I'm just delighted now, because I discovered Pessoa and the *Book of Disquiet*. So, my next project will be to write a book in Pessoa style, sort of imitating the *Book of Disquiet*.” And I said: “But this is not you, so who's going to have the copyright? And he said: “No, it's me.” Even the prompt thing raises this issue: who has the copyright of a book? Is it just because I give a prompt, like I say, well, could you please write a story about something, in someone's style – can I say that I'm the author? So also, the question of authorship is very important. One of these days I made an experiment. I have a subscription to ChatGPT; I'm trying all sorts of things so that I understand what it can be and what it can do. And I asked ChatGPT: could you please write a story about a little girl who looks at a tree, and then says, well, how beautiful life is? Something like that. Could you please write that story in Lídia Jorge's style, in Valter Hugo Mãe's style? And it was perfect.

CARLOS CEIA: Even in Shakespeare's style.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Even in Shakespeare's style. And I was like this, and I said, what? So, there's really... drama, you know, I have to say, but yeah, there's a new world. But the question of prompting... it is all about giving prompts and confirming, so, of course, the human being is

still needed... but the idea of “prompter engineers”, I don’t know, I found it quite strange when I first heard about it.

CARLOS CEIA: We are organizing a prompt conference, a prompt workshop.

FEDERICO BOSCHETTI: I believe that the future of Digital Humanities may paradoxically involve their transformation to the point of “disappearing” as we currently understand them. This disappearance could unfold in several ways, one of which is through advancements in quantum computing that might redefine the technological foundations of what we now call the “digital”. Quantum computing, based on principles such as superposition and entanglement, operates fundamentally differently from the binary logic of classical digital systems. However, rather than entirely eliminating discreteness, it introduces a paradigm that combines discrete states with probabilistic models, offering new ways to process and conceptualize information. From this perspective, quantum technologies could be seen as a step toward a partial “return to the continuum”, as they challenge the rigid segmentation characteristic of traditional digital architectures.

CARLOS CEIA: Does that make sense, talking about quantum humanities in the future? Does that make sense?

FEDERICO BOSCHETTI: Yes, I believe it does make sense to talk about quantum humanities in the future. That said, this idea invites us to reflect on the current technologies employed in Digital Humanities and their evolution. These technologies are often associated with deterministic models, governed by algorithms and predictable processes. However, AI introduces a new dimension, as it is, in many respects, non-deterministic and not directly controllable—at least in its current state. While we are studying how it operates, much remains unclear, particularly because knowledge of AI systems is distributed across networks. This opacity is one reason these technologies, as currently used in Digital Humanities, may eventually “disappear” or evolve beyond their present frameworks.

Another reason for this potential disappearance, or transformation, is the hope for full integration of Digital Humanities into the humanities as a whole. In fact, the greater risk of extinction lies with traditional humanities, not Digital Humanities. The latter is, in a way, more accessible to scientists in other fields, including STEM disciplines, which is evident in how European funding is often contingent on incorporating aspects of Digital Humanities. This reflects the challenge of fostering dialogue between humanists and scientists, a gap that Digital Humanities can help bridge. By enabling interdisciplinary collaboration, Digital Humanities can support the survival and evolution of traditional humanities, making them more relatable and comprehensible to other scientific domains. Returning to Aristotle, we see that science often focuses on the general — the study of categories, genera, and species — rather than the particular. In contrast, humanists must engage deeply with the specific: the individual manuscript, the singular author, or the unique cultural artefact. The challenge, then, is to find coherence between these two levels of inquiry. On the one hand, we have descriptive work, rooted in historical and contextual particularity; on the other, a scientific drive toward generalization. Neither approach is sufficient on its own. We must maintain a balance that respects the specificity of the individual while situating it within broader, generative frameworks.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Can I just jump in, just to say, when you mentioned that Digital Humanities are going to disappear, I thought that you were going to say they are going to disappear because we are not going to think any more of the digital component because it will be so natural. So, from my point of view, it will still be the humanities. And if you think of the digital, this is the way I think of it, as a means, then it's still humanities resorting to the digital. But I remember that I read about the history of publishing and writing and so on, and apparently, in Greece, there were people against the invention of writing because they thought, well, even our philosophy, critical thinking, would be disturbed by the paper and the act of publishing. And so perhaps, in fact, what we discover is that the paper and the pen, whatever, they are meant. So, it's a way to do something. So, don't you think that they are going to disappear because they are going to be so natural that we will just say, what do you do? I'm doing humanities research, full stop, because the digital will be natural.

JOANA PINELA: I guess in terms of AI, I think the biggest concern right now, is people doing their work fully with AI. Because I know, for example, there are more and more cases of plagiarism, not only at university but also in public schools at a lower level, which you wouldn't necessarily expect, and it was never like this. So, students are becoming more and more stunted in a way that they weren't before. They're losing their creativity and their imagination, which are two of their biggest tools in anything they'll ever do. And so, if they lose that, they can't write. And if every time they try to write, they resort to AI, I guess that's also a teacher's concern. They fear having their students overuse it, or use it at all, because they see its repercussions directly in their tests, in their exams, and then at university. So, I understand those fears, but I guess it's also our job to show that we can use these digital tools responsibly, and we can create fun activities with them, like the workshop that we did, which was really interesting and it was fun, and to do that in an exhibition would be incredible as well, as a responsible, intuitive, and a fun way to use ChatGPT, that I think any teacher taking their students to an exhibition would appreciate.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: Thank you. I think that now we can give the true meaning of a round table and be open to questions or comments from the other people in the room, if anyone wants to jump in.

LIAM BENISON: I was interested in how this perhaps makes us question the notion of the author. Maybe we need to focus on the role of the prompter. What does prompting mean? What does prompting involve? What did Mark Amerika do? Did he just simply publish what the AI produced? Or did he actually intervene?

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: His conversation with AI. So, it was just a book of him asking questions, you know, and then the answer. It was just like that. It was published by Power Wave or something like that, because it was quite innovative. First, I was thinking of how we can translate it into Portuguese. Prompting. So, Hanna? Zulmira, Prompter? Because it will be a future job. One of the jobs of the future.

HANNA PIĘTA: We will probably only know the name when we get there, and when it is a consolidated profession.

CARLOS CEIA: It's already a speciality in engineering, you know. I was told by engineers. And they are preparing courses in Portuguese.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Prompting engineer.

CARLOS CEIA: Prompting engineer. In Portuguese it's awful. It's an awful name. It makes no sense at all.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Seria instrução de engenharia.

HANNA PIĘTA: I wonder if we should be using the term “engineering”. This term is associated with hard sciences. “Language engineering” might be better. Maybe a language engineer is better.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: The same could happen with designers. We don't have a word for designers. We have prompters.

CARLOS CEIA: *Engenharia de Prompt.*

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: But in Portuguese we'll probably say “prompteiro”. Okay, what else? Prompter. That's very popular. With the Porto accent. So prompter.

HANNA PIĘTA: I have a question. It's a tricky one. But you're off the hook. Because I honestly don't have an answer to this. I don't think anyone has. Typically, when we're talking about Digital Humanities and AI at a certain point we're talking about biases too, right? My first question is, is this one of the major concerns that you're having right now in your initiatives? Are you trying to mitigate any potential bias? And I'm not thinking only about gender bias or

race bias, but any type of bias that you might see in your initiatives. How are you approaching this and trying to mitigate that?

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Can I just say, well perhaps Luciano, your question reminds me... I'm sure that Luciano will be able to also explain how one of our missions is also to preserve information so that it can be used in the future. But your question reminded me of *1984* by Orwell. And, of course, what happens is that Winston was a curator of information. And the government, of course, wanted him to make available only the information that it wanted to be offered. So, my main concern is also the curators of the information: who decides what information is going to be passed on to the future or not? Now, what we do is just Google, and then, of course, we know that the first hits will be those who paid. Okay? But we know the rules. These are the rules. So, I don't know in the future who's going to decide what sort of information is going to be preserved. But now I'll leave it to others...

NILS GEIBLER: And then again, I have to ask that question. Didn't we have that before? I mean if you came into a library and there's that table with those curated books...

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Those are the things.

NILS GEIBLER: So, we already had that in some way before. I mean, now we have it on a larger scale and maybe with fewer questions.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: We even had Bloom who told us what the canonical works are. And all the others were forgotten just because Bloom said, Harold Bloom said: these are the canonical works.

HANNA PIĘTA: You're not worried about bias, then.

NILS GEIBLER: I'm worried about bias. Totally. But I would say we had that in some way before. And now maybe we still have other means to go around that. In a project we're working

on with the FID philosophy, we thought about making our own word embeddings. Which is kind of one of the foundations of all those large language models. Kind of make our own embeddings and provide them to the researchers. So, if somebody is interested in philosophy and wants to do something with his own large language model. Or in that way, a RAG or whatever you would use. A RAG being something that is built upon a model and a specialized model. Kind of a large language model. So, the idea was that we would pick different philosophical works or books, texts with different backgrounds. For example, if you look into literature from the DDR, the German Democratic Republic. You had a certain influence in there, a certain bias. And so, you have a certain, let's call it "flavor" in there. And then you could provide different flavors of corpora. Or corpora with different flavors each. And then people could know about the bias they would use there. So, you could kind of maybe pick what bias you want to use. And maybe compare. And so, you would have some means to get around those biases. Or kind of work with that. What you actually do if you try to read about something. You don't read only one source, right? You read different sources.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: When the first five sources tell you the same, then perhaps you don't go on to write, you know, reading more. So, who decides what goes first? Because we can read, well, the first page of hints. And then we normally repeat.

NILS GEIBLER: And then it's a nice chance for the digital stuff. You can read not only five things, but you can read...

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: So, it starts reading more.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: I think that when we started this collaboration, we usually started with a text by Johanna Drucker.¹⁰ And then even balance for the Digital Humanities, they spotlight these when they talk about the FAIR principles.¹¹ And she says, we should stop talking about data. That which is given to us. And we should instead talk about Capta. So that is taken by us. So, the idea that we build data. And I think the best example is perhaps the one that Joana and Joel, who worked on a paper about it, can give. And how they, in the paper, address the

bias. I don't know, Joel, if you want to share a little bit of that perspective about our Utopian mindset.

JOEL FAUSTINO: Well, we've analyzed the data set. The goal of analyzing it was to sort of, through the information that we have there, try to find the state of the utopian project. It depends on the collaboration of many people. So analyzing that which is taken here, Capta, because we needed to isolate this information within itself so we could understand that field of the utopian thought, is that by analyzing what sort of people they would put in a database dedicated to utopians, where they came from, what they worked on, we could sort of find what people's current perception of what constitutes utopia and utopia thinking and utopia work is. So, yeah, analyzing numbers and percentages to try to find out what the field looks like there. One of the most impressive insights is that we asked people to give an example of a utopian thinker, and we got the man.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: Can I say something? You don't have to go far. At the faculty, all the departments were asked to just give an example of someone who's a reference for that department. And I was part of this department, and I also agreed that it should be Hemingway. So, if you go downstairs, you can see that we have eight departments here, so we have eight men, no women at all. So, at the time, I didn't know that all the departments would mention a man. So, you go downstairs just before the Amphitheatre, if you go there just before the hall, past our canteen or bar, you just have men. When I saw it, I went to the director and said: "Who did it?" And she said: "It was the director of the library". The director is a woman. So, I went to her and said: "Isabel, how can it be? We only have men". And she hadn't realized. So, sorry, I had to tell you this story. And I've already said several times that we should replace those men, at least a few of those men – because I'm not, like, in *Herland*, where all men were extinct.

HANNA PIĘTA: It's like this was a collective, right? I wouldn't blame the lady.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: No, no, of course not, but she could have noticed. Because the thing is that

someone suggested Hemingway, okay, Hemingway, I didn't make any comments, I could have done it, Hemingway, okay. And someone else, in another department... but in the end, we have eight men. This is something that still troubles me, and this happened over ten years ago. And they haven't been replaced.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: I think that we really must close.

