

revista  
**Yawp**  
2015

#8

Revista dos Alunos de  
Graduação da Área de Estudos  
Linguísticos e Literários em Inglês

**FFLCH/USP**

# revista Yawp 2015

#8

## **Editores responsáveis**

Gislene Fernandes Soares  
Ingrid Puche  
Jéssica Campos Oliveira  
Lucas Amorim dos Santos  
Marcela Prado Siqueira

## **Assistente editorial**

Thais Gomes Trindade

## **Equipe de revisão**

André Henriques Oshiro  
Beatriz Rodrigues Ramos  
Caroline Guarda Francisco Dau  
Gislene Fernandes Soares  
Ingrid Puche  
Jéssica Campos Oliveira  
Jonathan Renan Silva Souza  
Lucas Amorim dos Santos  
Marcela Prado Siqueira  
Ohana Araújo Pereira Meira Pinto  
Thais Gomes Trindade

## **Capa e Projeto Gráfico**

Maria Lúcia Rigon  
Renata Prilip

## **Diagramação**

Renata Prilip

## **Docente responsável**

Profa. Dra. Deusa Maria de Souza-  
Pinheiro-Passos

## **Prefácio**

Profa. Dra. Maria Sílvia Betti

## **Revista Yawp #8, ano 2015**

Revista dos Alunos de Graduação da  
Área de Estudos  
Linguísticos e Literários em Inglês  
FFLCH – USP

**Issn** 1980-2862 // São Paulo – SP

# Preface

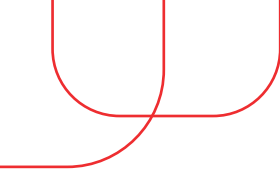
To edit a students' journal like this in the present context of the public University in Brazil requires more than organizational efforts from those involved in the task: it requires commitment to the idea suggested in Whitman's image to which the name of the journal alludes - the one of sounding one's *yawp*, in this case opening space to the publicizing of students' researches and ideas.

*Yawp 8* is a compilation of works that are representative of the different fields and theoretical approaches covered in the area of Linguistic and Literary Studies in English. The structure and style of the articles indicate the affinity of the authors with scientifically based analysis, as well as their motivation to pursue academic competence as future researchers. *Yawp's* formative role has been one of the targets since its inception, as the present issue successfully corroborates.

If a students' journal like this has always been a most welcome and rewarding activity, the moment we are presently facing in the public University in Brazil has made it even more urgent and relevant for one more reason: the conditions for effective debate in the University have been severely impaired in the last years, and a magazine like *Yawp* can potentially serve as a vehicle to keep the circulation and exchange of ideas alive and to prevent the community spirit from being suppressed altogether among students.

Higher and higher demands have been placed upon the University as concerns the institutional assessments of its academic performance. These assessments, almost entirely based on rankings and on the quantitative analysis of the so called results and products, have strongly contributed to deemphasize the concern with socially committed research, and to stimulate the pursuing of excellence as exclusively expressed through indexation, quantification and statistics. The growing demand for productivity that spread to all areas of the University took the form of an unquestionable priority and mounted to unprecedented levels, while research resources, on the other hand, suffered drastic cuts in all academic areas.

Within this context, a students' journal like *Yawp* is certainly of utmost importance: it breathes the fresh air of open expression, and it does not need to legitimate its existence resorting to numbers extracted from abstruse graphs and charts of the academic bureaucracy. *Yawp* shares texts, ideas, poems and translations for the pleasure of doing it, and for the warm, sincere and open-hearted conviction that there is a lot to be said, investigated, analyzed, discussed, shared and changed in the world.




Students' *Yawp* can be energetically and vigorously committed to the idea that the present circumstances do require their barbaric battle cry as much as they did when Walt Whitman wrote "Leaves of Grass", when Charles Bukowski wrote "So you want to be a writer", or when Bertolt Brecht wrote the poem "Let nothing be called natural".

This being said, we welcome all the readers (hopefully future *Yawp* authors and editors) and invite them to let the sounds of these students' *Yawp* sound highly and generously through the pages.

MARIA SÍLVIA BETTI

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY, LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE, AND HUMAN SCIENCES  
UNIVERSITY OF SÃO PAULO



# Table of Contents

## Literature

<b>Stasis and Movement in <i>Kew Gardens</i> and <i>Hills Like White Elephants</i></b> By THAIS MALAGOLI BRAGA.....	8
<b>Comparative Critical Essay: <i>The storm</i>, by Kate Chopin and <i>Cat in the rain</i>, by Ernest Hemingway</b> By LAÍS MARINHO DA CRUZ.....	12
<b><i>Things fall apart</i>, by Chinua Achebe: a deeper analysis on Okonkwo's trajectory</b> By ANDRÉ HENRIQUES OSHIRO.....	15
<b>The inevitable desire of the heart: a representation of the revolutionary Irish life in the short story <i>The Patriot</i>, by Sean O'Faolain</b> By VICTOR AUGUSTO DA CRUZ PACHECO.....	18
<b>James Joyce's representations of women: subversion and oppression</b> By RODRIGO MANZ DE PAULA RAMOS .....	27
<b>The idea of Authority and the use of farce in Social Criticism in Joe Orton's <i>Loot</i></b> By JONATHAN RENAN DA SILVA SOUZA .....	32
<b>Why don't we just let go: rumination on prejudice in Shakespeare's <i>The Merchant of Venice</i></b> By MELINA VALENTE.....	48
<b>Comparative analysis between Alice Walker's <i>The Flowers</i> and Katherine Mansfield's <i>Life of Ma Parker</i></b> By AMANDA ZIMBARG .....	51

## Cultural Studies and Cinema

<b>A cultura da heteronormatização em <i>Amor à Vida</i> e a diversidade representativa em <i>Orange is the New Black</i></b> By PAULA ARGOLLO DE SOUZA SANTOS.....	56
--	----

**What is Brazil's image? Stereotypes in Searching Engines**

BY CAROLINE DOS SANTOS, MARIANA L. FERREIRA AND MILENA L. G. MOURA..... 59

**Art and reality: Kubrick's approach to social elements through the cinema aesthetic**

BY JÉSSICA CAMPOS OLIVEIRA..... 63

**O processo de estandardização da identidade Drag em programas televisivos Estadunidenses**

BY BRUNO JOSÉ PEREIRA ..... 69

**The Modernity and the Panopticon in Kubrick's masterpieces: *2001: A Space Odyssey, The Shining* and *Eyes Wide Shut***

BY INGRID PUCHE..... 75

***Six Degrees of Separation* and the concepts of simulacra and culture industry**

BY RODRIGO MANZ DE PAULA RAMOS ..... 86

**Education and the Nuclear Family: an analysis of *Lolita, A Clockwork Orange* and *Eyes Wide Shut***

BY FILIPE R. SANTOS ..... 90

**Arts, Market and Culture in Woody Allen's *Small Time Crooks***

BY LUCAS AMORIM DOS SANTOS..... 98

**American Culture of Exclusion: a semiotic approach to the protagonist's situation of exclusion in Kubrick's *Lolita, The Shining* and *Eyes Wide Shut***

BY MARCELA PRADO SIQUEIRA ..... 106

**Linguistic Studies**

**Tempo é Dinheiro: a pressa para aprender inglês**

BY MARIANA LETTIERI FERREIRA..... 116

**Attitudes toward homosexuality in the Anglophone African Press**

By RYAN MARTINEZ ..... 121

**Terminological appropriation for subjectivity construction through discourse  
in Victoria Santa Cruz's poem *Me Gritaron Negra***

By SANDRO SILVA ROCHA ..... 135

**Translation**

**Turma da Mônica Jovem x Mônica Teen: estratégias de tradução**

By MILENA LOPES GUIMARÃES MOURA ..... 140

**Questão da Fidelidade em Tolkien: uma análise comparativa entre duas  
traduções de *As Aventuras de Tom Bombadil***

By JESSICA ELZA HAAK RAGONI ..... 148

**Creative Works**

***This won't change your life***

By PAULA ARGOLO DE SOUZA SANTOS ..... 154

***Return the ring***

By MÁRCIO CARDOSO DE SENA AND RODRIGO GIANNINI ARTIOLI ..... 157

***Identidade***

By AMANDA J. FARIAS ..... 159

**Agradecimentos**

# Literature

## Stasis and Movement in *Kew Gardens* and *Hills Like White Elephants*

THAIS MALAGOLI BRAGA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at the University of São Paulo. E-mail: thambraga@gmail.com

**Abstract:** It is interesting to notice how - in different historical contexts as well as in different approaches and syntaxes - the same elements can still be found in two short stories. An excess of movement in life calls for a moment, even if it is the smallest one, in which some sort of stasis is almost imposed on us. In order to show how movement and stasis are put together in both short stories, we make use of nature elements present in Hemingway as well as in Woolf to represent that opposition mutually important. Perhaps significantly, these literary works might come in hand when analyzing other contemporary stories in which this runaway from the movement of routine becomes more and more usual.

**Keywords:** Fragments. Movement. Nature. Stasis.

### Introduction

The aim of this article is to compare the essence of both short stories *Kew Gardens*, by Virginia Woolf, and *Hills Like White Elephants*, by Ernest Hemingway, highlighting the element of stasis and movement in both. For that matter, it is advisable to take into consideration each of the historical facts surrounding these creations. In Virginia Woolf, the art movement of the 19th century, Impressionism, was clearly a strong influence in her work; strong enough to allow all its characteristics to flow into the story itself. Painting qualities are mixed in *Kew Gardens*, such as the thin yet visible brush strokes; the depiction of light in its “changing qualities” as if it was really representing something in a picture; the ordinary subject matter (different but ordinary couples strolling through the garden), and the idea of movement as an important element of human perception and experience.

Differently, in Hemingway we have the in-between wars background, which, although not explicitly, brings out the idea of soldiers coming back from the First World War carrying nothing but a dramatic experience, and therefore, according to Benjamin (1936), carrying along for their lives not an experience, but a trauma: feeling the impossibility to carry on, those soldiers end up lacking the domestic, wife-and-kids routine that life could bring.



## The Comparison

Different from the geometrical quality found in traditional short stories, in contemporary writing, the traditional linearity is not necessarily present; there is no longer the need of one definite starting point followed by a certain progression which will always lead towards a conflict and a *denouement*: the “one character, one theme in order to produce one single effect”, as Aristotle would say, is no longer a necessity.

In Hemingway’s short story it becomes obvious the presence of the iceberg theory, as in “*what is most essential to understand the story as a whole is never told*”. In this case, we can observe two stories, the first one laying before the reader’s eyes and the second one hidden, as the in-between lines story that has fragments which may be useless or superfluous in one story, but essential for the other. *Hills Like White Elephants* comes to us with these two parallel stories; apparently this is just the story of a couple that is chatting in a train station in Spain, presenting nothing more than a chapter of a couple’s life. Nevertheless, the whole story of the couple is told in between lines and the most essential to understand - the conflict - can slip away from the reader’s view.

The same can be found in *Kew Gardens*, in which there is not one single clear conflict. Here, the fragments given are several blurred images, different strokes of stories and their conflicts. A symmetry to be pointed out would be the fact that the people who stroll around the garden

are always presented in pairs and are all about to reach the same place, in order to have some tea.

James (1977) says that plotless narratives such as “Kew Gardens” have as a salient quality:

an impression like that we often get of people in life: their orbits come out of space and lay themselves for a short time along ours, and then off they whirl again into the unknown, leaving us with little more than an impression of their reality and a feeling of baffled curiosity as to the mystery of the beginning and end of their being. (JAMES, apud REID, 1977, p. 65)

The movement-stasis opposition is given not only by the fragments that form the plot - contrasted with the uninterrupted development of the traditional plot -, but also by elements of nature very much present in both short stories. These elements may emphasize this opposition or work as metaphors, emphasizing either the movement or the stasis within the plot.

What we happen to find in *Kew Gardens* is the opposition given by the flowerbed description - taking the different light impressions as it moves, as well as stroking these impressions - and the colour effects through the petals. The grounded narrator, that is, the snail, also sets the same opposition. This latter example presents the story through an angle of a character that is continually trying to keep up his path while constantly being interrupted by the fragmental chats of the garden’s passengers. It is relevant

to point out that the figure of one of the slowest animals must be the only one that has a goal that will have to be reached through moving, although not explicated.

Still in *Kew Gardens*, we have the elements of nature - like the flowerbed, the butterflies and the dragonfly - as triggers to a reflection towards the inner lives of each character, whether they are conscious of it or not.

As examples of such usage of nature elements, we have the traditional family strolling through the flowerbed that is crossed by white and blue butterflies when the husband goes back fifteen years remembering his "almost-proposal" to another woman and, consequently, wondering at how that decision might have taken him to a whole different experience. That is, if only a dragonfly had settled on a specific leaf. The odds are that the environment, the turf crossed by the butterflies and also the flowers themselves, led the husband to a conscious reflection on his past.

Another example is given when the young couple is observed,

(...) when two other people came past outside on the turf. This time they were both in the prime of youth, or even in that season which precedes the prime of youth (...) when the wings of the butterflies, though fully grown, are motionless in the sun. (WOOLF, 1919, p.11)

In this case, we have nature not as a trigger to a reflection, but also as a metaphor of an age when all the first experiences are being lived; no reflection

has been made yet, only acting and living with no responsibilities and worries, only dreaming of a time in which a life would have to be built, a time in which there was thinking and reflection.

The same natural elements are present in Hemingway's short story, though, in this case, they work as symbols for the discussion that builds the story's dialogue itself. It is what we have in "*the girl was looking off at the line of hills. They were white in the sun and the country was brown and dry. 'They look like white elephants', she said.*" (HEMINGWAY, 1927, p.539). Both the "hills" and the "white elephants" bring out the stasis of the dialogue, the hidden conflict of the baby and its reference as burden to the American man.

Similarly to the first short story, the elements of "modern civilization" are related to reality's necessity of continuous movement, reflecting - in *Hills Like White Elephants* - and doubting on whether to catch the train and undergo the procedure or stay and deal with a domestic, family life. The train tracks act as divisions between those two options.


Although in *Kew Gardens* the city elements are present at the end - "*the motor omnibuses were turning their wheels and changing their gear*" (p. 87) - we believe that they are put as to provoke a different interpretation of the story. As if all those talks and pretense reflections were nothing, but "*wordless voices*", strokes of thoughts that slid away in the city's murmur.

Despite the fact that those elements are also present in *Hills Like White*

*Elephants*, they are necessary to make up the discussion - led always by the American man - helping to trigger the doubt, the reflection, and the discussion itself.

## Conclusion

Finally, either closer to the poetry form, by what Friedman (1967) says to be “the Camera” - the ultimate authorial exclusion with the aim to transmit a portion of life -, as in *Kew Gardens*, or closer to a “dramatic mode”, as in *Hills Like White Elephants*, the short story shall, at all times,

seek for “the effect”. This latter by means of what makes the stories unforgettable for its reader, capturing him/her through the mystery and secret in some unsolved event. It must always invite the reader to a stasis so that, escaping from the stressful movement as product of our day-by-day life, it will be possible to take a moment to reflect or at least to keep on moving with a different perspective. 



## References

**FRIEDMAN**, N. The point of view in fiction. In: *The Theory of the Novel*. New York: Free, 1967.

**HEMINGWAY**, E. Hills Like White Elephants. In: *Men without Women*. 1927.

**REID**, I. Essential Qualities. In: *The Short Story*. London: Methuen, 1977.

**WOOLF**, V. *Kew Gardens*. 1919.

**BENJAMIN**, W. A obra de arte na era da sua reprodutibilidade técnica. In: *Magia e Técnicas, Arte e Política: ensaios sobre literatura e história da cultura*. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1985.

## Comparative Critical Essay: *The storm*, by Kate Chopin and *Cat in the rain*, by Ernest Hemingway

LAÍS MARINHO DA CRUZ<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. Email: lais\_cruz@hotmail.com

**Abstract:** The short stories *The storm* and *Cat in the rain* address to a change of perspective towards the female role in Literature. However, the protagonists are not feminist heroes - their conducts only represent the changes in society. Analyzing the characters' actions and the symbolic elements in these narratives, while considering the historical context in which they were created allow us to understand why these stories are so remarkable.

**Keywords:** *Cat in the rain*. Female role in Literature. Meaningful conflict. Modern short stories. *The storm*.

Modern short stories are characterized by their unity of conflict; which means that every sentence of the story must tend to a single crisis, according to Edgar Allan Poe (1994). Therefore, Julio Cortázar (1994) and Frank O'Connor (1963) have pointed out the importance of embracing a character's past and future in the present of the narrative to produce a powerful impression after a fast perusal. Moreover, both writers have mentioned that the narrated event also has to be meaningful and bound with its historical reality in order to write a good modern short story. *The storm*, by Kate Chopin, and *Cat in the rain*, by Ernest Hemingway, were chosen to illustrate such characteristics through a comparative critical analysis.

The stories were written in the ending of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, respectively, which explains why their common theme was so meaningful. Both Chopin and Hemingway portrayed unhappy married women subtly rebelling against the imposed female role of submissive wives in society. Considering that the 1800s was the starting point of feminist concepts and legal divorces, the exposure of a woman's adultery or a wife's complaints and frustrations were very polemic and revolutionary subjects at the time the short stories were written.

According to Frank O'Connor, (1963) modern short stories do not have heroes; their protagonists belong to submerged population groups and follow the reader's attitude towards life. Therefore, Calixta and The American woman – as verisimilar characters who represented an oppressed group – were ordinary wives with many social boundaries who, somehow, would still rebel against the oppression of their time, stimulating the critical reader's reflection.

When it comes to Calixta, the social conduct of the Victorian period is observed in her resistance to the signs of the metaphorical storm. In one moment, she closes

the door and puts something beneath it to keep the water out as an attempt to stop the force that was bringing her and Alcée together, and in another one, she releases herself from his arms when he encircled her. It is also said that she hadn't seen him often since her marriage, and never alone, as expected of a good wife. Furthermore, the use of words such as "unthinkingly" and "unconsciously" reinforces the idea that Calixta's actions were not an indication of a bad character. However, she could not contain the actual storm, a storm of old-time feelings and the willingness for freedom that was actually leading her towards Alcée.

In Hemingway's story, the American woman has a more daring conduct by verbalizing her frustrations to her husband, who ignores her. Even though having a voice is already an important achievement if compared to Calixta, it indicates that the reader's attitude to life was starting to change. In addition, the rain is part of a metaphor in this short story as well. The American woman clearly feels lonely and unsatisfied in her marriage – which explains why she wants the cat's affection, why she fantasizes about the Italian man and why she complains about so many things – but her social conduct prevents her from changing this situation. When she sees a fragile cat trapped by the rain, she projects on it the same feelings of imprisonment caused by her marital situation.