HANNA PIĘTA: That's a very pessimistic note to end on.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: We still have the closing session, which is right now. Let's try to end it optimistically. Thank you so much to our invitees. But before we close, I would just ask Carlos Ceia and Fátima Vieira a very brief statement about these two days here, and what is, in your view, the biggest achievement of these days. And this will be our very formal closing session before we deliver some gifts to our invitees to whom we are grateful.

CARLOS CEIA: OK, let me start. First of all, I want to thank our keynote speakers and our colleagues, because this is the way we should do it: in a collaborative way, with many different viewpoints from different areas. I feel that we have a greater responsibility right now. I was talking about biased people around us. I'm surrounded by biased people—not my students, but mainly my colleagues. This is our greater responsibility from now on—not just to persuade them, but to help at all educational levels. We need to help our colleagues, especially teachers. I work with teachers all the time, and I know most of them have biases about the humanities. It is our greater responsibility now to provide courses, workshops, and training to help our colleagues understand that they can do their work better and faster. These are our most significant responsibilities as research units, including the responsibility to provide quality training. I'm also concerned about the type of training we are providing to our teachers, particularly our in-service teachers, not just the pre-service ones. This is an area where we need to improve. It is our responsibility as research units and universities to provide quality training in this area and many others, but this area is already at stake. In the future, hopefully, we will provide better, quality training for everyone in the country. Thanks to Digital Humanities, we

can reach anyone in any school, from the Algarve to Trás-os-Montes. This is a great advantage of Digital Humanities—we can reach anyone, anywhere. It is our responsibility to provide quality training in Digital Humanities from now on. Thank you so much for what I have learned over these two days. I have a stronger feeling that we have a greater responsibility to provide quality research here. Let's take this quality research to the rest of the world and the rest of the country.

FÁTIMA VIEIRA: I know that we are running late, so I will subscribe to everything that was said. And my words will be of gratitude. First of all, to our speakers, and also to our colleagues who came from Lisbon. Thank you so much, because I believe that we now have, I would say, a Digital Humanities community. And I believe that we really need to repeat this kind of activity, to have more sessions, so that we can discuss all these important topics. My gratitude goes to Luciano Moreira, of course, and many, many special thanks to our JRAAS, our junior researchers in Anglo-American studies, who talked about the future. You are the future, because this generation, my generation, will be retiring soon. So, I have hope, and what I feel is that we are lucky to be able to trust the future of the centre to your most capable hands. Thank you very much.

LUCIANO MOREIRA: One support that we received to organize this event was coordination that was with us all along to the colleagues that came from Lisbon. And I think that it's really important to stress that we are two branches of the same tree. So, I think these two days also proved that. A very special thank you to those who joined us today, and allow us to show that the community is not a closed one. To our invitees who agreed to travel, to spend two days with us, working from half past eight in the morning. Thank you very much. And thank you to Inês Silva, also who helped us organize the event, and to the JRAAS. It's a very special honor to work with them. And this kind of horizontality, I think it's also something that we look forward to having in academia. Thank you very much. And now we have a small gift. So we now have a small gift for our invitees. Thank you very much. Thank you.

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END NOTES

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VARIA SECTION

Paper Dolls. Female Stereotypes
in Anglo-American Music from the 1950s and the 1960s

MIGUEL ALARCÃO

NOVA University of Lisbon/CETAPS

ABSTRACT: This article puts up for a brief cultural comment some videoclips of Anglo-American songs from the 1950s and the 1960s, which, while displaying the visual centrality of women and the beauty of the female body, also (re)produce stereotyped gender images, as well as overt or implicit macho assumptions and prejudices.

KEYWORDS: Anglo-American music (1950s-1960s), representations and images of women (1950s-1960s), female stereotypes, women as “dolls”, “Paper dolls”

RESUMO: Este artigo propõe para um breve comentário cultural alguns *videoclips* de canções britânicas e norte-americanas das décadas de 1950 e 1960, que, ao mesmo tempo que atestam a centralidade visual da mulher e a beleza do corpo feminino, (re)produzem imagens estereotipadas do género, bem como pressupostos e preconceitos tendencialmente ou explicitamente machistas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Música anglo-americana (Anos 1950-1960), representações e imagens da mulher (Anos 1950-1960), estereótipos femininos, a “mulher-boneca”, “Bonecas de papel”

The female body remains an active battlefield.

Myra MacDonald

To Dr Isabel Lousada (CICS.NOVA FCSH)

After the end of the Second World War (1945) and notwithstanding the existence and subsistence, in the following decades, of two highly militarised superpowers, each one with its own areas of geostrategic, political, commercial, and economic influence, Europe and the western world, especially the countries run by democratic systems and open economies, benefited by and large from considerably high levels of growth, development and progress from the mid-1950s onwards.¹

These favourable circumstances manifested themselves in higher visibility of middle-class women, who nonetheless remained largely confined to the domestic space in the 1950s. In times of greater affluence, the “neo-Victorian” survivals of the (image of) woman as the “angel in the house” were accompanied and supported by guidebooks and magazines extolling the roles of the perfect hostess, wife and mother, always alert to the needs of home, family, friends and guests, ever smiling and willing to fetch fresh drinks from the brand new fridge, placing them on tables and sideboards of straight, simple lines, and modern design. The very rise in the number of TV sets, complementing the crucial communicational and socially cohesive role played by the radio in the first half of the century, is pointed out by C. J. Bartlett:

In the same period [1950s] there was the opening of new vistas through the coming of television (over 70 per cent of the population had sets by 1959) ... The growth in the employment of married women was facilitated by the availability of labour-saving equipment in the home, and was also stimulated by family demand for increased purchasing power. (1977, 147)

Likewise, to Mark Donnelly, “Television’s rise to become a near universal presence in people’s homes was the most important cultural transformation of the sixties. Between

1961 and 1971 the number of households with a set rose from 75 per cent to 91 per cent” (2005, 77). Finally, in *Never Had It So Good*, Dominic Sandbrook argues that

Like the car and the wireless before it, the television transformed the mental landscapes of ordinary viewers: where once their experience might have been confined to the narrow streets of their neighbourhood, now the BBC and ITV conjured up worlds almost beyond their imagining. Political and cultural events that would once have reached the public second-hand, through newspapers, now reached them directly, through the television. (2006, 408)

The increase in the ownership of TV sets and the ensuing massification of audiences now made it possible to broadcast news and images on a larger and more effective scale, especially as “From the mid-fifties ‘image’ became a prime concern. Not only the image of products, but the image of people ... became fitting subjects for the services of the marketing experts” (Ford 1992, 17-18), though, in fact, one of the possible meanings of “image” points towards some degree of untruth or even falsehood.

The following quotes assess the post-war situation in Britain and the United States:

The position of women in society, and therefore ... within the family, ... had been greatly accelerated by the Second World War. However, the ... differentiation of roles as between husband and wife prevailed, with a wife’s tasks clustering round her function as homemaker and child-rearer, just as a husband’s clustered around his function as principal breadwinner. ... it is in middle-class professional families that husbands would be most likely to share domestic chores with their wives. One must tread carefully, though, in this era long before the advent of women’s liberation. Clearly, middle-class professional husbands, dedicated to success in their careers, depended very heavily upon their wives providing them with the comforts and security of domesticity. (Marwick 2003, 43-44)²

The immediate post-war decades, far from promoting the role of women in society, had actually worked to drive back such advances as had been made. In both America and the UK ... the war had seen a huge drive to recruit women, giving them the jobs in factories and elsewhere that their men had been forced to forgo. Within months of the war’s ending, that trend had been comprehensively reversed.... The whole *leitmotif* for Fifties women was the home, and the ‘making’ thereof. The media, and especially women’s magazines, preached the gospel of conformity, spinning a confectioner’s sugary web of unattainable domestic fantasy. (Green 1998, 398)

Peter Hennessy describes the position of women in society as “a dawn-that-never-was” (2007, 123), adding: “This featured remarkably little in the early post-war years apart from the pursuit of equal pay and the ending of marriage bars (...). Class was an immensely more potent issue than gender even as a 25-year old woman inherited the crown on the death of George VI in February 1952” (*Ibidem*). The beginnings, although slow and limited, of modern female emancipation and empowerment, are usually ascribed to the 1960s and the second wave of feminism, and the American influence is noted by David Thomson, to whom “the period saw the emergence and growth in Britain of a vociferous feminist, or ‘Women’s Liberation’ movement, which claimed (...) that, despite the advances which had been won since the days of the suffragettes, women were still subject to widespread discrimination on all walks of life” (1991, 354).

These beginnings were also grounded in the intellectual and militant activities of Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), whose seminal book *Le Deuxième Sexe* came out in 1949;³ in the increase in the number of employed women; on the emergence of a population of young consumers (*teenagers*)⁴ with their own cultural values and tastes, experiences alien to the poignant traumas of war and pacifist or hostile feelings towards new conflicts, whether global, regional or local; in the “sexual revolution” (family planning and birth control through the legalisation of the pill, abortion, open relationships...); in the creative reinvention and boost of female fashion and looks (Mary Quant, Vivienne Westwood, Vidal Sassoon...), etc. And yet, despite the increased social and professional visibility of women, they still appeared, irrespective of their fields and activities, often associated with male companions, whether husbands, boyfriends, brothers or bosses.

In this framework of consumer and capitalist societies revitalised by the purchase of goods and services beyond those strictly associated with primary needs, a possible risk and effect of enhanced female attention to their own looks and image (clothing, bags, shoes, hair, nails and make-up, jewellery...) could be, then as now, the “commodification” of women. As Janice Winship puts it, “Femininity is recuperated by the capitalist form: the exchange between the commodity and ‘woman’ in the ad establishes her as a commodity too (...). A woman is nothing more than the commodities she wears: the lipstick, the tights, the clothes and so on are ‘woman’” (1984, 218).

Some forms of male gazing at/viewing of women as almost ornamental “objects”, “trophies” or “dolls” have spilt into language (*doll, dolly bird, Barbie*) and music. This is

already patent in “Paper Doll”, a song originally interpreted by The Mills Brothers in the 1940s and, later on, by Frank Sinatra:

I’m gonna **buy** a **paper doll** that I can call **my own**
 A **doll** that other fellows cannot **steal**.
 And then the flirty, flirty guys, with their flirty, flirty eyes
 Will have to flirt with **dollies that are real**.

When I come home at night, **she will be waiting**.
 She’ll be **the truest doll** in all the world.
 I’d rather have a **paper doll** to call **my own**
 Than have a **fickle-minded real live girl**. (The Mills Brothers, 0:00-0:58; my emphasis)⁵

As Nicola Lane recalls:

The important thing to remember about the ‘60s is that it was totally male-dominated. You had to be an awful lot of things: you had to be sexy, you had to be game for anything (...). Looks were very important. Looks were of primary importance. What really filled me with fear and loathing were these little hippie girls in long frocks, tiny little things (...) wisping around the room. The dolly bird is definitely a hippie motif as well as a Carnaby Street one. Hippie dollies wore different clothes to Biba dollies, but they were still dollies. They just wore long dresses instead of little ones. (qtd. in Green 1998, 400)

In her introductory chapter to *Living Dolls: The Return of Sexism*, entitled “Dolls”, Natasha Walter dwells on a process of “dollification” which she considers to be still underway in the 21st century, associated with a hypersexualized culture and allegedly validated by biological determinism. The author argues that despite its frequent connection with female empowerment, this hypersexualization of doll-like women does, in fact, signal a setback in the history and cause of feminism since the 1960s (see, for instance, 2013, 6 and 10). Whether or not one subscribes to this view, such phenomena like the Spice Girls, Kylie Minogue, Britney Spears and, lately, Taylor Swift seem to illustrate the visual subsistence of dollification in pop music, something that Annie Lennox, for example, rebelled against: “Before Eurythmics became established, I wanted to present myself as a

woman that was not of the girlish, girly ilk, with little mini-skirts and legs, a sexy cutesy-pie dolly-bird type person. Which I'm not" (qtd in Myra MacDonald 2003, 217).

If, irrespective of gender, the exposure of a beautiful body can inspire attraction and desire, this neither implies nor legitimates any form of sexual violence and harassment, be it physical, verbal, visual, psychological, or any other. Additionally, one should mention the metaphorical transference to the rituals and procedures of seduction – often called or known as “the love game”, in both senses of the word “game” – of predatory words somehow connected with war, hunting, and food.