As mentioned above, the choice of a meaningful historical theme is just as important as the selection of a single event that embraces the character's past,

present and future. O'Connor (1963) explains this statement by saying that a whole lifetime must be crowded into a few minutes, so those minutes must be carefully chosen, and Cortázar, (1994) reiterates this idea by saying that a short story is a live synthesis, as well as a synthesis of life. The authors also compare the modern short story to an instantaneous image: both a photograph and a frame capture only a brief moment of someone else's entire existence.

Hemingway, for instance, never mentions the character's past or future in *Cat in the rain*. But the details and metaphors enable the reader to speculate and fill the gaps of information that concern the "before" and the "after" from the narrated event. For instance, it is possible to infer that the husband was a well-succeeded man (by the fact that he was able to afford a trip to Europe and stay in a nice hotel room with an ocean view), and a cultivated person (as he was reading the news). This means he was probably a desirable man in a time that the husband was meant to be a provider; however, he did not provide the attention his wife needed.

In Chopin's story, it is possible to speculate about the characters as well, such as the fact that Alcée and Calixta are from different social classes. This is indicated by the rustic way Calixta talks and how formally she refers to someone she has known for years (for example: "Come 'long in, M'sieur Alcée") in contrast with Alcée's speech (for example: "May I come over and wait (...), Calixta"). The description of Bibinôt's house - there was a din-

ing/sitting/general-utility room adjoining the bedroom - and the fact of Clarisse being supported in another city for a long time also support the idea. However, differently from *Cat in the rain*, *The storm* has a direct reference to a previous event: the Assumption kisses. This episode sustains the interpretation that adultery was not a frivolous infidelity, but an irresistible act of freedom and passion.

In sum, Ernest Hemingway's and Kate Chopin's short stories had extremely meaningful themes for their historical period and narrated a single conflict that synthesized the characters existence in a compact perusal. Those qualities, according to Julio Cortázar and Frank O'Connor, are important aspects of this modern genre. 



## References

**CHOPIN, K.** The storm. In: *Understanding Fiction*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959.

**CORTÁZAR, J.** Alguns aspectos do conto. In: *Valise de Cronópios*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1994. p. 227-237.

**HEMINGWAY, E.** Cat in the rain. In: *In our time*. Westvaco, 1998.

**O'CONNOR, F.** Introduction. In: *The lonely voice: a study of the Short Story*. London: Macmillan, 1963. p. 13-45.

**POE, E. A.** Poe on short fiction. In: *The new short story theories*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1994 p. 59-72.

## *Things fall apart*, by Chinua Achebe: a deeper analysis on Okonkwo's trajectory

ANDRÉ HENRIQUES OSHIRO<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to highlight the importance of Okonkwo's role in the novel *Things fall apart*, by Chinua Achebe, juxtaposing his actions and psychological traits so as to examine the impact of the British colonialism on the novel's fictional clan – Umuofia. It follows that such analysis will also serve the purpose of pinpointing the mechanisms which Achebe employs in order to exalt the unsettling particularities of the African culture in question, no longer seen from the perspective of primitivism.

**Keywords:** African identity. Post-coloniality. Nigeria. British colonialism.

By analyzing the Nigerian novel *Things fall apart*, written by Chinua Achebe in 1958, from a literary perspective, it is reasonable to contend that one of the driving forces sustained by its author is the process of colonialization on the part of the British over Nigerian communities, as well as its social unfoldings. In doing so, Achebe actually attempts to depict such villages from the viewpoint of the natives rather than the settlers', who, in turn, impose their culture and language over the former. Having said that, this article focuses on the literary elements which are at work as far as the narrative is concerned, that is, the extent up to which formal aspects may enable us to see the British power as a determiner of the protagonist's trajectory.

To begin with, it is of paramount importance that we perceive how Achebe strives to make visible to the reader how the local villages work. By and large, he emphasizes their particularities and how each of them relate to the confederation of villages as a whole. The reader gradually makes sense of the subtleties and restraints imbedded in their system, in terms of social and economic organization, justice, religion, culture and traditions. Thus, it is possible to infer that Achebe argues in favour of a narrative in which the representation of African culture is no longer seen as primitive.

The aforementioned consideration corroborates the fact that all African characters do not seem to portray merely stereotypical traits, unlike the characters who represent the colonizers. Robert Fraser (2000) mentions, in *Lifting the sentence*, the critic and poet Wilson Harris' (1964) impressions on the rise of the novel with respect to the element of 'character' present in such literary genre. He argues that

"[...]the nineteenth-century novel has exercised a very powerful influence on reader and writer alike in the contemporary world. [...] As a result 'character' in a novel rests more

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. E-mail: andre.oshiro@usp.br

or less on the self-sufficient individual - on elements of 'persuasion'". (FRASER, 2000, p. 135)

Therefore, the Africans' singular individuality is highlighted, making room for an overlap of time and space, given that, from the perspective of the reader, it is possible to access the characters' thoughts through their inner world and also through the external world. Moreover, it is undeniable that the underlying principles and values which pervade Umuofia happen to be at times stronger than the characters' intrinsic motivation, causing them to disregard their own acts to comply with a specific tradition. The narrator, in this sense, shares such information with the readers, in order for them to better understand the very end of the story.

The narration revolves around Okonkwo's point of view, providing us with elements which, altogether, evince the characters' complexity and grant him the role of representing the thoughts and ideals of his own particular time and place. On account of his father's failures and lack of manliness, Okonkwo, throughout the novel, approaches his companions and children in a highly oppressive way. Such behavior is founded on the idea that "no matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his women and his children (especially his women) he was not really a man". (ACHEBE, 1994, p. 53).

Despite the fact that Okonkwo adopts a really tough attitude towards people who are close to him, the novel

proves that the protagonist often comes across moments in which he is drenched in guilt, causing him to reflect on his own actions. That can be identified by reading the following excerpt:

Okonkwo was beginning to feel like his old self again. All that he required was something to occupy his mind. If he had killed Ikemefuna during the busy planting season or harvesting it would not have been so bad, his mind would have been centered on his work. Okonkwo was not a man of thought but of action (ACHEBE, 1994, p. 69).

By the time that Okonkwo realizes he had murdered somebody he considered to be a self-made man, he becomes guilty. In this sense, the narrator enters his consciousness and shows the mechanisms which Okonkwo draws on to feel exempt from such guilt. The narrator subtly makes it clear that the protagonist is not incapable of feeling compassionate towards actions and/or people. On the other hand, the notion that Okonkwo is a man of action is recurrently emphasized. That is what confers him a good deal of complexity: the character struggles not to fail like his father, because he is also, after all, under pressure due to the responsibilities he has to cope with as a man of honour.

Such phenomenon makes it clear that Okonkwo, as a leader, is entitled to validate codes of behaviour which he deems relevant for his community: for as long as he lives in Umuofia, he preaches that one should always obey the laws. His assertions, up to a certain point,



reinforce the idea that the community in question is ruled by a solid system, which gives credibility to the story.


On that note, it is worth mentioning that Okonkwo's psychological individuality maybe easily contrasted with Obierika's. Throughout the novel, one may affirm that the latter is very much inclined to contest the laws which govern their community, rather than solely accept them. On the occasion in which Okonkwo and Obierika discuss the *ozo* title, they come to divergent opinions, as follows:

"It is so indeed," Okonkwo agreed. "But the law of the land must be obeyed."

"I don't know how we got that law," said Obierika. "In many other clans a man of title is not forbidden to climb the palm tree". (ACHEBE, 1958, p. 69)

To sum up, it is equally interesting to point out that when Okonkwo encoun-

ters his original place at the mercy of the English power after his seven-year exile, he does not feel part of that community anymore. Umuofia, in the end, maintains a configuration in which fighting against an inevitable imposition by white men occurs, but the values of such imposition are definitely assimilated by great part of the village locals. Hence, Okonkwo's identity must be now defined on grounds of where he turns out to be and not where he comes from. However, he refuses to conform to that.

In light of the considerations above, it is safe to say that the motivations which shape Okonkwo's trajectory are, to a certain extent, propelled by the British force, but for its most part supported by the fact that Okonkwo is remarkably consistent throughout the novel. His harsh and, above all, peculiar code of honour paves the way for his ultimate destruction. 

## References

**FRASER, R.** *Lifting the sentence: A Poetics of Postcolonial Fiction*. Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2000.

**ACHEBE, C.** *Things fall apart*. Anchor Books Edition, New York, 1994.

1 English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo, e-mail: victor.augusto.pacheco@usp.br

2 This paper is a result of a Scientific Initiation research (2013-2014), called *As representações da Irlanda revolucionária nos contos de Sean O’Faolain* guided by Professor Laura P. Z. Izarra and funded by RUSP Scholarship (University of São Paulo).

3 Sean O’Faolain (John Francis Whelan, 1900-1991) was an Irish writer with an intense literary production. He wrote fiction (novels, short stories collections and a play) and non-fiction (biographies, travel guides, a history of Ireland), including a

## The inevitable desire of the heart: A representation of the revolutionary Irish life in the short story *The Patriot*, by Sean O’Faolain

VICTOR AUGUSTO DA CRUZ PACHECO<sup>1</sup>

*It was doubtless because of the inevitable desire of man to recapture the past that they went to Youghal for their honeymoon. Their friends expected them to go at least to Dublin, if not to London or Paris, but they both knew in their hearts that they had spent the gayest days of their lives in this little town, and so as if to crown all those early happiness to Youghal they went, like true voluptuaries deliberately creating fresh memories that would torment them when they were old. (O’FAOLAIN, 1982, p. 144)*

**Abstract:** This paper aims to show the presence of the Irish historical context (situated between 1916 and 1922) in the short story “The Patriot” compiled on *Midsummer Night Madness* written by Sean O’Faolain in 1932. After the reading taken from this short story, we realized that the Irish history works as a background for the narrative through literary elements. Considering that the years covered in this short stories’ edition correspond to a time of intense struggle for independence of Ireland, it will be discussed the literary construction of the heroic young man who fights for his country through themes like patriotism, memory, love and death. Also, it will be checked the author’s position in face of the historic events construction.

**Keywords:** Ireland. Patriotism. Revolution. Sean O’Faolain. Short Story.

### Introduction<sup>2</sup>

If the ability to narrate, according to Walter Benjamin (1985), was lost due to war, at least this experience, transposed as literature, was made in a critical way. Sean O’Faolain<sup>3</sup> did not narrate his vision of World War I, because he did not fight in it, but raised a point so significantly: the Irish revolution for independence. This period is marked by political and armed conflicts with England in order to achieve independence. Started in 1916, with the *Easter Rising*, followed by a civil war between the two sides of the country (Anglo Irish War in 1919); the recognition of the independence and the separation of Ireland into two parts (Anglo Irish Treaty in 1921) and finally the disunity of the Irish political party that has articulated full independence with the emergence of the civil war (Irish Civil War in 1922).

*Midsummer Night Madness*, O'Faolain's first book published in 1932, is a work in which we can see the author's position about this revolutionary period in Ireland. The collection of short story is considered by Paul Delaney (2014, p. 153) as a "short story cycle": there is a repetition of "themes, tropes and concerns" and to "focus on a particular time and place" (Idem, p. 170). Following this notion of the impossibility of narration, the short story collection shows a disillusioned aspect and the denial of a romanticized nationalism, based on characters that were not in History books, but rather in a conflictual reality of the revolutionary struggle.

The quotation used in the beginning of this article is the first paragraph of the last narrative of *Midsummer Night Madness* by O'Faolain. It begins showing us the unity that passes throughout the book, not only by the social and historical themes, but also, with the resumption of figures and style, in order to affirm the critical view of the revolutionary events. The attention that O'Faolain gives to the first paragraph reaffirms even more the short stories theories from Edgar Allan Poe to Julio Cortázar: the author wants to show us since the beginning the main conflict of the narrative. Desire (coming as if it was an order from the heart) and memory were fundamental to the development of another short story in the book and these same elements are displaced by this new situation (or new narrative), but without losing their first meaning. What becomes clear is that the narratives sequence in *Midsummer Night Madness* was not arbitrary, so, we have to keep that in

mind for the final verdict that appears in "The Patriot". As well as the characters being tormented by the wishing to "recapture the past", the reader will also be tormented by a few questions that arise while reading: what kind of soldier has the revolution created? Will this struggle be worth it in the end and will it bring the so desired freedom?

The title, like all other stories from *Midsummer Night Madness*, is quite meaningful, but we shall see its true significance only at the end of the narrative. Dealing with the formal aspects of the narrative,

"Em 'The Patriot' o ponto de vista é de terceira pessoa, sendo que o narrador tem onisciência relativa ou seletiva: ele apresenta a história através da mente do protagonista e limita-se a ver as outras personagens em sua exterioridade, pois no conto não há espaço e tempo para uma onisciência múltipla. (...) A maior incidência de contos, que apresentam esse ponto de vista, atesta o pendor de O'Faolain por tal técnica. Assim em "The Patriot", só conhecemos Bernard, enquanto Norah e Bradley são vistos como que através de uma câmera." (Mutran, 1976, p. 48)

In addition to the structure, we can divide the story into three parts: the love affair between Norah and Bernard, life in guerrilla warfare, and finally, Bernard's final choice. In the first part we see the presentation of the main characters: Bernard, Norah and Edward Bradley. It is very common in love stories placed during a war that two characters fall in love and, due

newspaper (*The Bell*). In his work of fiction we can see an activism in favour of Ireland's political sovereign through his critical vision about the post-independence situation.

to the enlistment or army induction; the hero has to leave his beloved and fight for his country in foreign lands and his dying leaves an unfinished love story. This will not occur in “The Patriot” but the issue of death is very important to be analyzed, since that is a possible way to escape from a war. When it comes to the plot, the war itself serves as a barrier to overcome and achieve a happy ending. Bernard meets Norah twice during the first part, but only with the passage of time, they fall in love, before Bernard going to fight in the Irish Civil War of 1922<sup>4</sup>. Bernard chooses to fight: he was not forced or obliged to join the revolutionary struggles, there is a patriotic characteristic in that first moment: he joins the fight to defend his country. An interesting fact that can be noticed in this first part is the weather. Summer is the most favorable season for joy and fun and that is the reason the most positivist feelings are placed in that part. It is on summer evenings (reference to *A Midsummer Night's Dreams* by William Shakespeare) that Bernard and Norah can achieve their love affair. This romantic event in Bernard's life will torment him during the whole narrative, because it is what makes him imagine a new possibility of life.

Edward Bradley is presented since the beginning of the tale as a fervent patriotic politician:

That day he had spoken with a terrible passion against England, and against the Irish traitors who had been cowed by her, and his passionate words caught and flared the temper of the people so that they cheered and

cheered until their voices echoed state across the smooth surface of the water into the woods beyond. (p. 146)

Bradley is the one responsible for the actions and policies, primarily by speech of exhortation in order to lift up the mood in favor of the Irish struggle. This character concentrates all the aspects of historical figures that articulated and coordinated the revolutionary actions. The charisma and good oratory are the hallmarks of a political character, which in turn, is very important to induce and persuade people to fight or at least assist in the fight, and we can see this when Bernard “(...) had cheered like the rest where he stood beside Norah, proud to be that man's friend.” (Idem).

From the hot and warm summer that allowed a love story, the narrative passes to autumn, with a landscape that is gray and rainy, typical of the second part of the tale. This part is dedicated to the period of time which Bernard passed in the “guerrilla life.”

“It was the way of life that is guerilla that months on end the man never even thought of home or friends, and for months Bernard wandered among those grey mountains to the north of Youghal, the aimless, and he used to feel more uselessly, than the lost sheep. Once only did he use his rifle in those seven months of guerilla life and that was when sniping from fifteen hundred yards the village supposed to contain enemy troops, He slept in a different bed each night and never ate twice in succession from the same ta-

<sup>4</sup> We can affirm that through a point placed in the narrative: O'Faolain named the group Bernard was fighting in (Irregular guerilla), that was formed to assist in the *Irish Civil War*.

ble so that most of his time was spent in going from place to place in search of food and rest. He did so less from a sense of danger than a sense of pity towards the farmers who had to feed and shelter him and his fellows, never thinking that the all his fellows did as he was doing, it saved nothing to the flour bin lying lightly on the loft, or the tea-caddy on the high mantel-self, emptied almost daily. The days scarley existed for him and the weeks flew over his head the unnoticed the homing birds at night, until the human being he may be said to be almost, enveloped by the countryside as if he was a twig, the stone, an ear of corn.” (p. 147-148)

These two paragraphs have great significance in order to understand Bernard’s attitudes throughout the narrative. We observe a negative sensation that the narrator, from the point of view of Bernie, passes to the reader through words such as “never”, “aimless”, “uselessly” and “pity”. These words, if placed not just to the narrative, but also to the Irish revolution itself, can have their meanings changed: “aimless” and “uselessly”, for example, can be seen as the revolutionary effort as a whole. We note that O’Faolain does not use his contemporary vision of post-independence Ireland, putting the fight as something that gave a positive result. In fact, uncertainty is the main feeling of the characters of *Midsummer Night Madness*. Bernard’s vision becomes more pessimistic when we observe the lack of humanity of the men who were in this guerrilla life, depending on other people’s

pity to get the basics for survival: Bernard almost ceases to be a “human being”. There is also an ambiguous point in these paragraphs: the mobility is seen only in the moving from one place to another and not in the fight itself. The sensation of immobility is also strengthened when we consider the relation between “cities *versus* countryside” (this later is a quiet place without many events, with the possibility of a quiet life in communion with nature, and the former one is an unrest and urbanized place), since Bernard is running through cities in the countryside of Ireland. This also occurs on another occasion, when Bernie is asked about the resolution of a meeting with the leaders of the Irish rebel movement:

‘Well? What was deh deh end of meeting, aw? Are we to go home or stay here? Aw?’

‘Fight on!’ said Bernie.

They look to him too tired to mock the phrase.

‘Stay here, he means ‘ said Buckteeth.  
‘Stay bloody well here. (p. 156)

There is a character’s attempt to continue the fight to make sure that it is valid. “Fight on!” in addition to be a way of hiding from himself the immobility, it also shows an initial desire from Bernie about the revolutionary struggle. He feels that he needs to talk to someone, “(...) somebody like Bradley, someone who would persuade him that this struggle of theirs was not hopeless, that all their humiliation of poverty and hunger was not, as he had long since begun to feel, the useless

5 -less is a suffix which, when added to a word, adds the idea of “no”, and when placed in adjectives derived from verbs, indicates failure or inability to carry out or perform an action. Dictionary.com. Available at: <[http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/-less=""](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/-less=)>. Accessed on May 31, 2014.

and wasted offering.” (p. 149). The entire passage was constructed with words in a negative meaning, with a frequent use of the suffix *-less*<sup>5</sup>, showing the psychic state of the character that is even more affected by memories he has with Norah. Memory forms the second part of the narrative and it will have a fundamental space in the tale as it is the most important factor that will form Bernard’s opinion about the fight for independence. Memory in “The Patriot” is formed by the image of a past event and is associated with the affective experience of the character. Comparing to another short story from the book, memory in “Midsummer Night Madness” is more peripheral: even though it constitutes the entire first part of the narrative, it only serves to introduce the character Alexander Henn. While in “The Bombshop” we see memory connected to Mother Dale and during Norah’s epiphany, in which she realizes that getting older is, actually, a celebration of life. In “The Patriot” this is also placed in the first part, and it relates almost as a ubiquitous way in the plot and life of the main character.

This negative feeling and the immobility that torments Bernard increase every time the memories that involve Norah come to his mind. The verbs “to think” and “to remember” will be repeated throughout this part in sentences like

“[...] he remembered how lovely Youghal had been, and how lovely Norah, and he hated to look up at the cold and naked mountains. Thinking of that and thinking of the summer his memory began to work on him like a goad.

All about him on the night he thought of her [...]”. (p. 148).

An interesting fact in this passage is the relationship between a subjective aspect, which are the feelings that Bernard has for Norah, with the vision that the character has of the landscape. There is the strengthening of negative features employed to winter and the cold weather opposed to the amiability of the summer. The image of Norah confirms what Munira Mutran says in her doctoral thesis, showing that “[p]ara O’Faolain às vezes a mulher aparece como aquela jovem de cabelos escuros, da qual conhecemos apenas o aspecto exterior; representa para os rebeldes em fuga, a segurança e o aconchego do lar que não podem ter.” (Mutran, 1976 p. 122-123). Bernard’s life is made of running from one place to another, a hiding, a constant humiliation, suffering from starvation to the conditions of the weather. The contrast to this bad life the character goes through is the comfort that Norah provided to him at the beginning of the narrative.

Another point that must be highlighted is the importance of the home for the life of the Irish. Irish life is composed primarily by familiar relations, once society is governed by the patriarchal system. We do not see in *Midsummer Night Madness* these family relationships, nor we know the character’s family or familiar ties, like parents or relatives. However, we have to consider that the “aconchego do lar”, as says Mutran, is fundamental to this association with the image of women, that is also related to the role of women

in Irish society. Throughout the narrative, there will be two situations in which Bernard will be in a home: the first is the place that functions as a kind of headquarters, where the guerrillas can spend a minimum time and stock up on guns and ammunition. It is in this place that occurs the dialogue excerpt above and Bernard tries to borrow some money to return home and see Norah, because “If he could rest for a while and see Norah, he would become invigorated by her and be of some use again.” (p. 152). At the end of the narrative, he stays in a house, in which he is hosted by a family that supports the revolutionary struggle along with the other guerrillas. In this house, one of Bernard’s companions externalizes everything he feels through tears:

“[...] and when he heard the others argue that Limerick was a far more dangerous place than Cork he sat down wearily by the fire and began to cry telling his companions between his tears that he was afraid to go on with them and would hide here among the mountains. All the while Buckteeth and the others looked awkwardly at him. They offered him cigarettes and tried to cheer him by assuring him that that place was as safe as a house, and while he and they drank the scalding tea and the soft hot cake the girls searched him out a pair of socks and a dry, if torn, shirt. But while they ate they were less sure about the safety of the glens and they argued and argued as to what they should do next.” (p. 157-158)

The excerpt above shows a kind of collapse on the part of all the guerrillas. The safety issue and the next step to be taken increase the feeling of lack of purpose that revolutionary actions were awakening in Bernard. Seeing the reaction of one of the rebels, we can add another thematic point that is part of *Midsummer Night Madness*: the question of death. The proximity of death can be seen through all the narratives included in the book and its fear increases due to young age. Life and death are counteracted in the narrative background, showing that the choices tend towards life, in an obvious sense that the characters always will seek the option that gives them the possibility to live. There is also the characters’ fear of death (that to philosophy is the essential question of human life) and the fear of not having lived long enough. Reading a letter from Norah, Bernard “smiled at that letter, so full of life as it was (...) and he passionately wished to be away from so lonely and cruel place.” (p. 149). The interesting thing here is that Bernard realizes that the life as a guerrilla rebel is not his place: his place is, actually, next to Norah, who has a life that he does not have. Even if the letter was analyzed as a pure inanimate object, it was full of life, while he was alone in a cruel place.

Returning to the excerpt, this externalization of a shared sentiment can be seen as an anticipation of the narrative sequence: Bernard and his companions are captured, staying in prison for one year, and when he was released, he finds refuge in Youghal, Norah’s city. The city is also the place of their honeymoon

and we come back to the first paragraph of the short story that opened this analysis. During the trip, the couple stumbles upon a poster announcing a public meeting organized by Sinn Fein Party, whose spokesman is Edward Bradley. And even after all the chronological time of the narrative, Bradley, when he was speaking, had “the terrible passion of the man blazed like the fire of burning youth.” (p. 161). Bernard and Norah are not as encouraged as the first time they attended Bradley’s speech together, this time, they decided to go back to the hotel they were staying, where occurs the final scene of the story:

“Over his shoulder he could see her pale form in the dim light, but where he stood by the window with one hand raised to the blind his eyes fell on the passing car. He saw the white hair of their orator-friend, the old bachelor, the patriot, driving out of the town into the country and the dark night. The hedges would race past him; the rabbits skip before his headlights on the road; the moths in cool wind would fly round his flushed face and his hands trembling. But that wind would not for many miles cool the passion in him to which he had given his life.

‘Bernard’, she whispered again, and her voice trembled a little.

He drew the blind down slowly, the lamp shadowing the framework of the window on it, and slowly he turned to her where she smiled to him in the dark.” (p. 162)

The narrative seems to revolve around this last passage, in which the

characters and even the reader are faced with a decision that should be taken. The narrative was built on facts that happened in Bernard’s life during the life in guerrilla warfare and the presentation of the love story with Norah. We see, in fact, the contrast between a romantic vision and reality in all the plans of the narrative: Bernard begins like a true rebel, wanting to fight for the sovereignty of his homeland, always having his spirit inflated with the passionate speeches of Edward Bradley. An idealized passion for revolution, that is a patriotic aspect and is at the center of the nationalist representations, still accompanies Bernard. Actually, we see through the narrative the reality of a revolutionary struggle, that is more of a daily running than filled with heroic acts. It is this feeling that reappears at the end of the story: we see the fight between idealization and reality. Norah’s call, that can be considered an ubiquitous character within the story because she always appears through the Bernard’s memories, is responsible for bringing Bernard to the reality and also makes the reader remember all the “humiliations” the character went through during his days as a rebel.

For the first time the adjective “patriot”, that it is the title of the short story, appears being used to qualify Edward Bradley. The term as a dictionary entry, just indicates that patriot is one who “(...) vigorously supports their country and is prepared to defend it against enemies or detractors.” (Oxford, 2015)<sup>6</sup>. The definition becomes generic since it is also used as a synonym or as something linked to “nationalism”. Patriotism and nationalism

<sup>6</sup> Available at <[http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\\_english/patriot?q=patriotism#patriot\\_9](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/patriot?q=patriotism#patriot_9)> Accessed on Apr. 30, 2015



in the context of the Irish revolutionary struggle (and in the narratives of *Midsummer Night Madness*) get uncertain because they have, as their main features, the words “love and identification”<sup>7</sup>. The difference between both terms is that the “(...) object of patriotic commitment was the patria, and this was conceived as a political entity, that is, the community organized as a republic. Patriotism was the virtue appropriate to this conception of political life. “(Pole apud Primoratz, 2007 p. 130). Ross Poole in an essay for the book *Patriotism: Philosophical and Political Perspective*, still differentiating the terms, says that

“[...] patriots are more likely to be measured and reasonable in their commitments, to be responsible in their behavior, to respect the commitments of fellow patriots in other countries, and to look for a rational resolution of their occasional differences, while nationalists tend to be extreme, absolute, and uncritical in their commitments, too ready to claim superiority for their country over others, and to be bellicose in their behavior.” (p. 129)

The short stories analyzed on this essay, are based on these notions of love and identification of a struggle that aims at the independence of the country and political recognition. Patriotism and nationalism are presented in the last narrative, and we ask ourselves: who is the real patriot? Is the patriot the one who really cares for his country or is he the one who shows patriotism? In some way, it seems inconsistent that “the patriot” is employed for Bradley, because the character appears only three times in the story, always with the function to animate the fight, and when he is quoted, we know that he is hiding somewhere in Ireland. But also, it seems odd that the patriot is one who gives up the fight more than once within the short story. These questions are suspended, and maybe the narrative has no claim to answer them, but rather in forcing the reader into a reflection: patriotism is a feeling, or rather, it is a passion that can never be erased regardless of the choices of the individual, like an inevitable desire of the heart. Y

<sup>7</sup> We refer to the definition used by Igor Primoratz in his introduction to the book *Patriotism: Philosophical and Political Perspective*. “Both patriotism and nationalism involves love of, identification with, and special concern for a certain entity.” (Primoratz, 2007, p. 18).

## References

- AUERBACH**, E. *Mimesis: a representação da realidade na literatura ocidental*. 6. Ed. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2013.
- BENJAMIN**, W. *Magia e Técnicas, Arte e Política: ensaios sobre literatura e história da cultura*. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1985.
- BROWN**, T. *Ireland: The Social and Cultural History (1922-2002)*. London: Harper Perennial, 2004.
- CANDIDO**, A. et alii. *A personagem de ficção*. São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva, 1974.
- CORTÁZAR**, J. “Algunos aspectos del cuento” In: *Obra crítica 2 org.* Jaime Alazraki. Madrid: Alfaguara, 1994. p. 367-385.
- DELANEY**, P. *Sean O’Faolain: Literature, Inheritance and the 1930’s*. Kildare: Irish Academic Press, 2014.
- EDWARDS**, P. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London: The Macmillian Company, 1967, v. II.
- GOTLIB**, N. B. *Teoria do Conto*. São Paulo: Ática, 2003.
- INGMAN**, H. *The History of the Irish Short Story*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- LEITE**, L. C. *O Foco Narrativo*. São Paulo: Ática, 1989.
- LYONS**, F. S. L. *Ireland Since the Famine*. London: Fontana Press, 1985.
- MUTRAN**, M. H. *A Personagem nos Contos de Sean O’Faolain*. 1977. 146 f. Tese (Doutorado em Letras) – Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo. 1977.
- O’FAOLAIN**, S. *Midsummer Night Madness*. London: Penguin Books, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Short Story*. Cork: The Mercier Press, 1972.
- POE**, E. A. The Short Story. In: Doren Philip van (Ed.). *The Portable Poe*. Penguin, s.d., p. 565-567.
- PRIMORATZ**, I; PAVKOVIC, A. *Patriotism: Philosophical and Political Perspective*. Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2007.

## James Joyce's representations of women: subversion and oppression

RODRIGO MANZ DE PAULA RAMOS<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English  
undergraduate  
student at  
University of  
São Paulo. Email:  
rodrigomanz@  
gmail.com

**Abstract:** This essay will point out some examples of Joyce's works - *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* - which convey the author's portrayal of women and the *logos* reserved to them in his contemporary society, as well as the attempts to escape patriarchal social impositions.

**Keywords:** Female Characters. Feminism. Joyce. Patriarchy.

The beginning of the twentieth century was the stage of important manifestations of feminist nature. At a time still strongly attached to traditional values, the role of women was supposed to be a domestic one - that of a mother and a wife. A woman's importance was determined according to her husband's status. Women suffrage and better opportunities for work and studies were crucial steps taken towards gender equality in a patriarchal society in which women were still very dependent on men. Female's social condition did not go unnoticed by James Joyce and it is an important thematic in his works. According to Eugene O'Brien:

Joyce's delineation of women manages to both replicate the contemporary cultural context and to subvert it at the same time. In his work, woman oscillates between being subjectively constructed by the male gaze and being able to achieve a certain independence from this gaze by reconstructing the reflective 'other' and so attempting to redefine its parameters. Molly Bloom, for example, can be seen as prescriptive in her enunciation of a female subjectivity that is independent and attempts to resist and defeat the constraints of a patriarchal societal and cultural context which, by its very nature, defines women in negative opposition to man. (O'BRIEN, 2004, p. 213).

Thus, Molly Bloom from *Ulysses* is one of the examples of an independent woman's subjectivity. Her presence in the novel is not ruled by a determined male character and her identity does not correspond to the image of women in that social context. This becomes very clear in *Ulysses*' last chapter, "Penelope", in which Molly's internal monologue reveals her personality. Her musings in bed after Bloom's return contemplate her past, present and future. Far from being a Victorian model wife, Marion Bloom is a strong, confident and even conceited, sexually liberated woman. She is not the typically romantic sentimental woman; she is quite strong, and maybe even cold when remembering of her dead son:

I suppose I oughtn't to have buried him in that little woolly jacket I knitted crying as I was but give it to some poor child but I knew well I'd never have another our 1<sup>st</sup> death too it was we were never the same since O I'm not going to think myself into glooms about that any more. (JOYCE, 2004, p. 640).

She also has difficulty when dealing with her daughter's maturity and she feels jealous of the masculine attention drawn by Milly:

her [Milly] tongue is a bit too long for my taste your blouse is open too low she says to me the pan calling the kettle blackbottom and I had to tell her not to cock her legs up like that on show on the windowsill before all the people passing they all look at her like me when I was her age of course any old rag looks well on you then. (JOYCE, 2004, p. 631).

Even though, now and then, she recognizes some of Leopold's good qualities, she is not sexually satisfied in her marriage and cuckolds her husband with the dandy Hugh (Blazes) Boylan. Molly suspects that Bloom is aware of her extra conjugal affair; hers is a dominant position and her husband's is a masochistic one, since he does nothing to end the affair and even puts some effort not to stand in its way. Molly is quite proud of her dominant power over men and knows how to use it to get her ways. Such dominance and confidence are one of the characteristics that allows her to be classified as a "woman-manly". She even fantasizes

with being a man and about the beauty of women's body: "I wish I was one [man] myself for a change just to try with that thing they have swelling up on you so hard and at the same time so soft when you touch it" (JOYCE, 1986, p. 638), "God I wouldn't mind being a man and get up on a lovely woman" (JOYCE, 1986, p. 633).

Another character that represents feminine independence and subversion of patriarchal values is Molly Ivors from *Dubliners*' "The Dead". In this short story, it is possible to delineate a parallel between gender issues and British/Irish relations. Gabriel Conroy is the patriarchal figure of this story; he has erudite education, is more interested in the culture of the European continent than in his "Irishness" and he "writes for *The Daily Express*, a conservative paper with royalist leanings, suggesting his own unconscious collusion with the Empire" (CHENG, 2006, p. 353). As England exerts its dominant pressure over Ireland, analogously, Gabriel imposes his male status over the women of the story. However, Molly Ivors frustrates Gabriel's attempted superiority; she is an Irish nationalist, an independent woman who has erudite education as well, therefore, Gabriel not only cannot intimidate her intellectually, but is also vexed by her accusations of him being a "West Briton".

Molly is outside the parameters with which Gabriel is familiar: she has demonstrated a sense of selfhood which he finds most threatening. Indeed, she embodies the independent sense of female subjectivity that will find its apotheosis in Joyce's later work

(the fact that her first name is 'Molly' is surely proleptic of the later Molly Bloom), as she is very obviously in no need of a man to complete her sense of selfhood. (O'BRIEN, 2004, p. 220-221).

Lily, the caretaker's daughter, also defies Gabriel's dominance when he treats her in a patronizing and infantilizing way asking if she still goes to school and if she is soon to get married. Lily's school days are over; she is not a girl anymore and, showing a mature and embittered critical sense over men's behavior towards women, she responds: "The men is now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you." (JOYCE, 2006, p. 154). Stepping out of her expected submissive social behavior, Lily embarrasses Gabriel, a man that impresses people with his "palaver", who then expresses his dominance over her in the economic sphere giving her money for Christmas. She would not take it, but he leaves her no choice by going upstairs.

"The Boarding House" shows us yet another female character that subverts the female-oppressing social order, or rather, she uses her knowledge of patriarchal values in her benefit: "Aware of the patriarchal nature of her society, Mrs. Mooney is capable of circumventing it when she can and accommodating herself to the unavoidable parts of patriarchy." (O'BRIEN, 2004, p. 217). Mrs. Mooney knows that men also have their responsibilities and she uses this knowledge to coerce Bob Doran into marrying her daughter Polly as a form of reparation for putting her daughter's honor in question by having an unclear and socially unsanc-

tioned intimate relationship. Afraid of being considered a deviant, what would cost him his good job in a wine-merchant's office, Bob Doran will see himself forced to marry Polly.

In "A Mother", Mrs. Kearney is a woman who was "educated in a high-classed convent where she had learned French and music" (JOYCE, 2006, p. 116). Since she considered herself above her suitors, she started experiencing social pressure to get married and, because of that, "out of spite", she marries Mr. Kearney, a passive and obedient husband. As Mrs. Mooney, Mrs. Kearney shows knowledge of society's gender rules, but for the later, things do not go the way she wants them to go. Being well cultured and mannered, she probably had scared away suitors who would not like to marry a self-assured woman. However, at least she managed to arrange a marriage in which she was the dominant consort.

Nevertheless, her biggest disappointment in the story is that of not receiving her daughter's payment for a singing presentation exactly because she is a woman, what makes Mr. Holohan believe he could swindle her. In this story, Joyce criticizes women's undermined situation in society. Mrs. Kearney, knowing of her socially fragile condition, took the socially accepted measures to ensure her daughter's payment; she established a written contract and even took her husband to the presentation to enforce her claims with a masculine figure, but, ironically, to no avail. Mr. Holohan, the contractor, tries to elope from his responsibilities with sorry bureaucratic excus-

es, angering Mrs. Kearney who, losing her temper, seems to be the one without reason in the eyes of those present. In her anger, Mrs. Kearney allows herself to fall into the gender-prejudiced concept of a hysterical woman.


Besides these women who fight against the system's oppression, Joyce also portrays those who are subjugated by it. These women are characters whose subjectivities are subordinated to a present or absent male figure like in the stories of *The Sisters* and *The Dead*:

Both stories focus on the lives of spinster sisters, Nannie and Eliza Flynn, in 'The Sisters', and Kate and Julia Morkan in 'The Dead'. Both sets of sisters are unmarried and living together, and both are involved in social occasions – a funeral in 'The Sisters', and 'the Misses Morkan's annual dance' in 'The Dead'. Both sets of sisters find that these occasions are governed by the presence, or indeed absence, of a man. (O'BRIEN, 2004, p. 214).

In the first short story, the sisters are dependent on their brother, Father James, and their importance in the story is solely that of developing the character of their deceased brother. In the later, the importance of Gabriel as a patriarchal figure is clearly noticed thanks to the Morkan sisters' anxiety for his arrival and the fact that he is expected to give a speech and to carve the goose. This same submission of a female character to a male one can be seen in "Eveline" and in *A Portrait*

*of the Artist as a Young Man*. In the short story, the protagonist is faced with a decision to change her life or to keep it as it is. In either way, her life will orbit around a male character, her father or Frank. In the novel, the character of Emma serves only to further explore Stephen's internal questions. This relation between female and male characters denounces "the gender politics of the era of the stories' composition, as the roles of women are constantly framed by the activity of men with whom they are connected within the matrix of the narrative." (O'BRIEN, 2004, p. 215).