Bearing all this in mind, this paper puts up for a brief cultural comment some videoclips of Anglo-American songs from the 1950s and the 1960s,⁶ which, while displaying, in strictly binary terms, the visual centrality of women and the unequivocal beauty of the female body, also perform and (re)produce stereotyped gender images, as well as overt or implicit macho assumptions and prejudices. Music videos can indeed be viewed, read, and studied as culturally encoded productions that play a part in constructing, reinforcing, but also challenging prevailing gender stereotypes and expectations,⁷ to say nothing of their formative or educational impact:

Male address videos draw fundamentally on the connection between male adolescent license and adult male rule by activating textual signs of patriarchal discourse. Reproducing coded images of the female body, conventionally positioning girls and women as objects of male voyeurism, are effective strategies for associating male adolescent desire and male dominance. (Lewis 1998, 135)

Taking then, as we do, these musical videos as cultural codifiers and conveyors of meaning implies paying attention to the lyrics themselves, body language, clothes, shooting angles and frames, scenery, etc., thus involving semiotic methodologies, qualifications, and abilities beyond our reach. The selection below is, therefore, illustrative and subjective, but it may nevertheless inspire larger multidisciplinary projects focused on the verbal, visual, and corporal representations of women in the artistic, media, and marketing scenes of the mid-20th century. Myra MacDonald's *Representing Women. Myths of Femininity in the Popular Media* (2003, particularly chapters 6 and 7), may prove useful here, but, for the time being, this essay will focus strictly on music videos and leave

out any other forms or vehicles of artistic and/or commercial representation and communication, like films, theatre, ads, etc.

Our corpus begins with a woman who, for all her glittering charisma and iconicity, may arguably be considered not only a victim of her own turbulent love life but also of her public image and exposure,⁸ namely to male viewers whose coeval ideals and canons of sensuality and physical beauty she literally “embodied”,⁹ Marilyn Monroe (1926-1962), whose song “Diamonds are a girl’s best friends” features in the film *Gentlemen prefer blondes* (1953).¹⁰

Although the video displays, from the very beginning, an image of female power, rule, and even “sovereignty” – after all, Marilyn repeatedly rejects and refuses the hearts that her dozen or so male suitors (or “subjects”) offer her; she slaps them liberally with her fan and they still kneel before her, obey her commands, attend to her whims, carry her in their arms and lift her high above them –, the encoding/decoding of diamonds (and jewels in general) as a symbol of safety and stability, when affairs end or are at risk, has, however, a possible drawback: that of allowing the extension to the entire female gender of the traits of vanity, superficiality, futility, and material greed pertaining to the stock character played by Marilyn.¹¹ She (the character, not Marilyn!) is by no means a “dumb blonde”; on the contrary, she has no illusions; she knows that old age will inevitably come, “men grow cold”, and old girls may be discarded; hence the need for material security and financial independence.

So can this song be read as a sound, sensible, and realistic advice to all females? The reader will judge for him(her)self. However, the rejection of the hearts at the outset, coupled with the character’s obsessive craving for riches, may help build up, as suggested, a massified and biased male image of (all) women as “heartless”, selfish, cynical, and cold-blooded schemers, a generalisation that must be resisted at all costs.

Speaking of generalizations, Myra MacDonald notes that “if food is reputedly the route to the male heart, shopping, preferably on an unlimited budget, is the imagined pathway to a woman’s” (2003, 73). This stereotyped view is taken up in another videoclip, produced after our set timespan, but whose choreography is extremely similar to Marilyn’s, although the swing of the 1950s has now given way to Madonna’s pop: “Material Girl” (1984).

The visual and verbal messages at the beginning and the end of this clip (the non-musical “paratexts”, so to speak), add, however, an ambiguous twist, because although the character acknowledges that “we are living in a material world / and I am a material girl” (Madonna, 1:28-1:41), she starts by telling a friend, over the phone: “Yeah, he’s still after me. He just gave me a necklace. (...) Yeah, he thinks he can impress by giving me expensive gifts. It’s nice though” (Madonna, 0:44-0:57). This is actually overheard by the male gazer of 0:00-0:32, who accordingly drops the present in a dustbin. At the end of the clip, she happily accepts a simple bunch of daisies (not diamonds, jewels or necklaces) and is carried away by her suitor in a farmer’s or tradesman’s pick-up truck, rather than a Rolls Royce limousine (Madonna, 4:17-4:40). The final images of love and romance seem therefore to deconstruct, and eventually dispel the stereotyped characterization of this “material girl”.

As Janice Winship argues, “To make yourself (...) attractive is, by the mid 1960s, to make yourself *sexually* attractive and *available*: as if (...) the act of beautifying yourself is *already* to engage in sexual relations – (...) not just the promise of it” (1984, 219). The following videoclip – Neil Sedaka’s “Calendar Girl” (1961) –, much in the spirit and tradition of the American music-hall, recalls the pin-ups of *Playboy*, founded by Hugh Hefner in 1953 and whose first issue featured Marilyn Monroe on the cover; see the Easter “bunny”, standing for April (Sedaka, 0:33-0:38), and, for December, a flesh and blood “doll”, wrapped up in the guise of a Christmas present (Sedaka, 2:08-2:12). Thus, apart from the sexualization, or sexual objectification, of women, this video blatantly enacts and performs an overall image of females as commodities. Besides the fact that, irrespective of the months, all these calendar girls are implicitly presented as “available” and “easy to get” all year round, the very word “little” can be read as derogatory (a way of “belittling” them, so to speak), rather than as an affectionate term. Finally, the very calendar numbers at the back suggest a lotto or a lottery, as if these young women were nothing but (a) game...

Jealousy and spite are not really signs of love between individuals made equal, in terms of status and dignity, by a common human condition; this should be strongly emphasized, considering the rate of different sorts of crimes, often described and presented as “passional”, broadcast and almost “normalized” by some media. Nevertheless, the lyrics of songs composed by two of the greatest British bands of the Sixties – The Beatles and The Rolling Stones – sometimes voice and display an acquisitive or possessive

view of the female addressees, as well as a prescriptive and authoritarian attitude towards them. Some examples will be provided below, but this is ironical, considering not just the recurrence of “Love, love, love” as a discursive *leitmotif* and a mental “structure of feeling”¹² so mythically omnipresent throughout the decade,¹³ but also the display of mass “idolatry” and “hysteria” inspired by both bands in the girls and young women who chased them around the streets and outside airports and studios, cramming halls, theatres, and sporting grounds:

(...) what in the nature of their [The Beatles’] musical address attracted the adoration of so many young girls in the early years of Beatlemania? As Barbara Ehrenreich, Elizabeth Hess, and Gloria Jacobs observe, ‘Beatlemania was the first mass outburst of the Sixties to feature (...) girls, who would not reach full adulthood until the Seventies... In its intensity, as well as its scale, Beatlemania surpassed all previous outbreaks of star-centered hysteria’ (...). In short, the girls were the pursuers. (Whiteley 2006, 55-56)

Starting with The Beatles, Ian MacDonald highlights, not mincing words, “The paranoid possessiveness of YOU CAN’T DO THAT ...” (108), released in 1964, and the same might be said of The Rolling Stones’ “The Last Time” (1965). The lyrics of both songs cannot (and indeed need not) be quoted here in full, but the first lines already reveal possessive and authoritarian male stances, whether dictated by jealousy, hurt pride, or a sense of “ownership”:

Well, I’ve got something to say
That might cause you pain
But if I catch you talking
To that boy again,
I’m gonna let you down (let you down)
And leave you flat (gonna let you down and leave you flat)
Because I told you before, oh,
You can’t do that. (The Beatles, 0:00-0:33; my emphasis)

Well, I’ve told you once and I’ve told you twice
But **you never listen to my advice.**
You don’t try very hard **to please me.**
With what you know it should be easy. (The Rolling Stones, 0:00-0:32; my emphasis)



These examples from a decade traditionally regarded as permissive,¹⁴ liberal and liberating (perhaps also libertarian and libertine, according to some...) may surprise us, due to the echoes and hints, subliminal and blatant, of relational views, practices, and values defined and validated by (and for) the male gender. To Arthur Marwick, incidentally, “The British scene (...) was highly male-dominated: songs by male groups were often sexually extremely aggressive; songs by the relatively few female performers tended to be submissive in the traditional way” (1994, 96) and Mark Donnelly takes up the point:

(...) despite the social and cultural changes that transformed so much in Britain (...), the sixties remained male-dominated. (...) Icons of popular culture tended to be male. (...) of the twenty top-selling artists in the UK music charts of the sixties only three – Cilla Black, Dusty Springfield, The Supremes – were female. Films overwhelmingly dealt with male-centred narratives, viewing women on screen through the “male gaze” of a camera lens that was almost always directed by men. (2005, 158)

Besides noting down the absence in this list of such names as Petula Clark and Lulu, I would suggest an attentive reading of the lyrics of Sandie Shaw’s winning song in the 1967 Eurovision Contest, significantly entitled “Puppet on a String”. Relationships and states of mind – just like swings – have their “ups and downs”, and the female character performed by Shaw is perfectly aware of that (“One day I’m feeling down on the ground / Then I’m up in the air”, 0:36-0:42), but she is still too expectant and too passive, as attested by the lines “I wonder if one day that / You show that you care” (0:09-0:13), “Are you leading me on? / Tomorrow will you be gone?” (0:43-0:53) or “In or out, there is never a doubt / Just who’s pulling the string. / I’m all tied up in you / But where’s it leading me to?” (1:21-1:39).¹⁵ The character is also too gullible (“If you say you love me madly / I’ll gladly be there”, 0:14-0:18). Or is she trying precisely to warn other women against the danger or possibility of ever becoming (female) puppets on (male) strings? Once again the reader will decide for him(her)self.

As far as love is concerned, the picture left by the 1950s, and especially the 1960s, is therefore ambiguous: despite male acknowledgement and celebration of female beauty, sensuality, and, ultimately, sexuality, both decades were still strongly marked by signs of “patriarchal” power and female subordination and passiveness. In order to counterbalance

this somewhat bleak picture, we will therefore end up suggesting the viewing of two later and very different examples, which highlight the importance of women's independence, resilience, assertiveness, self-confidence, and self-esteem (Gloria Gaynor, "I Will Survive", 1978), as well as of men's recognition and gratitude (John Lennon, "Woman", 1980). Although we will not be commenting upon these songs, whose dates of composition transcend our chronological boundaries, the underlying messages allow us to hope for a more egalitarian world, gender-wise and otherwise. What better conclusion can one ask or wish for?

END NOTES

¹ For Britain and the decades under scrutiny, see, for example, Marwick's *The Penguin Social History* 1-147, Donnelly's *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics*, Hennessy's *Having It So Good* and *Winds of Change*, and Sandbrook's *Never had It So Good* and *White Heat*, as well as earlier books by Thomson and Bartlett. Although not limited to the Anglo-American cultural scene, see also Marwick, *The Sixties*.

² See also the chapter "Desperate Housewives" (Sandbrook 2007, 687-704).

³ Regarding the production of feminist theory and criticism in English, the impact of Germaine Greer (1939-), Elaine Showalter (1941-), Gayatri Spivak (1942-) Sheila Rowbotham (1943-) and Judith Butler (1956-), to name but a few, only came to be felt from the 1970s onwards.

⁴ Although focused, as borne out by the title, in the "pre-history" of this age group, see Savage.

⁵ See also Cliff Richard's "Living Doll" (1959).

⁶ See, out of curiosity, "Poupée de cire, poupée de son", sung by France Gall, the winner of the Eurovision Song Contest for Luxembourg (1965). The lexical and semantic evolution from *poupée* to "puppet" would also be worth considering.

⁷ According to Oberiri Destiny Apukes and Lingbun Goodness Jigem, "Sexuality in music has become more intense and more frequent (...), and women face a constant bombardment of images constituting who they should be, what they need to look like, and how they are expected to balance their lives (...). Thus, the issue of women's objectification and portrayal in the media has attracted a growing body of research and this sexual objectification has been described as an experience of being treated as a body (or collection of body parts) valued predominantly for its use to (or consumption by) others" (2019, 160-161)

⁸ Both these circumstances would invite a comparison with *Lady* Diana Spencer, Princess of Wales (1961-1997), who also died at 36 years of age.

⁹ "It is not the body, but the codifying of the body into structures of appearance, that culturally shapes and moulds what it means to be 'feminine'. (...) it is not the body as a functioning or dysfunctioning system that has been culturally related to female identity,

but those aspects of the female body that are attractive to men” (Myra MacDonald 2003, 194)

¹⁰ The original version, by Carol Channing, dates from 1949. Diamond rings are also mentioned by The Beatles in, for instance, “Can’t Buy Me Love” and “I Feel Fine” from 1964.

¹¹ The alleged volubility of women is pointed out in the aria “La donna è mobile” of *Rigoletto* (1851), by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901).

¹² “The most difficult thing to get hold of, in studying any past period, is this felt sense of the quality of life (...) at a particular place and time: a sense of the ways in which the (...) activities combined into a way of thinking and living. (...) The term I would suggest to describe it is *structure of feeling*: it is as firm and definite as ‘structure’ suggests, yet it operates in the most delicate and least tangible parts of our activity. In one sense, this structure of feeling is the culture of a period: it is the particular living result of all the elements in the general organization. And it is in this respect that the arts of a period (...) are of major importance” (Williams 1980, 63-65 *passim*).

¹³ Suffice it to recall here two facts from 1967: the song “All You Need is Love” by The Beatles and the “Summer of Love”.

¹⁴ See more about this in Donnelly (2005, 116-123) and the introduction of Marcus Collins (2007, 1-40); the latter argues that “Permissiveness was neither a catastrophe nor a canard, but a significant if contested liberalisation of behaviour and beliefs that began well before the 1960s and continues to this day” (2).

¹⁵ Gloria Gaynor’s song seems to meet and respond to Shaw’s doubts, insecurities, and anxieties.

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MIGUEL ALARCÃO

BA in Portuguese and English Studies (1981), MA in Anglo-Portuguese Studies (1986) and PhD in English Culture (1996), awarded by NOVA University, Lisbon, where he holds the post of Associate Professor. Director of the Central Library (2001-09) and

Co-Coordinator of the Faculty's earliest research group on Medieval Studies (1999-2004). Colloquial Assistant in Portuguese at the University of Birmingham, UK (Late 1980s). He has published two books, five co-editions and c. 80 articles in Festschriften, proceedings and academic journals on English/British Culture(s), Medieval English Studies and Anglo-Portuguese Studies. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0831-1941>; CIÊNCIA ID: 3913-2142-7A5F; RESEARCHER ID: M-1052-2016; miguel.alarcao@fcs.unl.pt.

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Liminality and Liminal Aesthetics in the Filmography of Charlie Kaufman

JOEL RAMOS FAUSTINO

University of Porto

ABSTRACT: In recent years, an online subculture dedicated to the appreciation and exploration of the aesthetic of empty spaces that evoke eerie and surreal feelings has sprouted on forums such as 4chan and Reddit. Users have taken to calling these “liminal spaces”, defined by existing in a state between being utilities and being ruins. Liminality has been defined in the fields of sociology and anthropology as the quality of being in between two stages of social and/or cultural status. This article aims to explore the filmography of American writer-director Charlie Kaufman through the lens of liminal aesthetics, pointing to instances of this aesthetic of emptiness in his three directorial works, connecting it to each film’s themes and attempting to form a narrative of liminality in the director’s body of work. In the introduction, there is an exposition of the online phenomenon of liminal aesthetics, a short review of literature on liminality and liminal spaces, and a section on liminality in Kaufman’s works. Afterwards,

RESUMO: Nos últimos anos, surgiu em fóruns como o 4chan e o Reddit uma subcultura online dedicada à apreciação e à exploração da estética de espaços vazios que evocam sensações sinistras e surreais. Os utilizadores chamam-nos “espaços liminares”, definidos por existirem num espaço que se inscreve entre o útil e o arruinado. A liminaridade é definida nos domínios da sociologia e da antropologia como a qualidade de estar entre dois estádios de estatuto social e/ou cultural. Este artigo pretende explorar a filmografia do argumentista e realizador americano Charlie Kaufman através da lente da estética liminar, apontando instâncias desta estética do vazio nas três obras que realizou, relacionando-a com os temas de cada filme e tentando formar uma narrativa da liminaridade no corpo de trabalho do realizador. Na introdução, há uma exposição do fenómeno online da estética liminar, uma breve revisão da literatura sobre liminaridade e espaços liminares, e uma secção sobre a liminaridade nas obras de Kaufman. Em



there are analyses of liminality and its aesthetics in his three directorial features: first, *Anomalisa* (2015) and the liminal space between “isolating” and “overwhelming”; second, *I’m Thinking of Ending Things* (2020) and the liminal space between “real” and “imagined”; and, third, *Synecdoche, New York* (2008) and the liminal space between “not yet” and “no longer”; these are ordered from the smallest to the largest liminal space present in the film. Finally, the conclusion will attempt to connect the three works through the thematic matrix of liminality.

KEYWORDS: Liminality, liminal spaces, liminal aesthetics, Charlie Kaufman

seguida, são analisadas a liminaridade e a sua estética nas três longas-metragens que realizou: primeiro, *Anomalisa* (2015) e o espaço liminar entre “isolante” e “avassalador”; segundo, *I’m Thinking of Ending Things* (2020) e o espaço liminar entre “real” e “imaginado”; e, terceiro, *Synecdoche, New York* (2008) e o espaço liminar entre “ainda não” e “já não”; cada um deles é ordenado do menor para o maior espaço liminar presente no filme. Por fim, a conclusão tentará conectar as três obras através da matriz temática da liminaridade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Liminaridade, espaços liminares, estética liminar, Charlie Kaufman

*A liminal space is the time between the 'what was' and the 'next'.
It is a place of transition, waiting, and not knowing.
Liminal space is where all transformation takes place,
if we learn to wait and let it form us.*¹

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, the collective consciousness has become attracted to a particular aesthetic present in the now iconic scenarios of the COVID-19 pandemic: roads, streets, schools, offices, and shopping centres, all empty, unpopulated; a reality which felt eerily similar to the settings of post-apocalyptic fiction.



Fig. 1 Empty Champs Elysées in 2020. Segretain, P. (2020). Getty Images.

Some have taken to calling these *liminal spaces*. Besides characterising the look and feel of the streets of great modern metropolises devoid of people, the aesthetic of liminal spaces has become associated with obsolete commercial spaces: the American malls of the 1980s were once filled with people, garish colour, neon signs, restaurants and clothing shops, bowling alleys and arcades. Now they stand empty, the home of businesses which refuse to succumb to the unforgiving march of History, stuck in a space *between* what is living and what is dead.

The liminal aesthetic has quickly acquired a cult following among Internet denizens. What started as only a set of mildly interesting posts on online forums such as 4chan and Reddit has turned into an artistic movement that seeks to capture – through modern mediums such as photography and digital art – the strange yet strong sensations one feels when traversing old malls, staying at largely empty hotels or walking below the

colourful plastic slides of an indoor playground that used to be filled with the screeching and laughing of children back in the early 2000s. The look of these places may be characterised by one word: *non-specificity* (Xiao 2021). They are devoid of any defining characteristics that may allow the observer to pinpoint where they are, what time of day they have been captured in, and at times, even what actual function they might have once served. Besides that, they are profoundly – even dreadfully – empty. They inhabit a sort of *architectural uncanny valley*, where the spaces one observes feel strange because they lack the expected context; while one expects them to be hives of activity, liminal spaces present the observer with a “failure of presence” (Heft 2021, 14-15).

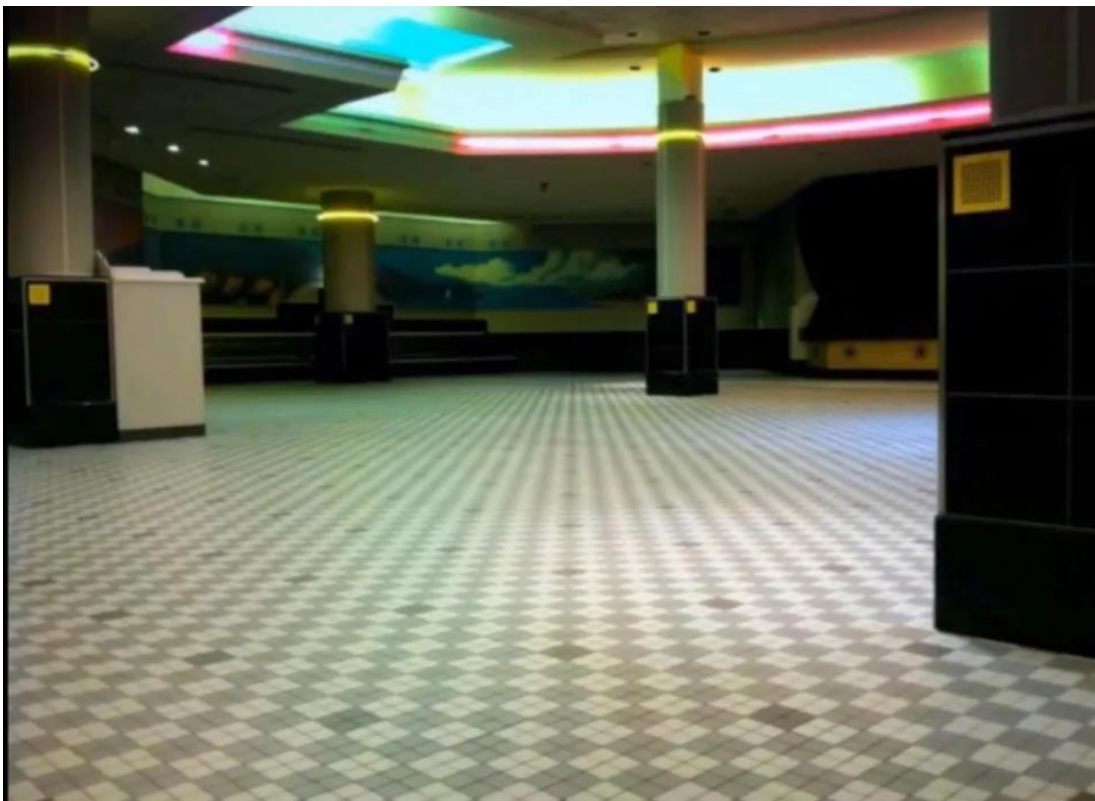


Fig. 2 An empty mall. Retrieved from reddit.com.

Spaces such as these represent a threshold. They are symbols of a changing world, for they can be portrayed as neither having concrete utility nor being ruins. They are, in essence, artefacts of a world in transition (Pitre 2022).

All of these places – malls and indoor playgrounds nearing foreclosure, Times Square and the Champs-Élysées during lockdown – are bound together by their *liminality*.

1.1. Liminality and liminal space

Liminality, as a concept, was first developed by German ethnologist Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957) and later expounded upon by Scottish cultural anthropologist Victor Turner (1920-1983). According to the latter, liminality is a state of ambiguity occurring in rites of social and cultural transformation in human societies, happening between a preceding and subsequent social status or cultural state (Turner 1974, 57).

The liminal space is, therefore, set between two states of being and may be disorienting to those who navigate it. When applied to the concept of *place*, and especially to the field of architecture, liminality usually refers to places of transience, something connected to the concept of *non-place*, which are understood as places where one does not dwell, that do not symbolise nor reinforce the identities of those travelling through them, where an individual is separated from their determinants and only inhabits the role of transient entity (Augé 103); places such as bus depots, train stations, and airports. Non-places such as these are liminal in so far as they are the setting in which liminal activity occurs – *literal* liminal activity, such as travelling from point A to point B. For this article, the liminal space will not be understood as one where liminality occurs by the actions of others; rather, liminal spaces – as characterised by the online subculture dedicated to them – should be understood as liminal entities *themselves*, traversing through change, inhabiting the space between *being* A and *being* B.