Therefore, because of his portrayal of both subversive and submissive female characters, it is safe to say that Joyce was aware of the gender-issued oppression suffered by women in society, and that he was sensible to the struggles towards liberation and equality.

Even though women's social condition have improved since then, there is still much to change in order to achieve gender equality. Nowadays, almost a century later, feminist struggles gained greater visibility in societies across the world. This also goes for denouncing gender crimes and patriarchy's injustices, such as the absurd gender wage gap and the atrocious sexual violence women suffer every day. With the Internet and social media, feminist claims and manifestations have become more accessible. Hopefully, these new and powerful channels of ideas will contribute and hasten society's evolution. 



## References

**CHENG, V. J.** "Empire and Patriarchy in "The Dead"". In: JOYCE, J. *Dubliners*. London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006.

**FROULA, C.** *Modernism's Body. Sex, Culture and Joyce*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

**JOYCE, J.** *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Dubliners*. London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Ulysses*. London: The Bodley Head, 1986.

**NORRIS, M.** The Perils of 'Eveline'. In: JOYCE, J. *Dubliners*. London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006.

**O'BRIEN, E.** 'You can never know women': Framing Female Identity in *Dubliners*. In: *A New & Complex Sensation. Essays on Joyce's Dubliners*. Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 2004.

## The idea of Authority and the use of farce in Social Criticism in Joe Orton's *Loot*<sup>1</sup>

JONATHAN RENAN DA SILVA SOUZA<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from the monograph: "A Autoridade e seus desdobramentos em *Loot* de Joe Orton, uma *farsa anárquica*", Universidade de São Paulo, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. Email: jonathan.renan.souza@usp.br

**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to analyze the play *Loot* (1964) by Joe Orton, considering its critical potential in the British context of the 1960s. It also intends to study the categorization of this play as a farce, investigating its formal strategies and relation with the themes presented in the play. One element central to the structure of the work is the issue of Authority, which is dealt through different facets, permeating the text and constituting great effects of criticism and humor. Regarding the genre, it is our intention to discuss and problematize the definition of the play as *farce as confrontation* as well as the one that places it as *anarchic farce*. The conclusion points to the constant presence of elements that relate to the authority theme through different devices: mainly to the Authority of religion, police force and law, and material interests and money. These Authorities that conform the characters are then taken in a critical perspective to the British society of the time. Regarding the formal analysis, the adoption of an established genre is sensed and problematized for specific critical purposes; it settles a singular and allegorical vision on reality, a sharp criticism and a particular style that places Joe Orton in the panorama of the British dramaturgy of the 20th century.

**Keywords:** Theater Studies. 20<sup>th</sup> century. Modern British Theater. Farce. Joe Orton.

### Introduction

Joe Orton (1933-1967) was one of the great exponents of the English theater of the post-World War II period. The playwright was a controversial figure in his personal life, and his particular vision of reality decisively marked all his plays, which circulated in the English scenario of theaters, television and radio. In this article we will analyze the play *Loot*, first performed in 1966, which received the *Evening Standard Drama Award* for best play of the year. Our main purpose is to see how its theme revolves around the questioning and the presence of evidence of what we call the "Authority" element, which includes other themes of the work. From that we will reflect on the definition given to the play as an *anarchic farce*, analyzing the question of genre and its link with the themes and readings the play radiates and makes possible.

However, before we focus on the text, it is necessary to point the scenario where it takes place: the 1960s. It was during those years that major movements were strengthened in the wake of the idea of a counter culture. This movement started in the United States and influenced much of the Western world and especially the



British context. Expressions such as the student movement (as well as the black, hippie, gay and feminist movements) started to gain more space, either through their political demands, or their cultural production. Another relevant point is the paradigm shift in moral and behavior patterns, which despite being considered unchangeable until this period, were questioned by this new generation. Mark Donnelly points out that there were profound changes in the British moral structure, although conservatism was still alive in that society. Thus, even if the idea of freedom summarized many of the period's ideas, so much had to be called into question.

The historian Eric Hobsbawm (2005) summarizes how this period of political and cultural movements helped to set the direction of arts and society in the second half of the twentieth century, in which theater had different purposes and challenges. First, the author points out the place occupied by Britain, stating that the "British art panorama was considerably more exciting [than the French], especially because after 1950 London became one of the world's leading centers of musical and theatrical presentation." (HOBSBAWM, 2005, p. 486, our translation). Therefore, the historian detains himself on the changes and paths followed by a culture that was, among other things, linked to the development of mass culture and the academic world. After all, it is a society that, despite having witnessed significant artistic development from the 1950s on, still faces problems of social inequality that made intellectuals

and artists think and criticize its most fundamental structures. In this sense, it is interesting to notice the degree of Orton's awareness of the purpose of his work and the means by which he would reach it: the theme recurrent in the various readings of his plays – anarchy – already appears in the epigraph of the work, which is related to the question of the social phenomenon and the possibilities to change it:

LORD SUMMERHAYS. Anarchism is a game at which the police can beat you. What have you to say to that?

GUNNER. What have I to say to it! Well I call it scandalous: that's what I have to say to it.

LORD SUMMERHAYS. Precisely: that's all anybody has to say to it, except the British Public, which pretends not to believe it. (ORTON, 1990, p. 193)

The playwright, using a passage of a play by Bernard Shaw, features what his work *Loot* reaffirms as its own topics: anarchy, police, scandals, and the British people. This little excerpt shows the playwright's awareness regarding the disposition of people and abuse of institutions such as the police. In his view, this should be the real scandal. The possibility of anarchy then is the only one in the confrontation with the reality of society in its true constitution, hopeless and without everlasting values. However, as much as it is a potentially desirable reality, this game can be lost for the police force, repressive and coercive. That is indeed what happens when in the play one of the characters (Mr. McLeavy) is taken into custody,

despite his complete innocence. His fault after all is one of a deeper order, not offenses committed deliberately as the other characters in the play. His only fault is to believe the institutions' supposed honesty and commitment to the truth. In this sense, he represents the British people described in the epigraph, who prefer to pretend and idealize, rather than stick to what they see just before the eyes: there is blame on both sides, corrupt institutions and those who insist on giving them credit.

The play itself is about a funeral attended by the widower McLeavy and the nurse Fay. The son of the deceased, Hal, together with his sidekick Dennis, robs a bank and they intend to hide the money in Mrs. McLeavy's coffin. Dennis, who works at the funeral company, has access to the body and Hal, to the keys of a wardrobe in which the body is hidden. The two characters plan to leave the building with the money. With this money, Hal wants to leave the country and buy a brothel, whereas Dennis wants to marry Fay. She, after all, discovers the duo's plot and demands a share of the profits.

In Act II, however, the plans of the three criminals are frustrated by the intrusion of the police inspector Truscott. Posing as an employee of a water company, he meddles in the affairs of the group, trying to pluck evidence against the criminals. Hal, who cannot lie, reveals the truth and then they propose a bribe to the inspector, who accepts it and eventually leads the widower to prison, who was not involved in the crimes.

One of the playwright's targets then is the hypocrisy that is personified in Fay and Truscott, to whom the values are all reversed or simply do not exist. What dominates here are the criminal minds which have no qualms about associating with each other to achieve their interests, produced and encouraged by a rotten and degraded social context. Actually, what is good in society is minimal and in helpless situations – death (as Mrs. McLeavy) or imprisonment (as Mr. McLeavy). As stated by Christopher Innes (1992):

Any innocence is presented as stupidity, all authority revealed as the source of chaos; and egalitarian principles only mean that everyone is equally corrupt. The whole society is a 'madhouse. Unusual behaviour is the order of the day... It's democratic lunacy we practise'; and 'All classes are criminal today. We live in an age of democracy'. (INNES, 1992, p. 272)

Regarding the conflict, there is one between Truscott and McLeavy in Act II, related to the legitimacy of the arresting; perhaps in a deeper level, a conflict that puts on one hand the dead woman (Mrs. McLeavy) and the widower, – incorruptible and victims of the others – and on the other hand, the other characters, unscrupulous and willing to do anything in behalf of their interests. In this last conflict, there is the huge gap that exists between McLeavy in his pious intentions and the degree of crime that the other characters convey, opposing to him and making him pay for their crimes. In this sense, the conflict extends to the playwright and his

play, polarized with respect to the society that is presented as conditioning and degrading the behaviors of the individuals.

In regard to time, we acknowledge that the farcical genre itself demands nimble comedy, fast action and quick solutions. As a result, fidelity to the genre is maintained. Indeed, movements to the past or to the future would hinder the purpose of the works of Orton, especially *Loot*, which makes a direct criticism of the society of its time. Therefore, what should be transposed to the stage was the order of the day, here, through the perverse agility and caustic humor of the play.

About the space of *Loot*, the entrances and exits are constant and such agility in movement helps create a panorama of dynamic speeches in which characters are to talk in high turnover. The core elements are the coffin, the wardrobe – in which the body and the stolen money are deposited – and the door that allows continuous entry and exit of the characters. Thus, while the restricted space freezes the movement of the characters, the entrances and exits give dynamism to the action and dialogue. This is because in the farce – as well as in bourgeois drama – the action takes precedence over the other constituting parts of the text, such as a fixed space and, in this case, simpler scenography.

The space of the play actually intended to be a representative microcosm of the British society of that period. Of course, all theater which intends to explicitly question society reproduces and analyzes on a smaller scale the problems

of its collective. In the play, the aims of Orton's criticism appear as the religiosity and the police force that are personified in the characters. The microcosm occurs in a blatant and allegorical way, and is also reflected on space, characters and the language of dialogues, full of puns and references of its period.

At this point not only is it necessary, but essential to draw a comparison between the play and the theory of Peter Szondi (2001) on the drama and its crisis. As it is situated in the second half of the twentieth century, *Loot* is already beyond the breaks and the attempts to rescue the bourgeois drama studied by the scholar, related to the European context of the late nineteenth century. Orton is bold and innovative in his themes and content, but “conservative” with the form used. Hence, we see the question of death, corruption, religion and crime dealt with the typical conventions of the genre to which they belong.

Looking closely at our object of study we find that the play follows the Aristotelian assumptions, which contribute to the characterization of a “well-made play”. The unit of time is preserved with the action going on during a single day, as in classical tragedy. The unit of space is also adopted: the action takes place in a single space, that is, Mr. McLeavy's living room. In relation to the unit of action, we can see that it is also maintained: there is only one major conflict in the play. Thus, the importance of Orton seems to reside in maintaining certain formal conventions and explor-

ing a greater opening in term of themes, questioning and problematic ones.

In light of the above considerations, we can observe that some of Szondi's ideas are manifested in *Loot*, while others are not. The primarily dialogic character of the play is not only present but also reinforced. Here we have a strong dialogue that makes the action go forward. There are few breaks that do not compromise the flexibility of dialogue, which is typical of the genre. There are not soliloquies or monologues, or asides, which would endanger the dialogical structure and the absolute aspect of the drama. And yet, the playwright undertakes the mechanism to make the audience know more than the characters. These are faced with the truth gradually, the outcome is thus the great revelation to the audience.

Still dealing with the bourgeois drama, even if the action progresses in a continuous present, its motivation is in the past events. For example, the death of Mrs. McLeavy and the looting by Hal and Dennis, which give conditions for the hiding of the money and the investigation of Truscott to take place, in exact concatenation towards the end.

This, ultimately, on the other hand, could characterize a rupture with the similarity to the drama and its critical purpose. There is an exterior reference, that is, the criticism, which is only possible if there is something out of the drama that is explored, directly or indirectly, to be the object of questioning. In this case, the farce gains a character detached from drama, due to the production of a humor

based not on innocent situations, but on reality outside the stage, dissected by the playwright and handed over to possible reflections on the part of the audience.

### **The idea of authority and the critical apparatus**

The questioning of authority figures has often been put into discussion in both Orton's personal issues and plays. It is undeniable that his audacious character addresses issues and situations barred by conservative traditions and customs. Lahr (1990) summarizes this rebellion that puts on stage institutions and authorities in their complete nudity and real constitution:

The comedian is a marginal man, someone who lives outside the boundaries of conventional life and acquires power (and danger) precisely because he can't be controlled by society. Laughter is the message sent back from his cultivated isolation. Orton was a survivor whose brutal laughter as a vindictive triumph over a drab and quietly violent working class world. (LAHR, 1990, p. 11)

With respect to religion, the most representative figure of this criticism is Fay, who, under the cover of religion and concerned with the moral values of Hal, hides her past of murderer and crimes in a hypocritical attitude in which, besides responsible for the death of her former husbands, she ends up joining the others. As for the material interests, we perceive a close connection with the problem of moral values. This is because in their ea-

gerness to possess and run away with the stolen money, Hal, Dennis and Fay have no qualms in the treatment of the body, which is taken as an object, less important than the amount of money to be enjoyed by the gang of criminals, among which one is the very son of Mrs. McLeavy. Finally, when it comes to the criticism of the law and the police, the adopted example is represented by inspector Truscott, who at least initially, was committed to his search and work to arrest the criminals. The corruption of an individual represents the entire society, which is, therefore, anarchic – though funny – enabling the creation of an anarchic farce.

So we detain ourselves in situations and comical statements that have specific purposes in all the work, and which also have their own meaning outside its context. These themes are therefore seized at a greater sign: various elements that make up the figure of Authority, that is, the position that certain institutions and forces have, affecting individuals and guiding their actions. The presence of such a figure is thus significant, which plays the role of an abstract construct that, in the play, has practical implications: religious hypocrisy, abuse of power, dishonesty and greed, rupture with moral values etc. and others, as well as the questioning of institutions such as marriage and mourning.

### **The religious authority**

**T**here is no doubt in Orton's choice of the theme of authority and his questioning, which is present in different ways throughout his work and closely

linked to religious criticism. Religion is the most questioned authority through its most apparent expression: the religious conduct. Fay is the major target of the criticism in which the symbols of her alleged religiosity are recurrent and come in deep disagreement with her actions. The dilemma in question is the gap between what is professed, but not put into practice. This is the case of Fay, who not only does not act according to the morality she clings to, but also practices actions that are at the complete opposite, setting herself as an allegory of religious hypocrisy.

The religious references are the most diverse, and generally appear to be challenged or profaned by the characters, in an ironic and sarcastic discourse. Apart from the obvious references to the Catholic universe, they still appear in the espoused values, in the images and symbols that run through the text. Thus, we understand that the symbols do not bring only an ironic aspect of blasphemy and the difference between the expected behavior and the executed one. The religious references appear as symbols and images in a physical sense, which seem to be present in the lives of individuals: eyes always watching them, something that is not a reason to prevent their conduct. This leads us to the conclusion that neither religious power nor the secular one, law and the individuals that follow them can be fully trusted, since they can be corrupted in face of more powerful authorities in a corrupted world: after all, money overlaps the moral and religious values, and justice itself.

McLeavy, as previously seen, fits perfectly in what Charney (2009) calls “mindless optimists and defenders of Establishment values, especially law and order and empty ceremony.” (CHARNEY, 2009, p. 144-145) This elevates his role in the play as a legitimate defender of constituted power, which, in turn, is constantly succumbing in the attitudes of individuals. The other characters are defenders of their own values and, therefore, represent other authorities: McLeavy and his traditional values, Fay and her alleged religious conduct and subordination to the monetary interests, Dennis and Hal, who have the money as major authority and of course, Truscott, who reversed his interest and revealed his true character, from symbol of justice and commitment to the truth to allegory of the corrupted British society.

The fact that religion is itself an authority is something undeniable, since religions are known in their prescriptive character in relation to their followers. Religion is, as the State itself, to which sometimes it is associated, a key construct that has the purpose of establishing a doctrine, and how the faithful should live and behave. It is known that within Christianity an important source of these values are the 10 Commandments, the list of behaviors that should be avoided and that go back to the time of immemorial primitive Judaism narrated in the Old Testament<sup>3</sup>. In the case of Fay it is significant that she points to the belief of the deceased and not to hers, constantly displayed and which, as we later discover in the play, is nothing great, earnest and true.

Among the commandments, for instance, “thou shalt not kill” stand out, which was clearly overlooked by Fay on his personal path, as well as “thou shalt not steal” by the other characters. This, in turn, is not only abandoned as it is from it that the other crimes are committed. Religion, which should be as law itself a kind of guarantee of order and maintenance of values, in the end, is also subject to the real needs of individuals who gravitate around money. It is only with McLeavy that religion, the only hope in face of police degradation, proves to be useful and relevant. For the other characters, it is a game of appearances, an empty tradition that loses all value when confronted with the possibility of profit. The criticism is then sharp and deep, revealing the hypocrisy of individuals and questioning their place within the social environment.

Innes (1995) elucidates: “Society is presented as a madhouse controlled by lunatics; and his primary targets are the police and the Church “. (INNES, 1995, p. 432) In *Loot* this is evident when we notice that the aims are the figures of authority called into question by Truscott and Fay. In our view, it is in this play that this critical framework reaches its most complex configuration, since here the police and religion are not only criticized for failing to adhere to their duty and commitment to values, but for other aggravating elements, as their fragility before the authority of money, constituting an apprehension on society that borders pessimism about collective life.

<sup>3</sup> Cited in the text in a dialog between Fay and Mr. McLeavy: “FAY. Here – (she puts the embroidered text on to the coffin.) – the Ten Commandments. She was a great believer in some of them”. (ORTON, 1990, p. 212)

## The police authority and the law

This is the second element of authority that is explicitly called into question. In regard to religion the most representative figure is Fay, while in regard to law it could be no other but Truscott, who constitutes sometimes a kind of parodied Sherlock Holmes. Indeed, this is the caricature of an investigative inspector, who goes piece by piece trying to collect evidence and proof of the crime. In terms of character building, Truscott is a great character, in which Orton puts much of his style, full of puns and ironies.

It is only when all are unmasked by the inspector that the legitimate secular authority figure shows its real values and Truscott undergoes a bribe. It is the test for the police force to state itself above the crime and establish peace and security. However, it is not what happens. There is no space, neither in terms of religion, nor in the secular justice to the accomplishment of the expected behavior. This corruption is therefore representative of the weakness of the police authority, which is subject to crime and turns sometimes teaming up to it, when advantageous situations appear together with dishonest individuals.

This critical aspect acquires greater dramaticity – or even tragicity – when opting to free the bandits, Truscott leads McLeavy to prison. In the dialogue between them the law itself is represented, which should be the guarantee of citizens' rights so as not to be arrested without evidence. Any possibility of

clinging to these guarantees is denied to the widower, as the law, embodied in Truscott, is under the interests of the subjects – which means that even the law is not free from the corruption of the individuals. If the subjects do not stop being corrupted in exchange for benefits and money, there is no possibility and validity to the secular laws and religious codes, which are thus useless. Therefore, the undisputed model of confidence in the power of law and police organization is McLeavy, who accepts prison taken it as fair, since an established authority stated it, so that it should be obeyed blindly.

According to the analysis of Charney (2009), there is in Orton the presence of an “authentic ‘figure of authority’”(2009, p. 144). In *Loot* this authentic figure of authority with institutional power is Truscott, considering his power on the other characters and his connection with an institution that is clearly questioned and criticized for its methods and practices. However, the text seems to deepen the matter when one considers that not only the inspector is an “authoritarian” figure and an authority. In fact, the characters undergo institutions and values that exert authority; and money itself would be the “authentic” figure, the only one that remains at the end. This applies to the gang of criminals, which, in order to get the stolen money, undertake a series of crimes, showing their own subordination to the authority that money represents in a capitalist and also inhuman society.

## The authority of material interests and of money

We saw that the aforementioned authorities – i.e. institutions and forces that are configured as direct influences on conduct and behavior – are the most pressing targets of the dramaturgy of Orton in *Loot*. Despite this central character in the sharp criticism of the English playwright, the characters are also subject to another authority: the material interests, the money as real authority, determining their course of action and attitudes.

Getting to this point we can outline the criticism of Orton in its complexity, bases and targets. In face of a cruel world, in which the issue of money and personal interests such as Hal's, Dennis' or Fay's prevails, there is no room for noble and lofty sentiments. Nothing can save the criminals from proposing bribery to Truscott, or the inspector from accepting it and taking McLeavy imprisoned unjustly. On behalf of money, the moral values, which actually do not exist in the characters, are abandoned, as the commitment to religion and to law.

Therefore, there is no love in the play; there is no place for respect and sacredness for the human being, even in its most precarious state, that is, death; the interests overlap kinship and friendship relations. It is the prospect of a life with money that takes the characters to treat life (i.e., the death) of the deceased with complete contempt, for example. This contempt functions as part of the comic element, being present there, by

the laughter, the criticism; and the route of laughter is effective in setting the most deplorable situations that are still comical. The critical aspect is strengthened when we realize that if all crimes were totally unrelated to the society to which the play is intended, there would be no laughter. For this, minimal similarity must take place, that is, even if the manipulation of the body is absolutely unlikely to happen, in fact, the feelings that lead to it, such as greed and ambition, find strong support in reality.

This criticism, apparently masked by comedy and laughter is, notwithstanding, incisive and complex, since it deals with two ancient institutions that, in the playwright's vision are, in the capitalist world, subject to the material interests. What is amazing, nonetheless, in the dramaturgy of Orton is this anarchic aspect, destructive, in which nothing remains: religion, law, marriage, values, respect for the dead. All are subject to the power and authority of money, which ultimately triumphs and quenches the characters in their brutalized eagerness to possess it at any cost and under any circumstances

## The farce genre

According to Pavis (1999), the farce genre has a character that, "usually associates a grotesque comic and buffoon, a coarse laugh and a bit refined style (...). The farce is always defined as a primitive and crude form, which could not rise to the level of comedy." (PAVIS, 1999, p. 164, our translation). It is a description largely guided by the critical apprehension of the genre over time, not necessarily focusing



on its characteristics and on the reception by the public.

Pavis also establishes the origin of the genre:

The etymology of the word farce – seasoned food used to fill (in French *farcir*) a meat – indicates the character of strange body of this kind of spiritual food inside drama. Originally, indeed, it was interspersed with medieval mysteries moments of relaxation and laughter: the farce was conceived as what spices up and complete the cultural and serious food of high literature. (PAVIS, 1999, p. 164, our translation)

We have already acknowledged that the farce as a popular genre, in fact, served as a way of relieving serious religious plays with laughter, configured as a moment of comedy, label with which it mingles. Pavis helps us in pointing out the differences between the *sainete* (another light and slight genre) and the farce: “In the comic genre, criticism opposes the farce to the comedy of language and of intrigue in which triumph the spirit, the intellect and the subtle word.” (PAVIS, 1999, p. 164, our translation)

Therefore, the low aspect of farce in contrast with the comedy of language is thus evident. In the farce, there should be no space for a more rational and elaborate comedy. With Orton, this assumption is, however, subverted. The farce constitutes itself in all its unpretentiousness and play, but also in the prominent work with language that “elevates” the genre beyond the playful and the comical.

We must also take into account the definition of Sobrinho (1979) that points to some farcical elements kept in *Loot*, and others that are problematized and subverted:

Respectability and the appearance of respectability is an important condition for the situation of the farce.

Another common ingredient of farce is violence; a violence that may exist under the surface of a trivial situation.

In the farce the capacity of judgment is irrelevant, or rather in the course of action, this ability is destroyed both in the characters and in the audience.

The scenes of a farce should be slightly accelerated, as in the silent film. According to Trussler the farce develops at high speed because there are no ideas to delay action. It would be impossible to convey ideas after a certain rate of acceleration. (SOBRINHO, 1979, p. 66-67, our translation)

The appearance of respectability is really what the play brings with characters like Fay, who, behind a mask of seriousness displayed by words, makes us through her actions, realize that she should not be totally taken seriously. In this sense, however, the play as a whole is subverted, since even if the comic and appearance of a play excel, there is in this dramaturgy an acute critical purpose, responsible for the understanding of the play. Finally, in Orton, it is pertinent to realize that, on the one hand he remains in an established and popular form, and on the other, this is subverted when he uses such tools to criticize and point re-

flections on the institutions and customs of his society.

In contrast, an important element of the convention of this genre that is maintained in the play is violence. This is in fact recurring in the dramaturgy of Orton, appearing explicitly in *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* with death, for example. In *Loot* its appearance does not go so far as to murder (the plot begins with a funeral, and in this sense it is something that is already present in the play), but we note several times that violence appears. One is when Truscott (twice in Act I) beats Hal trying to extract the truth about the money:

TRUSCOTT *kicks HAL violently. HAL cries out in terror and pain.*

TRUSCOTT. Don't lie to me!

HAL. I'm not lying! It's in church!

TRUSCOTT (*shouting, knocking Hal to the floor*). Under any other political system I'd have you on the floor in tears!

HAL (*crying*). You've got me on the floor in tears.

TRUSCOTT. Where's the money? (ORTON, 1990, p. 235)

In this point, we find what we had previously dealt with, that is, the criticism of law and police, the abuse of power which results in violence, which the excerpt above shows. Still working with the language in Orton, this is exacerbated in a mixture of comedy and tension. Thus, in the second line of Hal he makes us laugh while we revolt, leading us as critics to note the potential of the text to work with the comic instances in complex ways: even being beaten, Hal has at the tip of his

tongue a response to Truscott, mixing the feelings of the viewer / reader of the play.

Esslin (1966), upon writing about the first production of the play, argues that the work is not a farce, "it's situation comedy, not wild and intricate enough for farce, but with pace, a sprinkling of good lines, good parts". (1966 apud SOBRINHO, 1979, p. 68). As the text elucidates many conventional elements of the genre and even if the playwright proceeds in an attempt to convey ideas in his work (the "judgment" mentioned by Sobrinho), characterizing it as not a farce is unthinkable. In fact within the farce limits, while expanding its possibilities, Orton is located on a level, which instead of putting him out of the tradition of farce, opens a new entry in the history of the genre in English.

Following the reflections of Bigsby (1982) about the genre, we perceive that the theorist contextualizes it within the 1960's panorama and in Orton's own work.

But the deconstruction of character has always been a standard strategy of farce; and though there is, perhaps consequently, a strong farce element in absurdist drama, relatively little attention has been paid to farce itself as potentially a principal mechanism of the post-modernist impulse, or to the high priest of farce in the mid-sixties, Joe Orton. (BIGSBY, 1982, p. 16-17)

Thus, most of the farcical features are presented, the deconstruction of the character, that is, its reduction to what is most precarious in his attitudes and

hence the comical and, in this sense, all the characters in the play are, to some extent deconstructed. Again we take for example Fay, who is unmasked to the subsistence of her interests, which are what really moves her: her “incorruptible” religious conduct is not real, her interests are illegitimate and money-driven. After all, the farcical aspect is, in its most basic sense, in the action of the great confusion of the characters about where to put the money and the body in an attempt to hide their crime. These confusions establish a game of hiding which is one of the most farcical sides of *Loot*.

Innes (1992), when dealing with the shock that this destructive humor caused, states that “Orton farce turned into a weapon of class warfare (...). The sharp incongruity between subjects like death, incest or insanity, and their comic treatment was the detonator. His humor is always deployed strategically.” (INNES, 1992, p. 270) This description of the cheerful humor of Orton helps us to understand the uproar caused by his plays as Innes describes: “At first his plays were remarkably successful in provoking such an extreme response – even if critical appreciation of their stylistic qualities had already defused their shock potential less than a decade later, turning them into ‘modern classics’ by the 1975 Royal Court Orton season.” (INNES, 1992, p. 269-270) This highlights the contradictory nature caused by the production of his plays. On one hand they shocked, and on the other they were a commercial success, guaranteed by the bourgeoisie, which was, in fact,

questioned in its fundamental values in the theater.

Finally we approach what Innes calls *Farce as confrontation*, in which the idea of farce takes a connotation related strictly to the “purpose” of the play: critical power. Institutions, values and social sustenance are destroyed by the dramaturgy of Orton. The terms adopted by the critic are timely because they characterize not only the form used by the playwright, the farce, but its main target, which is to confront viewers with reality and its consequences in the lives of individuals.

Firstly pointing the relation of influence in *Loot* by Ben Travers with the play of 1928 *Plunder*, Innes clarifies that following the tradition of Travers, Orton was

Reacting against what he saw as having ‘become a very restricted form’ Orton parodied Travers’ formula for farce by taking it to extremes. So, while Orton was clearly working in the same tradition, he is also demolishing a recognizable type of theatre; this iconoclasm corresponds to his overall aim, which was to be provocatively outrageous. (INNES, 1992, p. 268-269)

What the critic points is that even though his work may be taken as a real artifact of political nature, observing his diary one realizes that for him “Politics was regarded as irrelevant: “Politics are dismissed as irrelevant, the only positive action being: ‘Reject all the values of society. And enjoy sex. ’” (INNES, 1992, p. 271) It is noted then that Innes builds his idea of confrontation with society not so

much by a political reading of his work, but by the reactions that his themes caused, as well as his own personal conduct, which can be seized by the police reports and his diaries. That is why, for example, he includes the well-known opinion of Orton about how to shock the audience, including sex in terms of content and in form maintaining the minimum realism in his works, even if the largest nonsense had to be set out in the most natural possible way. That is, the “contrast between the presentation and the subject is the key element in Orton’s brand of farce” (INNES, 1992, p. 271), something that can be applied to *Loot*, but referring to *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* when he says that “The setting of seedy naturalism, and the use of a sentimental comedy formula for a perverse action that the characters treat the perfectly acceptable behavior, is designed to intensify the shock effect”. (INNES, 1992, p. 269)

Hence, we realize that *Loot* is emblematic in an attempt to understand the function of farce, the intentions of Orton and the reaction that his daring dramaturgy caused. The importance of *Loot* is corroborated when Innes says: “The key to Orton’s approach [in *Loot*] is his way of treating conventionally tragic situations or disgusting as a source of comedy. This both trivialized public standards of seriousness, and used the audience’s laughter to challenge their moral principles”. (INNES, 1992, p. 270)

As a matter of fact, following the conventions of the genre, the exaggerations and unlikely situations serve the purpose of causing Orton to shock the au-

dience on account of their moral values, beliefs and certainties. This is discussed when we mention the effects and consequences both of format – naïve at first – and of the themes of the play – disruptive to an audience accustomed to a certain type of theater employed until then. Concerning other references, Innes delimits the influences of Orton as Harold Pinter, Bernard Shaw – something previously explained through the epigraph – and Oscar Wilde, condensing Orton’s contribution within this panorama of relevant playwrights and expressing his opinion on Orton’s production:

In Orton’s world, ethical principles are merely counterfeit propaganda lies propping up an immoral society. At the same time, the fantasy elements in his work devalue its social criticism, making a negative statement even out of the imperative to attack the society that victimized him as a homosexual. Indeed, in carrying his principle of inversion to its extreme the morality – for which society apparently stands indicted in his plays – always turns out to be positive and applauded. Orton’s brand of farce is not so much subversive, as a declaration of war. It embodies the anarchy it celebrates. (INNES, 1992, p. 278)

### The Anarchic in *Loot*

Lastly, we will concentrate on the definition given by Bigsby (1982) to *Loot* as an anarchic farce: this categorization

implies a series of procedures, as well as identifies the play within the playwright's work. On a more basic definition, closer to the common sense, anarchy is a regime that is free from authorities and rules, which apparently could be attested in terms of suitability for Orton. From a formal perspective, we realize how much Orton does not stick to fixed forms, moving through more extensive to shorter pieces; transposing them to the radio, to the TV and to the stage; using comedy elements largely, but also not abandoning certain tragic traits. However, if this anarchy in this most basic sense seems to quickly adapt to Orton, as we deepen to the term's definitions we understand the complexity of such an affirmation. According to the *Dicionário de Termos Políticos* anarchism is a doctrine in which:

All forms of orthodox political action must be rejected. Anarchism, therefore, wished to abolish any legal order, especially the State, and create a society without authority and dominion, based on reason and nature, which would be achieved by the intervention of individuals in the social sphere through direct action. (KIELHORN, 1965, p. 15, our translation)

Regarding *Loot*, this definition leads us to realize the intentions of scholars such as Bigsby and Sobrinho, who consider the play an anarchic farce. The term itself appears in the play in the epigraph and is in fact present in the moral construct of the play, which actually does not exist. What the reader/viewer sees is a world in which there are no values and

the authority is exercised by economic interests, that is, there is not in the text an institution or incorruptible authority that should be supported or maintained. Therefore, it points to a reality in which these bonds disappear and in which individual interests triumph, in a perspective which is characterized by pessimism regarding society's destinations.

Based on the above considerations, we conclude that Orton produced a political theater and indeed he was politicized. What happens is that *Loot* is really an opposition to the institutions, including the State and there is no institution, whether religious or secular, that survives man's greed. Hence the presence of a pessimistic view, which we could also consider in its contradictory aspect, in relation to anarchism itself. In it there is a belief that man, in his organization without the mediation of a state power, would ensure that individuals could coexist without killing or exploiting each other. Here in the play this belief is minimal, since all criminals get away at the end, and what only prevails is their unprecedented greed.

We take, after all, one of the various tasks of the term given by Bigsby in order to notice the anarchic elements of Orton's legacy: "His regard for the symbols of public order, his unashamed concern with sexuality and his disruptive wit made him that rarity in English writing the genuine subversive, social and literary anarchist" (BIGSBY, 1982, p. 18). This anarchism that could be credited only to the literary aspect extends in Bigsby's vision to the social field. It is hard to detect this anarchism without

resorting to Orton's journals and to his personal worldview. However, what is clear is that this anarchism plays an important role in the questioning that is undertaken in his plays.


Thematically, the playwright finds no limits to his subjects that are controversial and uncomfortable and decidedly flee from the small bourgeois intrigues and dramas. Then appears in his work the exploitation of the workers, crime, the desperate desire to keep up appearances, homosexuality, incest, greed, disrespect to the dead, in short, a wide range of issues that are proposed not to be curtailed or enclosed in a really anarchic and very typical attitude of the historical moment of the 1960s. Bigsby, in turn, locates Orton and his play in a political questioning plan, since, in general, this anarchic position is associated to the left wing and therefore to an intense inquiring character about society and its institutions. Therefore, the subversive aspect of Orton is assumed. It puts into question society, institutions and individuals, criticizing their conduct and their fragility.

However, it is necessary to notice that Orton does not present a solution to the problems that he attacks and opens eyes to. He does not define what to put in the place of a false religious conduct, a corrupted police and shameless criminals who triumph over innocent citi-

zens. It is not the case that the criticism is empty, but his disbelief in man seems to settle the universe into anarchy and chaos, without any possibility of "humanity"; remaining only the authority and value of money.

This subversion pointed out by Bigsby is corroborated by the censorship process that the play suffered in Brazil in 1968 under the title *O Olho de Vidro da Falecida*. And even with the censorship the potential criticism of the text was kept, perhaps because it has not been noticed or because of the disbelief in the mobilizing power of the theater: mobilizer, not at first, but inquisitive and insightful, absolutely yes, whether in the 1960s, whether today.

## Conclusion

The conclusion amounts to the complexity of Orton's work as a social critical tool achieved by the use of an established genre, said to be smaller, which is enhanced by him. In addition, there is the construction of a unique style in which the work with language, themes, irony and genre conventions makes the play dense and still up-to-date, which marks not only the dramaturgical production of Joe Orton, but also helps to outline the British theatrical context of the mid-1960s. 



## References

**BIGSBY, C. W. E.** *Joe Orton (Contemporary Writers)*. London and New York: Methuen, 1982.

**CHARNEY, M.** *Joe Orton's Laodicean Tragedy: The Good and Faithful Servant*. New Jersey: Connotations, Vol. 18.1-3, 2008/2009.

**DONNELLY, M.** *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics*. London: Pearson Longman, 2005.

**HOBSBAWM, E.** *A era dos extremos – O breve século XX: 1914-1991*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2005.

**INNES, C.** Farce as confrontation. In: *Modern British Drama 1890-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. Theatre After Two World Wars. In: BROWN, J. R. *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Theatre*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

**KIELHORN, A. E.** *Dicionário de Termos Políticos*. São Paulo: Íris, 1965.

**ORTON, J.** *The Complete Plays – Introduced by John Lahr*. New York: Grove Press, 1990.

**PAVIS, P.** *Dicionário de Teatro*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1999.

**SOBRINHO, J. M.** *O Teatro de Joe Orton*. [Dissertação de Mestrado]. Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 1979.

**SZONDI, P.** *Teoria do drama moderno (1880-1950)*. São Paulo: Cosac & Naify Edições, 2001.

## Why don't we just let go: rumination on prejudice in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*

MELINA VALENTE<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. E-mail: melvalente4@gmail.com

**Abstract:** This paper aims a comparison between the rumination observed in the character Shylock, in Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*, and the rumination of our society addressing the issue of prejudice and anti-Semitism. Psychological aspects of the character were considered making use of the play's metaphors depicting economic exchanges. The rumination is used here as a metaphor on how we could dwell over art and literature's themes to reflect upon our society issues.

**Keywords:** Anti-Semitism. Rumination. Shakespeare. Shylock. *Zeitgeist*.

As any science-fiction enthusiast knows, whenever we make a drastic time travel, some aspects are not very well brought in the same shape. As we take William Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*, written in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, to our contemporary times, some of its aspects might warp if taken literally. That is precisely what stirs up accusations about the prejudice issues of the play and such controversy troubles contemporary audiences with the possibility of its anti-Semitic theme.

But why cannot we stop ruminating over the alleged anti-Semitic aspect of the play as a major question? It seems it is worth the debate and doing so we can move on.