1.2. Liminality in the filmography of CHARLIE KAUFMAN

Charlie Kaufman is an American filmmaker and novelist. Born in 1958 to a Jewish family in New York, he began his career as a writer in the 1980s working for humour magazines, later transitioning to writing for TV in the late 1990s and early 2000s. His most notable work, however, has been on the big screen. His collaborations with directors Michel Gondry in *Human Nature* (2001) and *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004), and Spike Jonze in *Being John Malkovich* (1999) and *Adaptation* (2002), set the tone for the themes of his future films. His directorial debut, *Synecdoche, New York* (2008) and the two films he has directed since – *Anomalisa* (2015) and *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* (2020) – have cemented the theme of identity crisis as central to Kaufman's work.

The main characters of these three films can all be understood as being liminal entities; they are traversing points of monumental uncertainty in their lives, and the narratives in each work may be understood as explorations of distinct liminal spaces between opposing concepts. The present article aims to explore the *physical*/liminal spaces as liminal entities in these three works, and how said physical spaces reflect the liminal spaces the main characters traverse. The films will not be explored in chronological order; instead, they will be analysed from the one set in the smaller liminal space to the one set in the most sprawling one.

2. *ANOMALISA* – BETWEEN ISOLATING AND OVERWHELMING

Anomalisa is a stop-motion animated film following Michael (David Thewlis), the author of a popular book on proper customer service, as he visits the city of Cincinnati for a convention where he is supposed to give a speech. As he encounters other people during his visit, one comes to understand that he perceives everyone else as having the same face and voice (played by Tom Noonan). Michael eventually meets Lisa (Jennifer Jason Leigh), the only other person with a unique face and voice. The narrative is mainly set at a hotel called The Fregoli (after the Fregoli delusion, a rare mental disorder in which the affected person perceives everyone else as being one single entity).

It becomes readily apparent that Michael feels depressingly lonely. He can form no relationship with anyone in his life: not his wife, his child, his ex-girlfriend, or any of the people he meets throughout the night at the Fregoli. Michael longs for human connection, so he frantically runs after Lisa once he hears her distinct voice through the walls of his hotel room, thinking he may have finally found someone he can bond with.

Further analysis, however, may lead one to conclude that Michael suffers from something on the other end of that spectrum. Besides being lonely, Michael constantly seems to feel overwhelmed by human contact. The first of Michael's conversations is with a man sitting beside him as they land at Cincinnati Airport. The man apologises for grabbing Michael's hand earlier, and Michael quickly becomes tired of the interaction to the point of rudeness. The same happens in his conversations with the taxi driver taking him to the Fregoli, the concierge, the hotel porter, and even his wife and son. Interaction

with most people seems to annoy Michael; he makes no effort to engage with any of these people, which seems to be at odds with the fact that he longs for human connection.

There are several moments in *Anomalisa* where human presence is depicted as overwhelming. The movie opens with a black screen and the sound of dozens of identical voices having distinct conversations as if to disorient and overwhelm the audience intentionally. Besides that, in several instances, Michael seems to be overwhelmed by multitudes of people: during the nightmare sequence, during his speech at the convention, and at the surprise party his wife sets up for him on his return home.

It seems Kaufman aims to explore this metaphorical liminal space between being isolated and being overwhelmed by human interaction that Michael constantly traverses. That being the case, it is fitting that the film is mostly set in a hotel, of all places. Hotels are one of the examples Marc Augé uses to illustrate his concept of non-place. They are spaces where one does not dwell but only traverses; they are built for liminal activity. The Fregoli, however, could be understood as a liminal entity reflecting Michael's liminal state of mind as well.

The audience is first introduced to Michael's room through a dolly shot: the porter opens the door, and the camera moves into the room before Michael can enter it. The spectator sees the room in a shot that almost mirrors hotel catalogues: a made bed, neatly laid magazines, a small table with chairs displayed in a strange, artificial way (instead of facing one another, inviting two people to sit in front of each other and *engage in conversation with each other*, they face outward, as if to present themselves to their patron). The room lacks its expected context; it has no *human presence*.

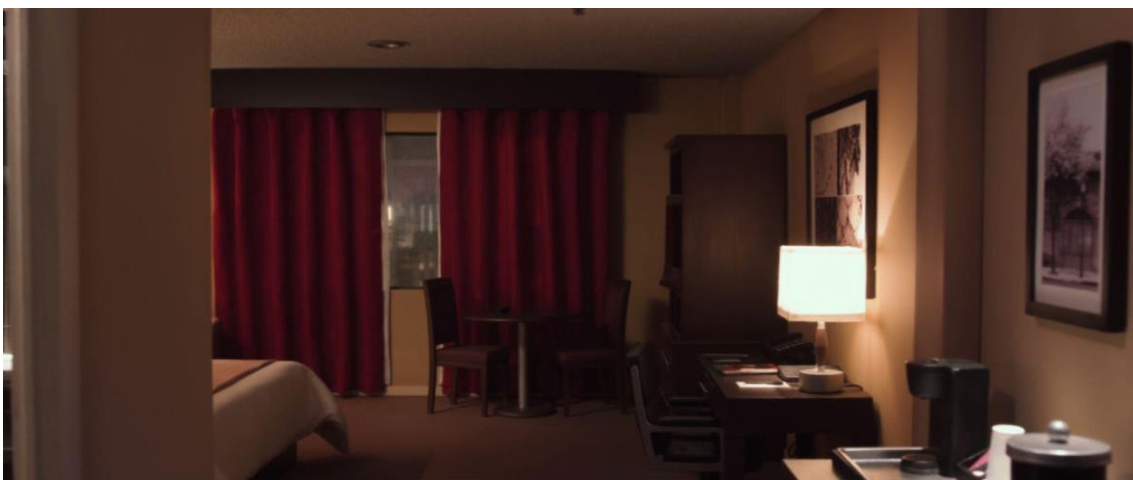


Fig. 3 Michael's room at the Fregoli.

The awkwardly laid-out table and chairs are most important. In the morning, Michael and Lisa sit at the table for breakfast after spending the night together. While eating, Michael notices small things in Lisa that irritate him, and her face and voice eventually transform, becoming identical to everyone else's. The chairs not facing each other foreshadow Michael's inability to see Lisa's uniqueness for a prolonged time and his subsequent failure to maintain a connection with her. He can never *face* anyone for too long; the people that seem unique to him seem so because he idealises them, and once he perceives flaws, the façade crumbles down. It seems Michael's room is the part of the liminal space (the hotel) that best reflects the sense of *isolation* in his liminal state of *being*. In it, he makes several failed attempts to escape his isolation: fruitless conversations with his wife and son, a haphazard attempt at rekindling the flame he once had with his ex-girlfriend Bella, and his eventual disillusionment with Lisa, all happen in this room, under the dim yellow light of a desk lamp and the irritating humming sound of the minibar.

Crossing the doorframe into the hallway does not lead Michael out of the liminal space; instead, it leads him into another dimension of it.

Scrolling through the r/liminalspace subreddit, one will notice empty hotel hallways are a recurring theme in the online subculture. The hallways of the Fregoli reflect many of the classical aspects of liminal spaces. They are devoid of people for the most part, largely characterless in their aesthetic, and they can be perceived to fall into the architectural uncanny valley; they seem longer than they should be, almost endless.



Fig. 4 The hallway on the 10th floor.

The hallway is a place where Michael seems to go through several experiences of being overwhelmed by human interaction. The first occasion is with the hotel porter, in an awkward and prolonged interaction that Michael seems desperate to terminate. Later, going out to get ice cubes for his drink, Michael walks by a couple having an argument, which he seems to want to ignore, but his uncomfortable expression says he cannot. The most poignant of these experiences, however, is during the nightmare sequence. In it, the collective entity, formed by identical people, tells Michael he cannot be with Lisa. He runs through the hotel to find her, eventually bringing her to his room, while darkness swallows the hallway. In the apparent safety of his suite, Michael hears the multitude of people in the hallway, banging at his door and calling his name repeatedly, at which point he wakes up from the dream.

It seems the hotel reflects Michael's liminal reality through its architecture. The hotel is set in a liminal space between being isolating and overwhelming, harbouring multitudes of people who desire to be separated from each other in the same place. While many seek hotel rooms to escape their home life – as appears to be Michael's case – the common spaces within the hotel force these people to engage with others, in a jarring experience for those seeking solitude. Therefore, the hotel dwells in the liminality between reinforcing loneliness and forcing one to engage in undesired interactions, and, by design, it can never escape it.

***3. I'm Thinking of Ending Things* – Between Real and Imagined**

I'm Thinking of Ending Things – based on the 2016 novel of the same name by Iain Reid – follows an unnamed young woman (Jessie Buckley) and her boyfriend, Jake (Jesse Plemons), as they go on a trip to meet his parents (David Thewlis and Toni Collette). The couple's story is interspersed with shots of an elderly high-school janitor (Guy Boyd). A careful analysis leads us to conclude that the janitor is, indeed, Jake. The first moment that indicates this to the audience occurs at the beginning of the film: as the young woman waits for Jake, she looks up at a window, and on the other side of it is the old janitor; the camera cuts back to the young woman, and then again to the other side of the window, where Jake now stands, watching her.

We then come to understand that the scenes involving the young woman and Jake occur in the janitor's mind. A parallel reading of the novel will make this more transparent:

the young woman is not real – she is called by several different names in the film, namely Louisa, Lucy, and Lucia. She was never Jake’s girlfriend. The old janitor remembers her from his past and regrets never having approached her. Therefore, he creates a fantasy of being in a relationship with her. The film chronicles the young woman’s slow realisation that she is, in fact, a figment of the janitor’s imagination.

The journey the imaginary couple embarks on takes place in mental representations of real places. The long drive to the farmhouse lets the audience know what this looks like: the old janitor combines elements from fragmented memories to attempt to reconstruct an authentic setting. One such example is when the young woman looks out the car window and sees a ruined farmhouse with a brand-new swing set out in the front yard. It seems this is the result of a conjunction of two anachronic memories: the janitor’s last memory of the house is seeing it abandoned, but it might at one point have had a colourful swing set in the yard, which made enough of an impression on the janitor’s mind that he would include it in his mental reconstruction.



Fig. 5 The new swing set by the old house.

The landscape the couple traverses is characterised by its liminal aesthetic: completely devoid of people, populated by the occasional building, grove or road sign, most likely resulting from the imaginator's scattered memories. On the drive back from Jake's parents' farmhouse, the couple stops at an ice cream shop; strangely, it is open in the middle of the night, in the midst of a blizzard, in a field engulfed by night darkness, with nothing in sight, no buildings, no vegetation, neatly fulfilling the (admittedly vague) criteria for a liminal space.



Fig. 6 The ice cream shop.

Jake's childhood home is an imagined reconstruction as well, as are his parents: a collage of different points in time, real moments in the janitor's life, which create a strange replica of what was. As time is spent at the farmhouse, the audience will see Jake's parents ageing and rejuvenating several times, a result of the janitor's recollection of several distinct points in his parents' lives.

Because of this, the architecture of the house feels unclear. Rooms seem to switch places, there are doors which seem to lead into a dark nothingness, and, during one scene in particular, the young woman seems to be locked in a loop, as it appears there is a strangely excessive number of flights of stairs for a house with only two floors. When Jake and the young woman first enter the house, they wait for Jake's parents to come down for quite some time. For a long while, they hear only the disembodied voices of the parents, as the rest of the house seems empty, *lacking presence*.

The one place that seems not to be constructed from an assembly of distinct memories is Jake's old high school, which is precisely where the janitor presently works. It is, however, a clear example of liminality in an aesthetic sense: it inhabits the architectural uncanny valley because it lacks the expected context. While most will think of a high school during the day, filled with young students, Jake's high school is displayed to the audience in the dark of night, completely empty. It is here that the narrative comes to its dramatic conclusion; the young woman encounters the janitor and eventually accepts the reality that she is, in fact, not real.



Fig. 7 Jake's high school.

In *I'm Thinking of Ending Things*, the liminality of the places parallels the liminality of the young woman's identity. All of it is built inside the janitor's – Jake's – mind, the result of an assembly of pieces of what *is* to build something that *is not*, something remembered. Because human minds are faulty and prone to embellishing and awkwardly reconstructing the past, memory could be said to be the liminal space between the *real* and the *imagined*.