Shylock is a complex character; on his ambiguity we tend to sympathize with him at the same time that we could consider that his obsessive, non-indulgent hate towards Antonio is a trait of his villainy. But in such politically correct times of ours, our feelings are determined: it is wrong, wrong, very wrong to hate Jews and anything that might remotely suggest that, even a Shakespeare's play, must be immediately suppressed.

It is essential to overcome the fact that Shylock is not simply a Jew, '*C'estn'est pas une juif*'<sup>2</sup> - he is a fictional character, which does not represent, endorse or create the archetype of the Jews, neither instruct how anyone should act towards Jews, as well as how any Christians should behave. Prejudice is a matter of minority and evidently if the Christians were minority, the play could also be regarded as anti-Christian, based on Antonio's behavior, regardless the plot's outcome. This rumination reveals the *Zeitgeist* of the present time and the anti-Semitic issue is the reduction of the discussion to where all the stigmas became leveled down. In such sense, the play might as well be perceived

<sup>2</sup> Reference to René Magritte's painting "c'estn'est pas une pipe", 1929 which makes clear that the object of analysis is the painting and not literally a pipe. *Juif* means Jew in French.



as bullying the Scottish, Italian, French, German, blacks etc.

Furthermore, one might dwell on Shylock's behavior. He has a hard time overcoming things and his rumination seems to be his very distinguished feature. On his brooding over his losses, he analyzes the situation but not himself. Nevertheless, on the judgment day he is his own council, and it is not beneficial to him. Shylock is a man portrayed - as Garber puts it - "with preference of unpleasure to pleasure (...) joyless, (...) and with a house shut off against the world" (GARBER, 2004 p. 229). His solitude seems to give emphasis on his literal interpretation that drives his "deep sense of justice mixed up with the gale and bitterness of his resentment" (HAZLITT, 1817 page 146).

Shylock and Antonio's economic moods reflect their actions because the perception of risks is what leads them. Antonio is the optimist; he takes risks believing that in the future they will pay off (equally to his investment on his feelings for Bassanio). On the other hand, Shylock is the pessimist; he lends money with interest, and the deal is always better when the result is disastrous for the borrower - the plot takes place in a commercial-oriented Venice, where money would represent a compensation for his emotional losses. This trade is not bound to please bears and bulls<sup>3</sup> since every market is a cut-throat market in its own *praxis* (and that *cut* aspect is taken in a very extreme way by Shylock).

Shylock's resentment is shown in Act I, scene III, when he says to Antonio: "Still have I borne it with a patient

shrug, for sufferance is the badge of all our tribe" (SHAKESPEARE, 1958, p. 275). But his silence aggravates, his feelings are suppressed and Venice is not the setting of the play by chance - as a matter of fact, Venice was as a city where the economy was at its peak and the force of trading was expected to eclipse cultural and religious differences, at least superficially. And as Shylock cannot abandon his feud, we seem not to let go the anti-Semitic issue in the play either.

The '*tragic fact*', as Bradley explains, is when "men may start a course of events but can neither calculate nor control it" (BRADLEY, 1905, p. 10). In this sense, Shylock take action to mute his ruminations, but this goes wrong and the resentment he inflicts on himself became his punishment, with the subsequent external consequences coming after in the trial scene.


Shylock's goal was to revenge the misconduct perpetrated by all the Christians, especially Antonio, and in doing so he approaches his frustrations. The means for that were economic ones, as a Jew he was able to lend money with interest, something that the Catholic church reproaches, despite the fact that at the same time benefits from it. Shylock's plan backfires (as the tradition of the small words of any contract taught us, there is relevance in the content, even though disguised in the form) his attachment to the law is strict, but the preponderance of the economic forces are imperative: Portia has not only the rhetoric, but the capital.

If rumination is the compulsively focused attention on the symptoms and

<sup>3</sup> In the financial jargon, the bears buy and the bulls sell bonds.

on its possible causes and consequences of one's distress, it is the opposite to its solutions. Rumination focuses on bad feelings and experiences from the past and is associated with anxiety and other negative emotional states.

In *Goal Progress Theory* (GPT), rumination is conceptualized not as a reaction to a mood state, but as a "response to failure to progress satisfactorily towards a goal" (MARTIN, 2004, p. 153).

Our poor Shylock felt and felt again (etymologically *resentment* derives from old French *resentire* which means *feel again*) and after four hundred years the present reader keeps reading Shakespeare. On brooding over in a literal manner the pseudo anti-Semitic aspect of the play, our punishment is to censor it, and therefore miss the debate on what could teach something about, at least, rumination itself. 



## References

**BRADLEY, A. C.** *The substance of Shakespearean tragedy*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Dist, 1905.

**GARBER, M.** *Shakespeare After All*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2004.

**HAZLITT, W.** *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*. Scotts Valley: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2004.

**MARTIN, L. L.; SHRIRA, I.; STARTUP, H. M.** Rumination as a function of goal progress, stop rules, and cerebral lateralization. In: PAPAGEORGIOU, C.; WELLS, A. (eds.). *Depressive Rumination: Nature, Theory and Treatment*. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2004. p. 153 – 175.

**SINGER, P.** *Para entender o mundo financeiro*. São Paulo: Contexto, 2000.

**SHAKESPEARE, W.** *The Merchant of Venice in The living Shakespeare*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958.

**WATKINS, E. R.** Constructive and unconstructive repetitive thought. *Psychological Bulletin* 134 (2): 163–206, 2008. Available at: <doi:10.1037/0033-2909.134.2.163>.

## Comparative analysis between Alice Walker's *The Flowers* and Katherine Mansfield's *Life of Ma Parker*

AMANDA ZIMBARG<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The following article makes, mainly, use of Ricardo Piglia's *Theses on the Short Story* (2004) to compare Alice Walker's *The Flowers* and Katherine Mansfield's *Life of Ma Parker*. Piglia claims that each short story has a hidden story within it, so the article aims to find these hidden stories and expose them. The article will also compare the short stories in their plot, and the social issues each tries to point out.

**Keywords:** Short story. Alice Walker. Katherine Mansfield. Prejudice. Social classes.

Ricardo Piglia begins his essay *Theses on the Short Story* (2004) explaining that a short story always tells two stories: the explicit one, which is the one that can be easily spotted on paper; and the secret one, told by fragments and hidden pieces. Alice Walker's *The Flowers*<sup>2</sup> tells the story of a little black girl who was having the perfect summer day. She walks around, picking flowers, oblivious to outside threats or antagonisms. Her name, Myopis, is even symbolic - Myop as in Myopia, as in someone who cannot see the world as it is. As she walks, Myop eventually reaches a part of the woods that is strange to her. When she decides to return to the place she initially came from, she stumbles upon a forgotten corpse. And then, she finally spots a noose, then another, then another, all "*Frayed, rotted, bleached, and frazzled--barely there--but spinning restlessly in the breeze*", and so she puts down her flowers, and realizes summer is over.

Summer is not over literally. What is over is the naive and tender illusion Myop used to live under. The nooses and corpse are representatives of the racism and segregation of the time, in which the body of a black person was not considered worthy. It was not a crime people would look into, nor was it something they cared about. There were even people, such as the members of the Klu Klux Klan, who believed in race superiority/inferiority, and through twisted and absurd points of views, believed aggression against black people to be right. This is the hidden story within the short story. The hidden story's revelation is both the ending of the story and its climax; that means that the conflict of the story is also a cause of surprise to the reader, since it is an encounter between the explicit (Myop's walk into the woods) and the hidden (injustice and indifference towards black people). According to Piglia, the classic story, such as *The Flowers*, "narrates Story One in the foreground, and constructs Story Two in secret"(2004, p.1).

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. E-mail: amzimbarg@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> The short story only contains one page, hence why quotes taken directly from the story are not followed by the respective page it can be found.

Katherine Mansfield's *Life of Ma Parker* starts when Ma Parker, an old woman who worked for a literary gentleman on Tuesdays, tells the gentleman that her grandson was buried the day before. His reaction, however, is in no way euphemistic or sympathetic. Instead of showing warm feelings, he says "he hoped the funeral was a success". All along the story he treats her terribly, calling her a hag, questioning her over the fact that "she threw things away" and feeling proud to do so. There is a certain animalization when it comes to Ma Parker; she cleans the apartment and in the end she goes home, or tries to.

The interesting key element to the story, however, is that it keeps getting interrupted by Ma Parker's fluxes of conscience, filled by her memories and her confessions. For example, in the beginning, while she takes off her shoes and rubs her knees, the paragraph ends incomplete, with ellipsis. We are then transported to her mind, and suddenly begin to witness a scene between Ma Parker and her grandson, in which he asks her for some money.

[...] That over, she sat back with a sigh and softly rubbed her knees...

'Gran! Gran! Her little grandson stood on her lap in his button boots. He'd just come in from playing in the street.

'Look what a state you've made your gran's skirt into - you wicked boy!

But he put his arms round her neck and rubbed his cheek against hers.

'Gran, gi' us a penny!' he coaxed.

'Be off with you; Gran ain't got no pennies.'

'Yes, you 'ave.'

'No, I ain't.'

'Yes, you 'ave. Gi' us one!' (MANSFIELD, 2006, p.244-5)

Later in the story, while she is heating water, she whispered to herself that she "had a hard life", and another memory begins. These "interruptions" happen all throughout the story, and it is through them that the reader gets to know more about Ma Parker's life. We learn that she started to work when she was sixteen, her late husband had been a baker and they had thirteen children (seven of which died). This is the second story we get from within the story – which proves to not be as secretive as the one in *The Flower's* is - the tragic life Ma Parker had and still had to face. By the end of the written piece, the reader discovers that she has become so marginalized that she believes she has nowhere to go.

Based on this, we can assume that one of the main differences between Walker's story and Mansfield's (based on Piglia's text), is that while the former has a hidden story that only appears during the climax (and ending), the latter includes another story which constantly shows up and confronts the main one. Mansfield works with the tension between the two stories, the memories of a hard life and a current hard day, without particularly trying to solve either of them. Meanwhile, Walker's hidden story is told by a very small amount of explicit text, sticking to the closed structure (there is only one conflict, which is the discovery of the body) and guaranteeing

that the ending of the story is a surprise. Therefore, we conclude that Walker's story follows the more traditional short story's model, while Mansfield's incorporates most of the modern short story characteristics.

Bader (1945) states on his essay *The Structure of the Modern Short Story* that the traditional plot has sequential and progressive action (meaning it has something that the reader watches being developed), which is the case in *The Flowers*. We get to see all of Myop's trajectory right from the beginning, when it is summer and the world feels like a perfect place; during the middle, when she starts noticing the changes in the air; and then reaching the end, when she discovers that what she called "summer" was an illusion.

Bader also claims that the structure of the traditional plot is dramatic, and from the start of the story, the reader has a line of progression to follow: a conflict, the hint of a conflict, or merely a sense of mystery, that something is off, which is the case in *The Flowers* when Myop senses a different smell in the beginning. The conflict can be external or internal, and in Walker's story it is definitely caused by an external factor, in that case, the body and what it stands for - a symbol of racism. According to Edgar Allan Poe (s.d.), the classic short story has to focus on a single character, a single theme, and it also needs to lead to one single effect. We can see this exemplified in Walker's story, since it is about a single character's experience (Myop), it discusses a single theme (which is the loss of innocence) and follows its linearity to form

a unity of effect (everything leads towards Myop's discovery).

On a different note, *The life of Ma Parker*, as a modern story, has a plot that is constructed within the story, and which has several conflicts, whether they take place in the past - with the death of her children and her husband and also the fact that she started to work from a very young age - or in the future - with the way her boss treats her and the fact that she realized that there was no place for her).

According to Bader (1945), modern stories are often called "plot less, fragmentary and amorphous" (p. 87), because people seem to mistake their technique for a lack of plot or missing structure. What happens in a modern story is that the author will not directly state every fact, but will try to let the reader figure it out indirectly, and will appeal to what the reader's imagination can come up with based on glimpses, suggestions and implications. So, if we look at *The Life of Ma Parker* it is able to see how much a character's actions can sometimes stand for something much bigger. For instance, the way in which the literary gentleman treats Ma Parker - with a certain amount of superiority and disregarding for any sort of emotional trauma she could be going through - shows us more than tells us that social discrimination is one of the main elements of the story. Before her flashbacks, Ma Parker is usually in a position of solitude, expressing, through her actions or words, little things that reflect her true state; for example, "*She sat back with a sigh and softly rubbed her knees*" (p. 244), it is almost as if we could see Ma

Parker, with the weight of a lifetime on her shoulders and the heavy and melancholic atmosphere. This is also a way of exploring the modern structure, using actions and scenes to show, and not tell the readers (and hence making the readers themselves realize through their own thinking) what a character is experiencing. As Bader says, “The emphasis is not upon the sequence of scenes, [...] rather, it is upon their meaning.” (p. 90).

We can see that when it comes to the construction of the story, Walker and Mansfield took different approaches; one followed the more traditional model, and the other the modern one. The stories are not, however, completely different.

We can say that the main characters from both stories go through some sort of epiphanic experience. Myop discovers that the world is a dangerous place, and it is definitely not safe for her, and we are shown that discovery and enlightenment through the last line of the story: “*And the summer was over*”. When it comes to Ma Parker, her story also ends with her realizing that she has nowhere to go, nowhere she can cry or feel relief, and we face that discovery through the last line, “*There was nowhere.*” (p.249). Both stories present an important moment of self-knowledge and the two extremely tragic life discoveries.

Self-discovery is, then, an important part in both *The Flowers* and *Life of Ma Parker*. The theme is the idea, the importance, what is present in both real life and

the short story. We can say that the theme in Walker’s story is the loss of innocence; how we are all eventually going to lose the naïveté and genuinely good vision we have of the world. And we may say that the theme in Mansfield’s story is how cruel and abusive the world can be and how unfair life is. Both themes, hence, are about one’s relationship with the world, how it may be easily shattered in a permanent way, and how awful the world may be to people who have done nothing to deserve such punishment. Both themes, then, are related to the main character seeing the actual truth of the world.

In conclusion, we can say that both Alice Walker’s *The Flowers* and Katherine Mansfield’s *Life of Ma Parker* are very different when it comes to their own structural organization (one being traditional and the other modern), and that this difference is very important because of the way through which the author decides to tell (or show) a story is what makes it unique. However, this does not mean one has more plot than the other. They are simply different, using different approaches, and we can even find some similarities between them (the epiphanies, for instance). What really matters is if the author managed to cause an impact on the reader, that kind of impact that only short stories can cause. As a matter of fact, for both Walker’s and Mansfield’s works, such effect is definitely achieved. Y



## References

**BADER, A. L.** The Structure of the Modern Short Story. *College English*, no. 2, v. 7 (1945-46), 86-92.

**BROOKS, C.; PENN WARREN, R.** How Theme Reveals. In: *Understanding Fiction*. 1943, 2nd ed. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959.

**CORTÁZAR, J.** Alguns aspectos do conto. In: *Valise de Cronópio*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1974. p. 147-163.

**MANSFIELD, K.** Life of Ma Parker. In: *The Collected Stories of Katherine Mansfield*. London: Wordsworth Classics, 2006.

**MANSFIELD, K.** Life of Ma Parker. In: *The Collected Stories of Katherine Mansfield*. London: Wordsworth Classics, 2006.

**PIGLIA, R.** Teses sobre o conto. In: *Formas Breves*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2004. p. 89-90.

**POE, E. A.** The Short Story. In: STERN, Philip van Doren (ed.). *The Portable Poe*. Penguin, [s.d]. p. 565-567.

**REID, I.** Essential Qualities? In: *The Short Story*. London: Methuen, 1977.

**WALKER, A.** The Flowers. In: Edward Proffitt (ed.) *Reading and Writing about Short Fiction*. New York: Harcourt, 1988

# Cultural Studies and Cinema

## A cultura da heteronormatização em *Amor à Vida* e a diversidade representativa em *Orange is the New Black*

PAULA ARGOLO DE SOUZA SANTOS

1 Aluna de graduação em Inglês na Universidade de São Paulo. E-mail: paulaargoloss@gmail.com

**Resumo:** Uma das grandes propagadoras culturais de nosso tempo, a televisão se mostra um importante canal de representação social, ao mesmo tempo em que estabelece relações de poder e opressão com seus telespectadores. O monopólio de produção pelos grupos hegemônicos afeta diretamente a ideologia por detrás de cada produção televisiva. Sendo assim, o artigo que segue procura explorar as representações de personagens homossexuais em *Amor à vida* e na produção americana *Orange is the new Black*, assim como as problemáticas por elas resultantes.

**Palavras-chaves:** Hegemonia. Heteronormatização. Representatividade. Televisão.

Desde sua invenção na década de 20, mais precisamente no ano de 1923, a televisão tem sido não um mero veículo de entretenimento, mas um importante difusor cultural. O comercial da família ideal se deliciando com a margarina no café da manhã ou os noticiários e suas notícias parciais podem ser analisados sob um olhar crítico que nos permite descobrir e entender a complexidade das realidades sociais e históricas de diferentes tempos.

A cultura televisiva diz respeito, sobretudo, ao nosso *lifestyle*, ao modo como vivemos e enxergamos o mundo. A análise que se segue, portanto, abordará a problemática da representação dos homossexuais na produção brasileira *Amor à vida* e na produção americana *Orange is the new Black*.

Em seu texto *Base and Superstructure*, Raymond Williams (1980) propõe que a crítica materialista deva se atentar às relações entre arte e sociedade como partes integrantes do mesmo universo. Em última instância, a arte é vista como a materialização da realidade sócio-histórica. Na perspectiva marxista, o ser social é definido, sobretudo pela *base*, uma das partes integrantes da organização da sociedade humana juntamente com a *superstructure* e que se define por ser "(...) the real social existence of man. The base is the relations of production corresponding to a stage of development of material productive forces." (WILLIAMS, 1980, p. 33)



De fato, há aqueles que dominam os mecanismos produtivos e que determinam, portanto, o senso de totalidade do ser que sempre apontará para a hegemonia, a dominação de uma única classe sob todas as outras.

Obviamente, não há a necessidade de explicitarmos que aqueles que determinam o que vemos na televisão são parte integrante do grupo hegemônico, o que resulta em uma propagação de sua própria hegemonia, ainda que busquem retratar aqueles à margem de seus pedestais. Um fenômeno relativamente recente, sobretudo na televisão aberta brasileira, é a representação de personagens homossexuais nas produções de grande audiência como a “novela das nove”.

Não há dúvida da importância da representação televisiva de grupos ainda marginalizados por grande parte da sociedade civil. O debate, porém, se esvazia na medida em que a representação se dá a partir do ponto de vista hegemônico que tenta a todo custo traçar um nível de homossexualidade “aceitável” para os padrões heteronormativos. Um dos traços característicos da cultura hegemônica é a apropriação da *selective tradition*, ou seja, “certain meanings and practices are chosen for emphasis, certain other meanings and practices are neglected and excluded.” (WILLIAMS, 1980, p. 39). O personagem Felix, de *Amor à vida*, herda, pois, a tradição do homem branco rico e bem-sucedido, deixando o fato de ser homossexual o único choque para as donas de casa que pouco se importam com seu mau caráter.

A problemática se agrava quando estamos tratando de um produto de ficção que também é um conjunto de discursos que estão adentrando a casa dos brasileiros, e que certamente gerarão opiniões, visto que “a televisão é muito mais do que um aglomerado de produtos descartáveis destinados ao entretenimento da massa. No Brasil, ela consiste num sistema complexo que fornece o código pelo qual os brasileiros se reconhecem brasileiros.” (BUCCI, 1997, p.21)

O emblemático beijo entre os personagens da novela nada se comparou às frequentes cenas quentes de paixão entre casais heterossexuais. O toque homossexual ainda não é visto em pé de igualdade com as demais relações afetivas.

Ademais, o casal Felix e Niko parece preceder de certo apelo visual, um casal bonito que dê lucros ao *merchandising* social a que a novela se propõe. Em última instância, a representação de homens, gays, brancos, ricos e não “afeminados” é vendida como o homossexual aceitável, como se estivéssemos “trying to incorporate a gay appeal without alienating larger markets” (SINFIELD, 1998, p. 161). O conservadorismo da televisão brasileira, que reflete o conservadorismo da sociedade brasileira e vice-versa, não se pode arriscar a perder investidores ou telespectadores em nome do respeito à diversidade.

Há, contudo, sobretudo nas produções televisivas americanas que já retratavam homossexuais em séries de grande sucesso, como a emblemática *F.R.I.E.N.D.S*, considerada por muitos a melhor série de comédia de todos os tem-

2 Serviço pago de transmissão de filmes, séries e produções originais pela Internet.


pos, ou no mais recente fenômeno de público e crítica *Orange is the New Black* (disponível no Netflix<sup>2</sup>), representações que se despem de qualquer conservadorismo e heteronormatividade.

A série já se destaca por ser contada inteiramente por mulheres dos mais diversos perfis: negras, latinas, homossexuais, transexuais (a série é a primeira a contar com uma atriz transexual no elenco), gordas, velhas – e os demais tipos frequentemente “higienizados” pela hegemonia.

No que se refere à representação de personagens lésbicas, a diversidade é a regra. Temos desde a personagem Big Boo, a lésbica fora dos padrões estéticos de beleza e magreza; Poussey, a homossexual negra, ou o próprio casal protagonista da série, Piper e Alex, que apesar de ser o perfil que mais se aproxima daquele retratado pela novela *Amor à Vida*, contrapõe a lógica hegemônica devido a seus passados criminais que desmancham a

possível ideia de “ordem e moral” a que as pudessem submeter.

O toque homossexual também já é fato superado na série, nada de beijos breves que não refletem a paixão dos personagens. Não há qualquer tipo de censura às cenas de sexo ou ao corpo das personagens. É justamente essa diversidade de subculturas que se unem e batem de frente com a ideologia capitalista hegemônica de indivíduo, que cria uma identificação e ideia de comunidade, fortalecendo uma cultura que encontra mecanismos para se afirmar e não se adaptar aos padrões culturais predominantes.

Que em um futuro não tão distante séries, novelas, filmes e qualquer outra produção midiática sigam tal exemplo e trabalhem para que “o que poderia ter se tornado um extraordinário instrumento de democracia direta não se converta em instrumento de opressão simbólica.” (BOURDIEU, 1997, p. 13). 



## Referências Bibliográficas

**BOURDIEU, P.** *Sobre a televisão*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1997.

**BUCCI, E.** *Brasil em tempo de TV*. São Paulo: Boitempo, 1997.

**SINFIELD, A.** Consuming Sexualities. In: *Gay and After*. London: Serpent's Tail, 1998.

**WILLIAMS, R.** Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory. In: *Problems in Materialism and Culture*. London: Verso, 1980.

## What is Brazil's image? Stereotypes in Searching Engines

CAROLINE DOS SANTOS<sup>1</sup>

MARIANA LETTIERI FERREIRA

MILENA LOPES GUIMARÃES MOURA

**Abstract:** The idea of this article is to find images that would reflect the topics discussed in the chapters “Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices” (Hall, 1997); “The Spectacle of the Other” (Hall, 1997), “The question of cultural identity” (Hall, 1996) and “Cultura, língua e emergência dialógica” (Menezes de Souza, 2013). We intend to analyze the images related to Brazil, focusing on the issue of the perspective of the ‘other’ and the view of cultural identity language it entails. The seventy five first pictures that come up on Google when the term “Brazil people” is typed and consequently some stereotypes related to it will be analyzed. Besides that, we have analyzed the power relation of the stereotypes and the mechanism of search in which researches on Google are based on.

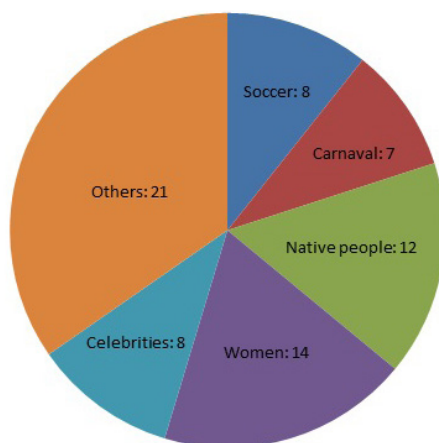
**Keywords:** Brazilian stereotype. Cultural representations. Cultural identity. Searching Engines.

This article aims to analyze critically some images in relation to cultural aspects and theories. Having decided to work with image associated with Brazilian people, we have analyzed the seventy five first pictures that come up on Google when the term “Brazil people” is typed.

It is important to point out that the research mechanism on Google is built according to our “interaction” with the website. If you type the same term today, the results may be slightly different from the ones generated on December 6<sup>th</sup> this same year. The images we click are considered to be more relevant, thus the reason why they appear right at the beginning.

After the research, a chart has been built in order to help systematize the data (Chart 1). There are many interesting aspects when analyzing this kind of research. There are related results, which are also very interesting but will not be the focus in this analysis. Most of the pictures show young people, who may be related to the image of Brazil being a “new” country; it is also noticeable that Brazilians are seen as “blessed people”, always partying and being at the beach, for example.

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate students at University of São Paulo. E-mails: k\_a.santos@hotmail.com; lferreira.mariana@gmail.com and milenamoura92@gmail.com, respectively.



**Chart 1** Results for the search “Brazil People” on Google. Other results: kids, marches, protests, Beyoncé (3x), pictures related to diversity, families, groups, beach parties, historical images

First of all, it is of high importance that to remember that culture is dynamic, as stated by Geertz (1973). Not only the images go against this theory but they also depict a stereotyped view of Brazil, which is based on an aesthetic and static view of culture. There is always an effort to homogenize culture, ignoring the differences.

The images are built from the point of view of the “other”; that is why we do not identify ourselves with all of them. For example, upon searching about Brazilian people on Google, it is noticeable that Brazil is viewed as a “blessed country” - the nation of soccer, native people, beaches and beautiful women. By looking at these images the following question is raised: why is Brazil being described this way? Do all Brazilians behave like this?

As sustained by Geertz, we cannot approach a culture by only relying on what we think about it; we should live it, observe it, not through the eyes of a foreigner and their assumptions, but trying

to look through the “native” perspective. However, that does not apply to the present case. People assume, for instance, that parties and festivals are part of Brazilians’ routine, but it is not.

Menezes (2013), in his essay *Cultura, Língua e Emergência Dialógica*, problematizes the notion of nation as an imagined **culture**: he claims that considering a **culture** as a unique and homogeneous aspect it is a myth that has to be deconstructed. When it comes to the pictures, there is an attempt to show people and habits homogeneously, but it does not represent the vast majority of the population. The images, for example, reduce Brazil to a place where there are half-naked and sexy women and native walking without clothes, there are parties, young people and some famous icons popping out.


The difference is important because it is charged with meaning and is a way of marking local cultures’ specificities and understanding and constituting ourselves. Brazilians’ habits and hobbies

are different from other countries', due to colonization, weather and other geographic, social and cultural implications. Therefore, acknowledging the others is a way of forming our own subjectivity. On the other hand, this is dangerous, because it may create stereotypes, as if all Brazilians played soccer, lived at the beach or even in the jungle. The image according to which Brazilians are always celebrating is constructed, along with the idea that there are no serious studies or meaningful things produced here. Not only is such image constructed, but also naturalized, so that it is normal to be so and there is nothing to do about it.

Brazilians are not part of the ones considered "powerful cultures". Moreover, they are "fruits" of miscegenation with a large number of black people, native peoples and Europeans, which brings an exotic aspect to the Brazilian culture. They are represented as group uncivilized and close to nature. Although their sexuality is exalted, Brazilian women seem pathologically different, as they are known for their relevant part, a "protruding butt". The majority of images shows women in informal moments and focuses on their beauty.

Stereotypes are focused on power relations, because they establish bound-

aries that exclude the powerless peoples, nations, etc. They reduce a national and grand culture to some fixed elements, as though all inhabitants were equal: living, eating, dressing and thinking according to a same pattern. It is interesting to consider Menezes' arguments (2013): the author states that culture is necessary to organize society and it influences the constitution of the subject, but it is also essential to consider communities' "cultures". Besides that, it is essential to realize that culture is dynamic and open, so it is constantly changing. New practices and relations dialogue with old ones and step by step the internal structures of culture are modified; this hybridism is positive because is the source of change.

Overall, instead of showing these images as a representation of a unique culture, people should think of it as part of a very diverse whole. The pictures are not totally far from Brazil's reality, but they show just a part of it. There are many "cultures" inside Brazil and not only one. Based on what is held by Derrida (apud Menezes, 2013) we are not just one; according to the concept of "undecidibility", we can be various and change habits at any time. 

## References

- GOOGLE.** How research works: from algorithms to answers. Available at: <[https://www.google.com/intl/en\\_us/insidesearch/howsearchworks/thestory/index.html](https://www.google.com/intl/en_us/insidesearch/howsearchworks/thestory/index.html)>. Accessed on Dec. 9, 2014.
- HALL, S.** The work of representation. In: \_\_\_\_\_ (org.). *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Sage Publications & Open University, 1997. p. 2-73.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The spectacle of "other". In: \_\_\_\_\_. (org.). *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Sage Publications & Open University, 1997. p. 225-290. Chapter 4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Questions of cultural identity*. London: Sage, 1996.
- GEERTZ, C.** The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man. In: *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- SOUZA, L. M. T. M.** Cultura, língua e emergência dialógica. 2013. Available at: <[http://www.academia.edu/589594/Cultura\\_L%C3%ADngua\\_e\\_Emerg%C3%A2ncia\\_Dial%C3%B3gica](http://www.academia.edu/589594/Cultura_L%C3%ADngua_e_Emerg%C3%A2ncia_Dial%C3%B3gica)>. Accessed on Dec. 9, 2014.

# Art and reality: Kubrick's approach to social elements through the cinema aesthetic

JÉSSICA CAMPOS OLIVEIRA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. E-mail: jessicampos.oliveira@gmail.com

**Abstract:** Art manifestations such as literature and cinema have been seen as a way through which social elements might be depicted. This paper aims to present examples of this process by analyzing romances (*A Clockwork Orange* written by Anthony Burgess and *Lolita* written by Vladimir Nabokov) and their film adaptations (*Lolita* (1962) and *A Clockwork Orange* (1971)) directed by Stanley Kubrick, in order to elicit and problematize social aspects portrayed by these manifestations, such as clash of cultures and free will.

**Keywords:** Aesthetic. Art. Cinema. Literature. Stanley Kubrick.

Any kind of cultural manifestation may contain elements of the social context in which it was produced. It may even be seen as the product of an era, considering that the particular characteristics and configuration of that environment – in that specific moment – may have direct influence on its creation.

Literature and cinema are examples of how cultural manifestations may present readers and viewers to a whole set of social and historical elements and how these elements might bring to this audience the feeling of being presented to something familiar, something they have seen before in the real world, not only in the portrayed one. It can depict habits, traditions, rituals and rules of a particular society. Eisenstein (1996) has described one example of this event:

We know how production, art and literature reflect the capitalist breadth and construction of the United States of America. And we also know that American capitalism finds its sharpest and most expressive reflection in the American cinema. (EISENSTEIN, 1996, p.196)

In this excerpt, Eisenstein illustrates how cultural manifestations, such as literature, may display social elements, and also how social aspects, such as capitalism, may use the culture industry in its favor. This happened although the cinema industry was still attempting to figure out a language of its own, as Eisenstein points out. Jameson (1992) also sees the relation between the culture industry – and its products – and the social reality in which it is produced. He emphasizes that any artistic manifestation is compelled to have traces of a society.

Literature and Cinema have had close links for a long time, probably due to the visual elements approached by both, as well as the presence of a text (or a narrative) as a

guiding device of their experience. While literary text uses figures of speech, such as metaphors and metonymy in order to materialize its content, cinema and its cinematic text appeal to visual aspects to achieve the same purpose.

This paper aims to analyze two different cinematographic manifestations adapted from two literary texts. The movies are *Lolita* (1962) and *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), both directed by the North American director Stanley Kubrick, and the two literary texts from which the movies were adapted from are, respectively, *Lolita*, written by Vladimir Nabokov, and *A Clockwork Orange*, written by Anthony Burgess. This analysis intends to point out aspects of the individuals portrayed in both movies and their relations with the social context in which they are inserted, based on the idea that these works reflect social aspects.

### **Lolita (1962): The clash of cultures**

*“Good by-aye!” she chanted, my American sweet immortal dead love.*  
(NABOKOV, 1994, p. 320)

Nabokov's *Lolita* presents the story of Humbert Humbert, a middle-aged professor who is writing his memoirs while imprisoned awaiting trial for murder. In Kubrick's adaptation, the order of the first event is changed; instead of starting with the preface by John Ray Jr., Ph.D., then a chapter dedicated to Humbert's love for Lolita, followed by his description of his childhood, Kubrick's movie has as the first scene the mur-

derer that put Humbert behind bars (in the novel, the place where he writes his book). The unexplained crime poses to the viewer a negative perspective upon Humbert that does not happen in the novel. Other than this first difference, the movie follows the sequence of events as it is portrayed in the novel.

Many critics see *Lolita* as a work through which some aspects of the American society may be analyzed. The first relevant aspect of the movie's narration is the fact that the main character, Humbert, has a cloistral life; although he is in frequent contact with other people throughout the major part of the movie, he has a reclusive lifestyle to what concerns his own desires and expectations. Whenever he is alone – usually writing – is the moment in which he can be and express himself. He is, indeed, very cautious about the image he conveys to people; he has control over the way others see him. He presents himself as a cultured professor and sticks to this image, loosening it only in cases of extreme emotion, such as when he reads Mrs. Haze's letter. In this moment, he laughs compulsively demonstrating his scorn for Mrs. Haze.

Kubrick's choice to portray Humbert's reclusive character differs from the freedom ideology that arose in the United States in the 1960's, and from the freedom that enchanted Humbert about the new land. Humbert is the representative of the European culture, whereas Lolita represents the American one. She represents the freshness and the freedom of this culture, and such features



are quickly identified by the European eyes that immediately get obsessed with her. At the same time that this new culture is admirable, it is also seen as vulgar by Humbert's canonical eyes.

Lolita and her mother, Mrs. Haze, are amazed by the American culture industry and, ultimately by Hollywood. They both admire the figure of Clare Quilty, who is the great representative of this culture in the movie. Lolita even has a poster of Quilty in her bedroom wall. The European man identifies this culture as vulgar. The scene in which Humbert meets Lolita – at that moment she was just Dolores – is an example of the encounter of two cultures. While he is hypnotized by the nymphet, the young girl is lying down on the garden, listening to a song that latter would get famous as “Lolita Ya Ya”.

Humbert and Quilty form a double representative of the encounter between these two cultures. The first scene of the movie (that is continued in the last scene) may be seen as the clash of cultures, in which one attacks the other. Humbert literally kills the representative of the vulgarity of the American culture.

Kubrick's movie approaches the culture industry of the United States, and no one could know it better than him, as he was also part of it. His work managed to deal both with the demand of the culture industry and the elements of the cinema as an artistic manifestation, apart from its commoditization.

## A Clockwork Orange: Is there free will?

*“Very hard ethical questions are involved,” he went on. “You are to be made into a good boy, 6655321. Never again will you have the desire to commit acts of violence or to offend in any way whatsoever against the State’s Peace. I hope you take all that in. I hope you are absolutely clear in your own mind about that. (BURGESS, 2000, p. 71)*

*The Tramp: “It’s a stinking world because there’s no law and order anymore”  
(A Clockwork Orange)*

Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* was modeled based on the American version of Burgess's novel, the one in which the last chapter (chapter 21) was deleted. As well as Burgess's novel, Kubrick's movie may also be defined as atemporal, once its perspective on the “future” could easily depict the social context in which both works were produced, as well as the decades that came afterwards.

The movie is, in fact, full of social historical issue from the 1960's and the 1970's. The imagery of fascism is represented, even if by an outdated approach. The apparatus of social repression, the control of this apparatus over cultures, the matter of free will, art commoditization (pop art are examples of this process both in the novel and in the movie) are some issues approached by the director.

The movie denies the positive – and alienated – perspective of the social movements that arose in the 1960's. For instance, although the sexual revolution happened, women are still seen from an

objectified angle (for instance, the tables shaped as women bodies in the first scene of the movie and the first attempt of rape are only two examples from the first five minutes of the movie), as Rasmussen (2004) points out:

Acknowledging a decade of progress in the professional status of women, Kubrick contrasts that progress with the debasement of women in the commercial world, in the arts, and especially in the mind of Alex. (RASMUSSEN, 2004, p. 113)

The sentence said by a drunk man right before being beaten up by Alex and his “drugues” friends, *“It’s a stinking world because there’s no law and order anymore”* points out another constituent element of the movie: the issue of the social organization (or order). Kubrick once said in an interview<sup>2</sup> that he believed that the movie was about free will. It is known that free will might interfere directly with a particular social configuration and this issue is approached throughout the whole movie.