There is one noteworthy conversation in the film relating to this concept. While having dinner with Jake's parents, the young woman shows them her landscape paintings – which turned out to be Jake's, since the woman is a reconstruction and is prone to be injected with aspects of his personality. She says she attempts to imbue them with *interiority* without painting people. Jake's father then asks, "How can a picture of a field be sad without a sad person looking sad in the field?". That is, indeed, the question that artists such as photographers and digital artists attempt to respond to when depicting liminal spaces; liminal spaces *evoke feeling through emptiness*.

4. *Synecdoche, New York* – Between Not Yet and No Longer

Synecdoche, New York tells the story of theatre director Caden Cotard (Philip Seymour Hoffman) – named after Cotard's syndrome, a rare mental disorder in which the afflicted person believes they are dead – who, after receiving the MacArthur Fellowship prize, decides to invest the money into a hyperreal production which mimics real life.

Caden lives in a dysfunctional marriage with his wife, Adele (Catherine Keener), an artist herself, with whom he has a daughter, Olive (Sadie Goldstein). He suffers from numerous bizarre health issues; several scenes take place in hospitals, some of which are clear examples of the liminal aesthetic, as (once again) they fall into the uncanny valley for lacking human presence, besides being devoid of any defining characteristics. They evoke a foreboding atmosphere, in the moments when Caden is informed that his life is in jeopardy due to his failing health.



Fig. 8 The hospital in Berlin.

During the first half of the film, Hazel (Samantha Morton), who works at the box office of the theatre Caden is directing a play in – and is the object of his romantic desire – purchases a home that is perpetually burning. She ends up living in this space, which is traversing a liminal experience: the house is not safe nor burnt down but in the in-between stage of being on fire. This may be perceived as reflective of Caden’s attitude towards her: he wishes to become romantically involved with her but awaits her approach instead of approaching her himself. However, when they finally have sex, Caden cannot perform, leaving their time together incomplete. When they meet again years later, Caden is in his second marriage. Although the erotic tension between them still exists, it takes a long time for it to materialise into something concrete. Most of the time they know each other, their relationship feels like a half-said word that lingers on the lips; *between* being and not being. Eventually, they fully embrace it. Caden, however, does not leave the liminal space of his life for long: Hazel soon dies, probably due to smoke inhalation.



Fig. 9 Hazel in her burning house, obfuscated by the smoke.

The clearest example of a liminal space in the film, however, is the absurdly large warehouse in downtown New York that Caden uses as a set for the play he directs with the MacArthur grant. In it, he constructs a recreation of the city and populates it with actors, aiming to recreate real life. As he becomes more obsessed with this production, he starts casting doppelgängers of real people, and doppelgängers of said doppelgängers, eventually building a recreation of the warehouse inside the warehouse where a recreation of the play is taking place, creating a sort of Droste effect (the effect of a picture recursively appearing within itself).

Eventually, by casting actors as themselves – including his wife, Claire (Michelle Williams) – and setting up walls in the initially open apartments so they would feel more real, a liminal chasm between reality and fiction begins to open up. For both characters and the audience, it becomes a difficult task to distinguish between what is set in real life and what is set in Caden’s play. When Claire leaves Caden amid rehearsal, he and Sammy (Tom Noonan) – the actor playing Caden – have trouble discerning whether Claire is truly angry or simply playing the part.



Fig. 10 Sammy walks towards Warehouse 2, located inside Warehouse 1.

Throughout the film, there are references to Caden's own multifaceted liminal identity. Long after separating from Adele, he visits her apartment, where he begins playing the part of Ellen, her housemaid. Despite never actually seeing Adele, Caden gets into the habit of going to her apartment, cleaning, and conversing with her through notes, signing them as Ellen. There are several moments in the film where people around Caden seem to take him for a woman: close to the beginning of the film, while having a seizure and calling 911, the operator calls Caden "ma'am". Once Caden has embraced the role of Ellen, Claire says he smells "like he's menstruating"; and when preparing to have sex with Tammy (Emily Watson) – the actress playing Hazel in the play – Caden says he feels he would have been better living as a woman. This does not necessarily mean Caden is transgender; rather, it means that he inhabits a liminal space relating to his gender identity. He never

commits to presenting as a woman, but he seems to feel more at peace with himself when playing one.

Millicent (Dianne Wiest), the actor playing (the never-seen) Ellen, eventually volunteers to play Caden after Sammy commits suicide. When trying to convince him to let her play the part, she describes Caden as follows:

“Caden Cotard is a man already dead. He lives in a half-world between stasis and antistasis.”

All these liminal spaces, both concrete and abstract, are set in the largest physical liminal space one could imagine. The world of *Synecdoche, New York* is, much like our own, liminal. Because this story takes place over many decades, one can observe, in the background of the narrative, a world in constant mutation. The film begins in a universally familiar setting: a small town (Schenectady, to be precise, in Upstate New York) in the early 21st century. As the narrative progresses, however, so does the setting. One can see the world outside Caden’s warehouse transforming into something like a post-apocalyptic setting (circling back to the earlier reference to COVID-19). Besides the liminal aesthetic of the empty streets of future New York, one can witness violence – the sound of explosions and shooting in the background – and the assembling of some form of dictatorship in the background of the narrative (a great chromed zeppelin is seen floating above the New York skyline with a searchlight, perhaps looking for curfew violators). Caden’s play becomes isolated from the real world, as if a bubble of relative normalcy forms inside the warehouse, if not for the bizarre condition of it being a play mimicking the real world. Eventually, though, reality bleeds into the play most devastatingly: New York is bombed, the warehouse is destroyed along with the actual city, and all the actors lay dead just as the real people they were playing. As Caden walks among ruins and corpses, it becomes apparent that the world has left the liminal space it inhabited.



Fig. 11 Caden walking among the ruins.

It is not easy to discern a single concrete liminal space in *Synecdoche*; there are several of them. Between real and fictional, between normal and abnormal, between male and female, between affection and disdain. It seems that the film functions as the overall thematic thesis of Charlie Kaufman's work, which is why its theme will be addressed in the conclusion of this article.

5. CONCLUSION

Much more than what was written in the last pages could be said about Charlie Kaufman's films and the concept of liminality in fiction. One could say that all stories worth telling are of people walking through liminal spaces, where certainty and safety do not exist. The terror of liminality may be the core of writing fiction. There are also aspects of the previously mentioned films that were not discussed, and the films Charlie Kaufman has written but not directed are also worthy of being analysed through the lenses of liminality and its aesthetics.

It seems, however, that Charlie Kaufman believes that the human experience mainly comprises liminal experiences. Social and emotional bonds, thoughts, and fantasies, all exist in an uncertain middle ground that we are fated to cross for the whole time we are allowed on Earth. *Synecdoche, New York* asserts that life itself is liminal: the space between *not yet* being and *no longer* being. Humans seem to be deeply uncomfortable

with being placed in life's liminal spaces, for those are the places where we are forced to make choices. The only moments in time where one does not have to choose are mentioned above: before one's birth and after one's death, when all choices either do not need to be made or have been made already. In the meantime, one must navigate the disorienting reality of simply existing.

Synecdoche seems to be a story about everything, so it seems fitting that the liminality of the greatest abstract space it depicts – *life* itself – is mirrored by the liminality of the greatest concrete space in which it is set – the *world*.

At the end of the film, as we witness the death of Caden Cotard, the screen does not cut to black (as most films do) or white (as a few others do). Instead, it cuts to grey. Halfway *between* black and white.

END NOTES

¹ From inaliminalspace.org.

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JOEL RAMOS FAUSTINO

Joel Ramos Faustino took a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Languages - Translation (English and German) at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. He is currently enrolled in the second year of the Master's Degree Program of Anglo-American Studies at that same faculty, for which he is currently writing a dissertation on the role of magic in medieval fantasy literature. At the same time, he is working as a Junior Researcher in Anglo-American Studies at CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies), where he has worked – among other projects – with the 'Great Utopians' database within the Utopia 500 project. His main interests include medievalism, fantasy literature, and aesthetics.

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Pretty, Petite, Polite Dawn: Beauty Pageants, Housewifery and the Feminine Mystique in Philip Roth's *American Pastoral*

DIOGO OLIVEIRA

University of Porto

ABSTRACT: This article studies gender roles in Philip Roth's *American Pastoral*, published in 1997. It addresses the housewife condition in 1960s America through the character of Dawn Dwyer, drawing from Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963, and the second edition of Silvia Federici's *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*, published in 2020. Moreover, it analyses how American history is told and fictionalized in Roth's work, comparing the scenes from the novel to Friedan's non-fiction narrative of the 1960s. This analysis builds on previous works on gender roles in Roth's literature, aiming to contribute to the body of literature on the American celebrated author.

KEYWORDS: Philip Roth, Betty Friedan, Silvia Federici, *American Pastoral*, *The Feminine Mystique*.

RESUMO: Este artigo analisa os papéis de género em *American Pastoral* de Philip Roth, publicada em 1997, abordando a condição da dona de casa na América dos anos 1960 através da personagem Dawn Dwyer, apoiando-se numa leitura de *The Feminine Mystique* de Betty Friedan, publicado em 1963, e na segunda edição de Silvia Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle* de 2020. Ademais, este artigo estuda como Roth trata e ficciona a história americana e contracultura em *American Pastoral*, através da comparação de episódios do romance com a narrativa verídica de Friedan dos anos 1960. Este estudo fundamenta-se em trabalhos anteriores sobre papéis de género na literatura de Roth, a fim de contribuir para o corpo de literatura sobre o celebrado autor americano.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Philip Roth, Betty Friedan, Silvia Federici, *American Pastoral*, *The Feminine Mystique*.



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1. INTRODUCTION

To Philip Roth, during the 1960s, “life was becoming so fantastic that it was outstripping the capacity of the novelist’s imagination” (Roth 1960, qtd. in Alexander 1999, 183). Therefore, the novelist waited until the late 1990s to explore this turbulent period through fiction. When writing *American Pastoral*, the author enhanced his fiction to a “fake autobiography, false history (...), half-imaginary existence out of the actual drama of my life” (Roth, in *ibidem*). The novel opens the *American Trilogy* and is followed by *I Married a Communist* (1998) and *The Human Stain* (2000). In this series, Roth explored the three events that marked his generation the most: the Vietnam War and 1960s counterculture, McCarthyism in the 1950s, and the impeachment of Bill Clinton, respectively. Starting with *American Pastoral*, the study of Roth’s work seemed to shift from “What is he saying about the Jews” to “What is he saying about America”, as argued by Laura Tanenbaum (2004, 42). Still, the author warns the reader that his work is “[not] a report card about America but [rather] a work of fiction about America” (Roth 2000, qtd. in Aliko Varvogli 2007, 102).

In “Paradigmas Masculinos, Mulheres Revolucionárias e a Mística Feminina: História e Gênero em *American Pastoral*”, the third chapter of my Master's dissertation, I delved into the character of Dawn Dwyer and her importance in understanding gender roles in this American context. This article springs from that research. It seems to me that, for the study of this specific character, the wife of the protagonist Seymour “Swede” Levov, a parallel reading of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), written to challenge the notion that “fulfillment as a woman had only one definition for American women after 1949 – the housewife-mother” is required (Friedan 1965, 70). Dawn, as a housewife (who will later build a business, dissatisfied with her path until then) and former Miss New Jersey, fits fully into some of the categories addressed by Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique*, and more specifically, in the chapters “The Problem That Has No Name” and “The Happy Housewife Heroine”. To compliment this approach, the study *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle* (2020) by Silvia Federici will also be relevant in theoretical terms, focusing on the essay “Wages Against Housework”, written in 1975.

2. FROM MISS NEW JERSEY TO OLD RIMROCK HOUSEWIFE: A PORTRAIT OF DAWN DWYER

Dawn appears in the first pages of the novel, in Nathan Zuckerman's long nostalgic description of Swede Levov, when Zuckerman describes her as a *shiksa* and as Miss New Jersey: "Swede's marriage to Miss New Jersey. Before competing at Atlantic City for the 1949 Miss America title, she had been Miss Union County and Spring A queen at Upsala. From Elizabeth. A *shiksa*. Dawn Dwyer. He'd done it" (Roth 2019, 15). Dawn is presented to the reader, first, as an award that Swede received, to be seen later as one of the novel's antagonists, with Zuckerman only mentioning the character's higher education and musical career more than a hundred pages after introducing her: "I had the job. I had it waiting. To teach kids music in the Elizabeth system (...) I never wanted to be Miss America!" (Roth 2019, 78). This first section of the article intends to explore precisely the deconstruction of these two antagonistic conceptions that recall old dichotomies: woman/devil or temptation/destruction. These dichotomies are very popular female stereotypes in cinema and literature, as in the case of Marlene Dietrich, Louise Brooks, and Greta Garbo (Macedo and Amaral 2005, 135). According to the *femme fatale* stereotype, the woman is someone who wants/needs to be desired, having her affection vilified when she does not return the feeling. Consequently, the woman has to be punished for rejecting male advances, ending up ruined because she neither accepts nor conforms to the patriarchal role that is required of her, whether it is motherhood or domestic work. As Macedo and Amaral argue, in *Dicionário da Crítica Feminista*, the two fundamental characteristics of the *femme fatale* are coldness and extreme beauty (2005, 135). In *American Pastoral*, we find two *femme fatales*: Merry, characterized by her coldness, and Dawn, denoted by extreme beauty, both of whom reject Swede's affection.

In the essay "Femmes Fatales" published in *Nothing Sacred: Selected Writings* (1982), Angela Carter tells us about *Earth Spirit* (1895) by the German Frank Wedekind, the first of two plays about Lulu, a prostitute, against the backdrop of the case of Jack the Ripper. Carter argues Lulu is a *femme fatale* since she "has a man wholly in her power" (Wedeking 1895, qtd. by Carter 1982, 119). Fate leads her into the hands of the murderer, Jack the Ripper, as if it were a punishment, leading Carter to the following conclusion:

So, Lulu (...) will be murdered by a sexual maniac, a man whose repression has turned into a monstrous scourge of whores (...). She pays the price of expressing an unrepressed sexuality in a society that distorts sexuality. This is the true source of the fatality of the femme fatale: that she lives her life in such a way that her freedom reveals to others their lack of liberty. So, her sexuality is (...) destructive, not in itself but in its effects. (1982, 123)

In *American Pastoral*, it is not only Swede who is mistaken and who looks at his wife as an object since, due to her participation in the beauty contest, like Lulu, Dawn is stuck in the condition of objectification by all people that surround her, leading to a certain kind of condemnation. When a local newspaper interviews her, the beauty contest is remembered despite her express refusal:

She had consented to be interviewed only if the journalist promised not to mention her having been Miss New Jersey of 1949 (...) the caption read, "Mrs. Levov, the former Miss New Jersey of 1949, loves living in a 170-year-old home, an environment that she says reflects the values of her family". (2019, 204)

The reader is also told that Dawn tries to resume the narrative in her favor and mentions that she never had the ambition to be Miss America:

[I]t didn't matter what she said or how often she mentioned the piano: nobody believed her. Nobody believed that she ever wanted to look better than everybody else (...). "For some strange reason," she said, "the women always think that because I'm a former whatever I want their husbands". (2019, 194-195)

However, we can see that who referred Dawn to this condition was society itself: "All through high school people were telling me, 'You should be Miss America.' I thought it was ridiculous. Based on what should I be Miss America? I was a clerk in a dry-goods store after school" (Roth 2019, 179). In this way, the pressure to live up to the expectations of the people around her reaches Dawn, who, during her campaign to be Miss America, even confesses to Swede, "I hate to let them down" (*idem*, 183).

Nevertheless, as Marshall Bruce Gentry argues, much of the pressure for Dawn to remain in the condition of beauty queen comes from Swede himself, and there are numerous situations during the novel in which this happens, according to Zuckerman's

narrative (2000, 75). For example, Dawn refuses to return to the skin of Miss New Jersey, although Swede insists that she does so: “she never wore the white Catalina one-piece suit that she’d worn on the runway in Atlantic City, with the logo just below the hip (...). He loved that bathing suit (...), but after Atlantic City, she never put it again” (Roth 2019, 195). Zuckerman hints that the beauty pageant logo is something Swede likes to see, almost as if it were a reminder of Dawn's status.

On the other hand, Roth does not write Dawn exclusively as a victim. Her participation in the beauty pageant shapes the way Dawn tries to raise her daughter, Merry, a thesis that is defended by Rita Cohen, a character who claims to be a disciple of the Levovs’ daughter. During their meeting with Swede, Cohen mentions that Merry's education was directed towards living as a successor to her parents’ good looks: “the little shirtwaist dresses (...) disgusted she couldn't have a baby beauty queen that could grow up in her image to become Miss Rimrock” (*idem*, 136). Swede mentions his wife's cattle business, which Cohen dismisses as a middle-class fantasy, to try to reverse the idea that people around Dawn have of her as a beauty queen. Cohen's accusations reach a climax when she accuses Dawn of never having loved her daughter, as she could never live to achieve her mother's legacy, due to her stuttering and poor appearance, concluding that Merry is the antithesis of her parents: “You have a *shiksa* wife, Swede, but you didn't get a *shiksa* daughter” (*idem*, 138).

Likewise, Dawn can be cruel to the other contestants of the Miss America pageant, even claiming, in confidence with her husband, the prize of the contest for herself: “Those tall girls with their big feet. None of them gifted. All of them so chummy!” (*idem*, 180). Therefore, Dawn manages to get into the shoes of Miss New Jersey and takes the contest seriously enough to evaluate her performance, also going so far as to objectify herself in the process: “I was so introverted. I was so unpolished” (*ibidem*). Finally, Dawn even admits that the monetary prize for one of the categories of the contest would be worth all the humiliation: ““imagine if I'd won the booby prize. Though (...) it would have been nice to bring home the thousand dollars” (*idem*, 94). Gentry alludes to Roth’s “Coronation on Channel Two” to argue that the author shares the opinion of the character Marcia Umanoff, that beauty pageants border on prostitution (2000, 76).

Bill Orcutt appears late in the novel but turns out to be one of the most important characters, as he is the one who provokes an abrupt end to the Levovs’ marriage by having

an extramarital affair with Dawn. At first, Dawn's impression of Orcutt is not favorable: “He works so hard to be one-dimensional. That Wasp blandness. Living completely off what they once were” (Roth 2019, 336). If Swede fantasizes about being Johnny Appleseed, who, wherever he goes, leaves seeds to plant trees, Orcutt's legacy is the graves of his family members. Swede has the fantasy, but Orcutt presents something concrete. This description of Orcutt reminds the reader of Thomas Buchanan's in *The Great Gatsby*:

His family was enormously wealthy (...). Now he was a sturdy straw-haired man of thirty, with a hard mouth and a supercilious manner (...). His speaking voice, a gruff husky tenor, added to the impression of fractiousness he conveyed. There was a touch of paternal contempt in it, even toward the people he liked. (1992, 11)

Similarly, Orcutt's artistic work differs from Swede's manual work, with one man painting abstracts and the other making gloves in downtown Newark. During their time dating, Swede offers Dawn a pair of Newark Maid gloves, but at the end of the marriage, the female character is surrendered to Orcutt's abstract art, clashing with the worldview of the Levovs: “That it isn't finished,’ said Dawn, ‘is the idea, Lou” (Roth 2019, 324). Likewise, Zuckerman mentions that Orcutt's Meditation #27 replaces Merry's oil painting.

Lastly, it is important to mention that the union of Swede and Dawn raised criticism from both their families, with religion being a fundamental issue, but in different magnitudes. Dawn's mother labels her as the family's rebel: “But her choice was to fall in love with and marry Seymour Levov of Newark instead (...) of Catholic boys” (*idem*, 197). In turn, Lou Levov, Swede's father, is more vocal about his son's choices, subjecting Dawn to an interrogation reported for over ten pages in *American Pastoral*. Before it started, the union between Swede and Dawn already seemed doomed. The concerns about religion illustrate the generation gap between the young couple and their parents, as Jerry Levov says: “She's post-Catholic, he's post-Jewish” (*idem*, 73).

Besides the relationship between the two, if the reader meditates on the tumultuous relationship between Dawn and Merry, they will realize that there are not many scenes between mother and daughter. We also do not know to what extent Swede did not mediate the mother-daughter relationship. For example, Swede never tells Dawn that he has discovered Merry's whereabouts, refusing to take her to her daughter. However, it is difficult to disagree with Rita Cohen's opinion on Dawn and Merry's

relationship, as there are no great moments of tenderness between them. For example, Marcia Umanoff fantasizes about Merry being her daughter, as this would explain her revolutionary side because Dawn does not have that in her: “For Marcia to have spawned a self-styled revolutionary – yes had Merry been raised within earshot of Marcia's mouth (...) but Dawn? Pretty, petite, unpolitical Dawn” (Roth 2019, 340).

The Dawn-Merry relationship enters Swede's idyllic pastoral fantasy in some moments, for example, when Roth opens “Paradise Lost”¹ with a scene between mother and daughter: “Dawn's grazing along the hill (...) Merry, in her pajamas, wanted to see them before she went to bed (...) the next day Merry and Dawn would be out at sunrise getting them all together again” (*idem*, 285). The only major episode shared between Merry and Dawn takes place with Count, the animal they raised in the family cattle business, a narration that lasts only three pages. However, Swede recalls the moments when Merry worked with her mother: “Merry, as a grade school kid, was lying on the floor of the study next to Dawn's desk, drawing pictures of Count while Dawn did the accounts for the farm. Merry emulates her mother's concentration, enjoying working with the same discipline” (*idem*, 202). In *Dicionário da Crítica Feminista*, Macedo and Amaral explore and explain the issue of the mother:

Since the Neolithic period, the Mother Foundress of generations has also been entrusted with the care and feeding of offspring because she is designated as more capable of caring for and loving. Always coerced by patriarchal power, (...) in every age, the mother cared for or rejected, cradled or avoided contact with her children. (2005, 119; my translation)

As previously noted, Dawn did not intend to be a mother, a decision that had to be reversed by Swede's will and which would create an obstacle to Merry's education. Since Dawn already suffers scrutiny from third parties due to her past in beauty pageants, the character is also concerned with the opinions they may have about her performance as a mother since she knows that she can only belong to one of two categories: “the good mothers” or “the bad mothers” (Macedo and Amaral 2005, 119). It is also necessary to point out that Dawn's concerns result from the social circumstances in which the character is inserted, that is, the post-World War II in the United States of America. In a society centered on the ideology of work, paradoxically, a phenomenon of intensive motherhood coexists, that is, the belief that mothers, and not fathers, need to spend enormous amounts of physical and

emotional energy (*ibidem*).

As far as Merry is concerned, Dawn tries to teach her how to survive in a patriarchal society, one that she knows well. However, Merry does not resign herself to her mother's rules. In his essay on the American trilogy, Mark Shechner presents the following thesis about Merry: "Incendiary? Jain? American Bakunin? (...) She isn't an aberration, after all. She is her father's Jewish unconscious; she is the return of the repressed" (Shechner 2007, 147). The same holds for Dawn: while the latter reclaims her place as the narrative unfolds, the former is aware from a young age of the difficulties of achieving gender equality. The book *Why We Should All Be Feminists*, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, closes with a passage about the Nigerian author's grandmother: "She didn't know the word feminist. But that doesn't mean she wasn't one" (Adichie 2014, 47-48). This statement could well be applied to Dawn in *America Pastoral*.

How can we say that Dawn is a feminist without knowing it? Dawn slowly challenges the social norms of the generation that precedes her. Similarly, when it comes to defining a woman as a sexual object, Dawn does not embrace her past as a former beauty pageant winner, defying the label imposed on her years into this phase of her life, as we witnessed during her interview about her cattle business. Returning to Adichie, the author tells us that her grandmother ran away from home to marry the man she wanted, just as Dawn does with Bill Orcutt. Even though there is no marital relationship, Dawn makes her choice, freeing herself from Swede, no longer subjugating to his fantasies. Finally, Adichie tells us her definition of the word feminist: "My definition of a feminist is a man or a woman who says, 'Yes, there's a problem with gender as it is today, and we must fix it, we must do better'" (2014, 48). Dawn does not say this phrase in the book, even though she acts according to this motto: she imposes herself on Lou Levov, seeks her financial freedom regardless of her gender, seeks emotional support away from her husband, and pushes away society's view of her as a sexual object.

3. AMERICAN PASTORAL, THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE AND REVOLUTION AT POINT ZERO

The end of World War II brought the return of male labor, and the role of women in

American society was conditioned. As Betty Friedan documents in *The Feminine Mystique*, “interior decorators were designing kitchens with mosaic murals and original paintings, for kitchens were once again the center of women's lives” (1965, 15). This new reality introduced young American women to a new problem, silent at first but glaring as the decades passed. According to Friedan, the danger of this new problem is precisely its silence since the difficulties brought about by it are all new: “Part of the strange newness of the problem is that it cannot be understood in terms of the age-old material problems of man: poverty, sickness, hunger, cold” (*idem*, 24). When discussing an issue that affects only one part of society, how can we bring this problem to center stage? Alternatively, as Federici questions, in *Revolution at Point Zero*, “the problem, then, becomes how to bring this struggle out of the kitchen and the bedroom and into the streets” (2020, 14).

This problem was not unique to American women. Friedan recalls the publication of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* as a crucial point in affirming the second wave of the feminist movements. However, in the United States, the book did not have the necessary reach to trigger the discussion about husband-and-wife dynamics and domestic work:

[A]n American critic commented that she obviously “didn't know what life was all about,” and besides, she was talking about French women. The “woman problem” in America no longer existed. If a woman had a problem in the 1950s and 1960s, she knew that something must be wrong with her marriage or with herself (...). Even the psychoanalysts had no name for it. (1965, 16)

The psychiatric issue is present in the novel, with Dawn's hospitalization after Merry's terrorist attack. Dawn's state mirrors a situation that Friedan reports was standard to thousands of American women who, in private practices, express their existential discomfort: married women sought help because they were frustrated with domestic life and marriage, while single women sought help when struggling with loneliness, anxiety, and depression. In the novel, Dawn aspires to be a music teacher but is seduced by Swede's domestic fantasy. In *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan gives voice to women who, from a certain age, felt impelled to abandon their aspirations for good to dedicate themselves to domestic life: “The ones in their forties and fifties who once had other dreams gave them up and threw themselves joyously into life as housewives” (1965, 24). Similarly, the author

evokes the testimony of a psychiatrist who argues that women have been transformed into sexual objects, with no identity other than life as mothers and wives, thus ignoring themselves: “We can no longer ignore that voice within women that says: ‘I want something more than my husband and my children and my home’” (1965, 29).

As already mentioned, single women behaved subversively, challenging the status quo by simply deciding to remain "alone". Both Friedan and Federici agree that the problem with domestic work stems from the misconception, which has been widely spread in the United States, that it is part of a woman's natural behavior. Consequently, women cannot be separated from domestic work, as they will lose their femininity. Federici problematizes this issue as follows:

The difference with housework lies in the fact that not only has it been imposed on women but also transformed into a natural attribute of our female physique and personality, an internal need, an aspiration, supposedly coming from the depth of our female character. Housework was transformed into a natural attribute rather than being recognized as (...). We must admit that capital has been very successful in hiding our work. It has created a true masterpiece at the expense of women. (2020, 12-13)

In this section of *Revolution at Point Zero*, Federici introduces the proposal of paid domestic work since this is as relevant as a male job in building a family. Instead of looking at domestic work as a “labor of love”, Federici demands that it should be looked at as labor, or, in her own words, “call work what is work so that eventually we might rediscover what is love” (*idem*, 12, 15). Therefore, the struggle for wages is a struggle against women’s social role, making it “a revolutionary demand not because by itself it destroys capital, but because it forces capital to restructure social relations in terms more favorable to us” (*idem*, 15). Moreover, the author argues that demanding wages “does not mean that if we are paid, we will continue to do it. It means precisely the opposite” (*ibid*). However, this position presents yet another problematic layer for the condition of housewives, as Federici exemplifies: “Many women are (...) afraid of identifying for a second with the housewife. They know that this is the most powerless position in society, and they do not want to realize that they are housewives too” (2020, 18).

Following Federici’s argumentation on wages for housework, it is also relevant to recall one of the most striking cases in Friedan’s work, "Occupation: Housewife" (1965,

35). In this section of the book, Friedan writes about an article that portrays the situation of a housewife who has completed her higher education and is asked to fill out a questionnaire about her occupation. Interestingly, like Dawn, the woman in question also has a professional background in music. In an attempt at subversion, after recounting her frustrations at never being able to use her potential and realize her ambitions, the woman is manipulated into admitting that the role of housewife did not restrict her but rather liberated her: “You might write business manager, cook, nurse, chauffeur, dressmaker, interior decorator, accountant (...) or just put down philanthropist (...). All your life, you have been giving away your energies, your skills, your talents, your services for love” (*idem*, 36). The last sentence is especially significant as it tries to disarm what Federici will, a decade later, write about the manipulation of women until they accept that domestic work is a unique and exclusive aspect of their gender, which is a service of love, in Friedan's words. Moreover, Federici also argues that all the second jobs that women employ are mere extensions of their domestic tasks, as is Dawn's case, who, instead of raising a daughter, starts raising cattle: “the second job not only increases our exploitation but simply reproduces our role in different forms” (Federici 2020, 18). Thus, it is even more complicated to escape the mystique, since it is not only a generational problem or an isolated case in a woman's life, but an ingrained idea deeply rooted in the social fabric of the United States: “The material details of life, the daily burden of cooking and cleaning, of taking care of the physical needs of husband and children – these did indeed define a woman's world a century ago when America were pioneers” (Friedan 1965, 59).

Still, on the topic of labor outside of the household, Friedan documents that the only career reported in magazines with a female target audience was one in the artistic world, namely acting. However, the focus of the articles on these women continued to be their domestic chores:

The one “career woman” who was always welcome in the pages of women's magazines was the actress. But her image also underwent a remarkable change: from a complex individual of fiery temper, inner depth, and a mysterious blend of spirit and sexuality to a sexual object, a babyface bride, or a housewife (...). When you wrote about an actress for a women's magazine, you wrote about her as a housewife. You never showed her doing or enjoying her work as an actress unless she eventually paid for it by losing her husband or her child or otherwise admitting failure as a woman. (1965, 46-47)

The novel illustrates this similarly, when Dawn is interviewed about her cattle ranching company, and the journalist mentions that she is a former beauty queen and claims she is now a housewife. In *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan writes about how “women” journalists wrote about women with professional careers. This position winds back into the hands of men during the post-World War II period, contributing to the construction of this feminine mystique. Federici also states that the “career woman” escapes from her condition of domestic work not through collective power and sonority but through capitalist and patriarchal means, something that is also visible in Dawn, who only achieves her limited independence through financial means of the Levov family: “The old image of the spirited career girl was largely created by writers and editors who were women (...). The new image of woman as housewife-mother has been largely created by writers and editors who are men” (Friedan 1965, 47).

When mentioning Swede's financial support, discussing what Friedan and Federici write about sharing household chores between the couple is relevant. Friedan gives the following example: “Ed and Carol have ‘centered their lives almost completely around their children and their home.’ They are shown shopping at the supermarket, carpentering, dressing the children, making breakfast together” (*idem*, 43). The couple shares Merry's upbringing and education, with Dawn taking over domestic and daily life while Swede is left to resolve her daughter's medical and political issues. However, as Friedan argues, this division of tasks does not solve the problem because the woman still does not leave the house, ending up being even more harmful since it devalues her precarious position. Swede's tasks turn out poorly executed, as Merry interprets her father's advice radically, solving her political issues, as well as her stuttering, through terrorist activities. Dawn is unable to intervene in these issues due to the gender roles established in the novel's time of action, as women were not expected to make decisions or intervene in political office: “They may have the vote, but they don’t dream about running for office (...). If you write a political piece, they won’t read it. You have to translate it into issues they can understand—romance, pregnancy, nursing, home furnishings, clothes” (Friedan 1965, 45).

The idea that women could not share in the country's political life explains not only Dawn's despair in the face of her daughter's radicalism but also her inertia. This sums up the feminine mystique, something so ingrained and familiar in the daily lives of these women that acting oppositely was seen as unnatural, as Friedan argues: “When a mystique

is strong, it makes its fiction of fact. It feeds on the very facts which might contradict it, and seeps into every corner of the culture, bemusing even the social critics" (*ibidem*). It is this contradiction that leaves Federici, in 1975, with the following questions: "we deluded ourselves that we can escape housework. But how many of us, in spite of working outside the house, have escaped it? And can we really so easily disregard the idea of living with a man? What if we lose our jobs?" (2020, 18).

Adapting this last question to *American Pastoral*, what happens to Dawn if she decides to leave both the Swede and Orcutt, quitting her job as a housewife? In *American Pastoral*, Zuckerman's narrative is subversive enough to make the reader think in extremes: either you blow up the house like Merry and die in the streets, or you clean the house and live under a man's rule like Dawn. Or, resorting to Federici's words, "why are these our only alternatives and what kind of struggle will move us beyond them?" (*idem*, 18). Yet, the novel closes with Dawn neither blowing nor cleaning the house, instead, she projects one, believing that she has found her alternative and deciding to go through with it.

4. CONCLUSION

At the end of the novel, did Dawn escape the feminine mystique? It is complicated to answer this question since the mystique itself results from a century-old problem, preceding her generation and continuing through her daughter's. We only know that, at the end of the novel, Dawn creates a path of her own, separating from Swede, with Bill Orcutt or not. As for Swede, through direct contact with Zuckerman, we know that the protagonist remains a highly superficial person, not subverting or even challenging the feminine mystique. Also, Dawn can see her first marriage being repeated in her relationship with Bill Orcutt, even if the latter, on an intellectual level, is different and more modern than Swede.

Although imagining Dawn's life as a single woman, with Orcutt being a one-time lover, is not difficult, the rejection of Dawn's feminine mystique will, unfortunately, also depend on her companion and his power over her life. Therefore, two possibilities arise. She may either perpetuate with Orcutt the cycle of individual constraint she endured while married to Swede or, on the contrary, be – in our minds, at least – free. Indeed, if Roth

allowed Swede to recover from his fall from Paradise, the reader may hope that the author would also allow Dawn to teach music in the Elizabethan system, like she wanted when she was unmarried and, thus, finally turn the mystique into mystery.

END NOTES

¹ Roth organizes the three sections of *American Pastoral*, “Paradise Remembered”, “The Fall”, and “Paradise Lost”, inspired by the epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667) by John Milton. In *Paradise Lost*, Satan seeks to corrupt God's creation, Adam and Eve, by sowing distrust that will lead to disobedience. In this way, Eve is seduced into tasting the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which leads Adam to turn his back on God and join his companion. However, the poem ends with Adam and Eve turning their back to God, contrary to Satan, and Archangel Michael informing the two that, although they have been expelled from Paradise, they may find another within themselves. In *American Pastoral*, Swede can be compared to Adam, while Merry and Dawn can be seen as Eve. In turn, the revolutionary forces of the Weather Underground may appear as substitutes for Satan. Merry, as Eve, is a transgressive figure in that she tastes the fruit of a tree that Johnny Appleseed does not plant; Dawn, as Eve, produces her transgression by having an affair with Orcutt. As in *Paradise Lost*, Swede, as Adam, encounters judgment by association with his “Eves”. At the end of the novel, although there is no reconciliation with God, Swede finds his paradise through a second marriage, Merry converts and becomes a Jain, and Dawn leaves her husband, i.e., the characters eventually find a paradise within themselves.

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DIOGO OLIVEIRA

Diogo Oliveira (Porto, 1999) holds a BA in Languages, Literatures and Cultures (2021, FLUP) and a MA in Anglo-American Studies (2023, FLUP), with a dissertation on Philip Roth's *American Pastoral*. He currently works as an English teacher and form tutor at Escola Profissional de Comércio Externo do Porto.

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