The first image of Alex, shown after an enigmatic and suggestive sequence of red and blue backgrounds, before the beginning of the narrative might provoke on the viewer different reactions. The close-up on his eyes, followed by his expression of mockery or violence – probably both – anticipate what will be narrated by him. The young boy is the representative of a believer of the free will; for him, one must have free will to choose accordingly to one’s desire: But, brothers, this biting of their

toe-nails over what is the cause of badness is what turns me into a fine laughing malchick. They don’t go into the cause of goodness, so why the other shop? If lewdies are good that’s because they like it, and I wouldn’t ever interfere with their pleasures, and so of the other shop. And I was patronizing the other shop. More, badness is of the self, the one, the you or me on our oddy knockies, and that self is made by old Bog or God and is his great pride and radosty. But the not-self cannot have the bad, meaning they of the government and the judges and the schools cannot allow the bad because they cannot allow the self. And is not our modern history, my brothers, the story of brave malenky selves fighting these big machines? I am serious with you, brothers, over this. But what I do I do because I like to do (BURGESS, 2000, p 31)

Based on this excerpt, it is possible to depict Alex’s perspective of the world. This point of view is also portrayed in the movie. Throughout the narrative, Alex suffers from the impossibility to manifest the free will he believed would always guide his actions. When he accepts the behavioral-brainwashing procedure treatment called Ludovico’s Technique, Alex is warned by the prison chaplain that its effects are not yet proven, although he affirms that his nature might be changed. At a certain point of the treatment, after feeling “ill”, Alex asks the doctors to stop the procedure, shouting that *“...ultra-violence and killing is wrong, wrong and terri-*

<sup>2</sup> The interview mentioned was given by Kubrick to the film critic Michel Ciment and is available at: <http://www.visual-memory.co.uk/amk/doc/interview.aco.html>. Accessed on Aug. 2nd, 2015.

bly wrong. I've learned my lesson, sir. I see now what I've never seen before. I'm cured. Praise God." At this point, Alex is not guided by his free will any longer. He is unable to quit the treatment, and he is not even allowed to follow his own thoughts and opinions; he had internalized what is "against society" through torture.

At a certain point of his journey, Alex sees himself in a sort of battle against a representative of the government, the Interior Minister. When the Interior Minister attempts to take advantage of Alex's situation – turning it into a positive governmental propaganda – Alex insists to be fed by the Minister himself. In a game of power, the young boy is again aware of his power of decision, of his free will. "The bourgeois nature of Alex's reformation" (RASMUSSEN, 2004, p. 114) should be seen as an attack to an individual's free will, once, although he struggles against the attempt to be made a governmental propaganda icon, he accepts the "cure". On the outside, he is the reborn sign of the "cure", while inside he still wonders about the desires of his free will. Alex's competence to "manipulate our perceptions" (RASMUSSEN, 2004, p. 172) cannot be tamed.


## Conclusion

Kubrick's movies allow us to identify elements and issues of our reality inserted in artistic manifestations.

This may also happen with other kinds of manifestations, such as literary ones. Nabokov and Burgess are examples of it. As Jameson (1992) points out, the connection between art and reality absorbs elements of the world in which they exist, and they are consisted by important social material.

Among the series of social elements that the movies analyzed in this paper portray, two were emphasized. *Lolita* presents us with a unique perspective of the encounter of two cultures. European and American cultures are represented by Humbert and Lolita, respectively; he is tradition, canonical; she is freshness and newness.

*A Clockwork Orange* approaches a wide number of elements that sound familiar to the nineteenth century readers, such as violence and moral, as well as the issue of free will. Alex's journey is determined by it.

The encounter of cultures and free will are as part of our world as they are of the cinematographic realia. Any of the elements described above may sound familiar to nineteenth century readers and viewers, and the fact that they were portrayed through artistic manifestations, through a specific aesthetic language, does not diminish their value as representations of a given reality. 

## References

**BURGESS**, A. *A Clockwork Orange*. London: Penguin Books, 2000.

**EISENSTEIN**, S. Dickens, Griffith and the film today. In: *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, New York: Hartcourt, 1996. Translated by Jay Leyda.

**JAMESON**, F. Signatures of the visible. New York & London: Routledge, 1992.

**NABOKOV**, V. *Lolita*. São Paulo. Companhia das Letras, 1994.

**RASMUSSEN**, R. "A *Clockwork Orange*: Crime in punishment". In *Stanley Kubrick: Seven Films Analysed*. London: McFarland, 2004.

## Filmography

**KUBRICK**, S. *A Clockwork Orange*. USA, 1971. Warner Bros.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Lolita*. USA, 1962. Metro Goldwyn Mayer.'

## O processo de standardização da identidade Drag em programas televisivos Estadunidenses

BRUNO JOSÉ PEREIRA<sup>1</sup>

**Resumo:** Nos últimos anos, tem-se dado maior atenção a programas televisivos que trazem grupos outrora periféricos como protagonistas de *reality shows* e novelas. Dessa maneira, surge o questionamento sobre como tais identidades são representadas e em que medida as particularidades desses grupos são dissolvidas para que tais produtos culturais ganhem tamanha repercussão na mídia. O objetivo deste trabalho é analisar os motivos que levaram o programa “RuPaul’s Drag Race” a ser um produto comercial de alta rentabilidade, tanto para o canal que o produziu como para grandes empresas de televisão, explicitando as consequências desse movimento.

**Palavras-chave:** Consumismo. Estudos de cultura. RuPaul’s Drag Race.

Determinados fenômenos televisivos produzem tanta repercussão e debate em torno de si que parece imperativa a necessidade de nos atentarmos sobre os assuntos e as formas que tais produtos midiáticos acabam por utilizar, na tentativa de alcançar sucesso e popularidade. Um dos casos mais singulares é o do reality show “RuPaul’s Drag Race”, que, desde seu surgimento em 2009 na televisão norte-americana, pretende, a cada ano, selecionar a nova celebridade *drag* em meio a diversas competidoras selecionadas. O *show business*, comandado por um dos ícones da área da moda, ganhou repercussão mundial e acabou sendo vendido para a rede *Netflix*<sup>2</sup> – fato este que sugere um caráter global na reprodução e alcance do programa.

Se o resultado bem-sucedido de audiência e repercussão do *reality* pode ser verificado em sua alta popularidade, inclusive em países de língua não-inglesa, o que nos parece interessante é verificar as razões e implicações de tal fenômeno cultural. Afinal, como uma subcultura que há menos de 40 anos ainda ocupava caráter periférico na sociedade dita ocidental pode, já no início do século 21, veicular tanto rumor e interesse?

Dessa maneira, o objetivo do artigo é discutir, a partir de textos e discussões levantadas em torno da disciplina *Estudos de Cultura*, quais as consequências e questões implícitas em torno da produção e reprodução de tal fenômeno midiático, principalmente no que tange às questões ideológicas de nacionalidade. Para cumprir tal propósito, será feito um recorte no objeto de estudo para que se discuta, majoritariamente, a terceira temporada da série, mais especificamente os episódios “The queen who mopped Xmas” e “Life, Liberty & Style”.

<sup>1</sup> Aluno de graduação em Inglês na Universidade de São Paulo. E-mail: bruno.jose.pereira@usp.br

<sup>2</sup> Netflix: serviço de compartilhamento de filmes e seriados online.

Antes de mais nada, é importante salientar o caráter tanto tradicional quanto inovador de todo fenômeno cultural. Logo no início do texto *Culture is ordinary*, Williams (1958) adverte para o aspecto líquido e móvel no que se refere aos valores de determinado grupo social:

A culture has two aspects: the known meanings and directions, which its members are trained to; the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested. These are the ordinary processes of human societies and human minds, and we see through them the nature of a culture: that it is always both traditional and creative (WILLIAMS, 1958, p. 4)

A reflexão acima apresentada sobre a constituição dos fenômenos culturais explica em parte o caráter ambíguo do programa televisivo em questão, já que o mesmo incorpora ao *show business* um grupo que há muito pouco tempo ainda se configurava como periférico dentro das estruturas sociais americanas. Por um lado, devemos reconhecer que existe de fato um caráter inovador na incorporação e valorização de uma identidade que ainda insiste na busca de direitos civis – aqui identificado como o *creative aspect* do fenômeno analisado.

Parece haver, entretanto, certa reprodução de determinados aspectos marcadamente conservadores que sugere uma incorporação de uma identidade inicialmente subversiva ao sistema capitalista de consumo e que, por tal motivo, facilita a recepção do público e aderência facilitada ao que se diz ser o mundo *drag*.

De fato, o aspecto de consumo e incorporação de identidades outrora ditadas subversivas ao sistema de produção e consumo vigentes, já aparece como constatação no texto de Alan Sinfield, *Consuming sexualities*. O autor procura nas condições materiais – revistas gays e anúncios publicitários – evidências de como a figura do homossexual foi incorporada ao sistema de consumo. A subjetividade criada, obviamente formada através das condições sócio-históricas, aparece vinculada ao processo de industrialização:

Industrialization divested the household of its economic Independence and fostered the separation of sexuality from procreation. This eventually allowed the space in which men and women, especially of the middle class, might 'organize a personal life around their erotic/emotional attraction to their own sex'. Socio-economic conditions, therefore, produced the 'the social space' in which to be lesbian or gay (SINFIELD, 1998, p. 161)

De maneira semelhante, podemos afirmar que a identidade *drag* – ocupante periférica até mesmo em grupos gays – parece também ser incorporada ao aspecto de consumo tão presente no processo de criação do espaço homossexual. O próprio prêmio oferecido no programa – 75 mil dólares para a campeã – comprova, em parte, essa aderência do grupo ao processo de consumo.

Associado a isso, percebemos também que a ideologia da classe média americana aparece reproduzida no dis-

curso das participantes, que já estão incorporadas às relações de meritocracia individualista e a ideia do *self made man*. A própria estrutura de um *reality show* em que apenas uma das participantes pode vencer já estabelece uma dinâmica de competição e conflito que parece, em última instância, uma potencialização da busca do lucro nas relações sociais capitalistas tradicionais. Além disso, algumas frases de caráter evidentemente individualista são repetidas pelo apresentador RuPaul com bastante frequência, tais como “And may the best woman win!” e “If you *can't* love yourself, how the hell are you gonna love anybody else?”.

De fato, podemos perceber uma série de práticas e valores que, em última análise, pertencem a grupos sociais hegemônicos. Sobre tais conceitos, Raymond Williams em outro texto intitulado *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Theory*, afirma que

In any case what I have in mind is the central, effective and dominant system of meanings and values, which are not merely abstract but which are organized and lived. That is why hegemony is not to be understood at the level of mere opinion or mere assignments of energy (...). It is a set of meanings and values which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. (WILLIAMS, 1958, p. 9)

O que parece ocorrer no *reality show* é uma incorporação da identidade *drag* ao discurso hegemônico, verificado aqui através da afirmação de práticas e valores próprios da classe social domi-

nante, ainda que esse conjunto de valores supracitados esteja em constante reinterpretação através de incorporações e reinterpretações. Raymond Williams prossegue, no mesmo texto, discutindo a importância desses processos:

But always the selectivity is the point; the way in which from a whole possible are of past and present, certain meanings and practices are neglected and excluded. Even more crucially, some of these meanings and practices are reinterpreted, diluted, or put into forms which support or at least do not contradict other elements within the dominant culture. (WILLIAMS, 1958, p. 9)

Dessa maneira, o comentário citado acima pode, em parte, explicar o sucesso do programa na grande mídia: embora traga um grupo até então desvalorizado e socialmente excluído, o *reality* acaba por não questionar nenhuma premissa do grande público, o que facilita a vinculação da série em canais de massa, como o *Netflix*.

A propósito, uma das ideias mais vinculadas ao programa, principalmente no capítulo selecionado aqui para a análise, é a questão da nacionalidade americana. Quais as implicações desse tema em um contexto que sabemos ser globalizado, vinculado a um programa de televisão de alcance mundial? Passemos agora a discutir com mais detalhe a maneira como tais assuntos são vinculados ao programa do apresentador RuPaul.

Em um dos episódios da terceira temporada da série – *Life, Liberty & Pur-*

*suit of Style* – as competidoras são desafiadas a criarem uma campanha aos soldados americanos enviados a países distantes. Na mensagem, as *drag queens* devem ressaltar os valores americanos que as fazem amar o país. A questão é emblemática, visto que duas das competidoras são porto-riquenhas, tendo até a primeira língua como elemento contrastante em relação às companheiras nascidas nos Estados Unidos.

O que nos parece interessante é o fato de que tal temática do episódio levanta argumentos e discussões sobre a questão da globalização que vão além do simples julgamento positivo ou negativo – afinal, estamos tratando de um processo de homogeneização ou diversificação?. Faz-se necessário, portanto, o cuidado com a análise do fenômeno. Michael Denning (2001), em seu texto *Globalization and Culture: process and epoch*, nos apresenta o debate sobre globalização, resgatando as primeiras conferências em que a temática foi discutida. Logo na primeira ocasião, a preocupação sobre o caráter constitutivo do processo de globalização já aparece entre os pesquisadores participantes:

Like many of the early globalization discussions, the conference was dominated by the worrying parallel between a world economy structured around an international division of labor and a global mass culture that seemed to follow in its wake. Was globalization a force of cultural homogenization, or was there a countermovement of resistance, translation, hybridization, in-

digenization, and creolization? (DENNING, 2001, p.19-20)

Dessa maneira, é evidente que no *reality show* em questão perceberemos as duas facetas da discussão. Em um primeiro momento, é inegável que a cultura porto-riquenha aparece em alguns momentos dos episódios. Na verdade, as participantes da nacionalidade dita latina são identificadas pelo apresentador como tendo um “*Tcha tcha tcha*”, algo que as distingue positivamente das competidoras americanas. Há com certeza um orgulho e uma tentativa de manter algumas premissas culturais de Porto Rico, verificado no esforço das competidoras em incluir sentenças em espanhol em partes dos desafios propostos ao longo do programa.

Por outro lado, a questão se torna complexa diante do episódio supracitado, visto que o apresentador RuPaul pede que todas as competidoras veiculem em suas apresentações os conceitos que as fazem ter orgulho de serem americanas. Afinal, onde estaria o espaço para diversidade étnica nesse caso? Quais os efeitos dessa temática em um programa exibido em diversos canais internacionais?

Verificamos a existência de um processo de homogeneização que, em certa medida, já aparece no discurso das competidoras. Logo no primeiro episódio da terceira temporada, uma das *drag queens* porto-riquenhas, ao ser identificada como tal, argumenta que: “*Odeio quando as pessoas te rotulam como queens latinas. Não sou apenas uma queen latina. Quando estou montada de drag, sou uma estrela.*”<sup>3</sup>.

3 Legendas fornecidas pelo canal Netflix.



É evidente o desejo por parte da artista de incorporação e assimilação ao grupo de *stars*, em detrimento de suas características étnicas locais. Tal desejo de pertencimento seria de fato um dos efeitos de um processo de americanização? Outra conversa entre as competidoras parece ser esclarecedora nesse sentido:

**Carmen Carrera:** *Vocês cresceram patriotas do tipo “Amamos a América?”*

**Raja:** *Eu nasci aqui, mas morei na Indonésia quando pequeno, e lembro de pensar na América como a terra das barras de chocolate e MeM’s, era uma espécie de sonho para mim.*

**Manilla Luzon:** *Eu sei, é como minha mãe, vindo de um país diferente, “A América é o sonho”. É para onde precisamos ir.”<sup>4</sup>*

A incorporação da fala das personagens ao discurso hegemônico americano, similar àquele verificado no processo de consumo dos grupos gays, aparece como decorrência deste e atesta mais uma vez a incorporação do grupo *drag* do programa aos grupos mais marcadamente reacionários.

A questão do consumismo, agora associada aos processos de incorporação e homogeneização americanas, é marca fundamental do processo de incorporação da identidade *drag* à estrutura capitalista globalizada. O aparato ideológico contido nessas sentenças evidencia muito mais um processo de americanização do que de valorização de identidades ou de tentativas de visibilidade.

O que aparece nas falas das competidoras ainda é a manutenção do sonho americano como processo que só se realiza através do consumo. Além disso, a vinculação de tal programa nas grandes mídias e também em países latino-americanos, como o Brasil, resulta em uma espécie de ensino de uma cultura específica e de práticas sociais delimitadas. É dessa maneira que vemos com mais frequência uma substituição da variedade por aspectos acentuadamente massivos e assimilados a tal discurso hegemônico.


A partir dessa perspectiva, é cada vez mais comum ouvirmos frases que atestam o domínio cultural através desses elementos televisivos americanos, que tem como consequência frases como a da competidora Yara Sofia, que diz: *“Eu sou Yara Sofia. Eu sou porto-riquenha. Eu sou uma garota americana”<sup>5</sup>*

Por fim, é importante salientar que o trabalho de análise empreendido aqui procurou verificar quais as implicações da veiculação da identidade *drag* em um programa de alta popularidade. É possível afirmar, então, que certa incorporação de um grupo periférico nos discursos hegemônicos de consumo e nacionalidade americana poderia desencadear uma perda do caráter subversivo e questionador, aspectos marcantes da constituição da identidade *drag*.

A análise nos mostrou que, embora haja um aspecto progressista na veiculação e valorização da imagem da *drag queen* americana, há também uma evidente tentativa de incorporação desse universo à ideologia e práticas sociais dominantes, o que também auxilia na re-

<sup>4</sup> Legendas fornecidas pelo canal Netflix.

<sup>5</sup> Legendas fornecidas pelo canal Netflix.

cepção do programa pelo grande público, já que este não se vê questionado ou incomodado em suas premissas e valores. Parece haver uma adesão por parte das competidoras ao discurso originário da classe média americana e que, em um contexto dito como globalizado, acaba por ganhar ressonância e homogeneizar mais do que tornar visível culturas que não sejam a norte-americana. 



## Referências bibliográficas

**DENNING**, M. Globalization and culture: Process and Epoch. In: *Culture in the age of three worlds*. London: Verso. p. 17-34.

**ENTRETENIMENTO**, *RuPaul's Drag Race – Third Season*. Nova York: Netflix, janeiro de 2011. Programa de TV.

**SINFIELD**, A. Consuming sexualities. In: *Gay and after*. London: 1998. p. 161-189.

**WILLIAMS**, R. Culture is ordinary. In: *Resources of Hope*. London: Verso, 1958. p. 3-18.

\_\_\_\_\_. Base and superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory. In: *Problems in Materialism and Culture*.

# The Modernity and the Panopticon in Kubrick's masterpieces: *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *The Shining* and *Eyes Wide Shut*

INGRID PUCHE<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English  
undergraduate  
student at  
University of São  
Paulo. E-mail:  
ingrid.puche@  
gmail.com

**Abstract:** The aim of this paper is to observe how the modern life of the 20th century and its problems are dealt within the work of the movie producer and director Stanley Kubrick. In order to do so, we are going to analyze three movies released in different decades of the 20th century: *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), *The Shining* (1980) and *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999). Our hypothesis is that the movies can be interpreted as a continual narrative about a society that witnesses a period of modernization and social revolutions. However, its revolutionary claims and technological progress have not resulted in social achievements in the future; on the contrary, the same obsolete models of lives and institutions were maintained. The main revolutions of the century were succumbed by the modern capitalistic life, and the systems men built to help improving their lives became their own enemies and lords, turning life into a cycle of emptiness, repetition and lack of content. We based our analysis on Foucault's discussion on the Panoptical Structure (FOUCAULT, 2004) and the critical contribution of Rasmussen (2004), Jameson (1992) and Chion (2007).

**Keywords:** Kubrick. Modernity. Panopticon.

## Introduction

It is a hard task to summarize the great scenes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in a few words, we could say that it was a period in which the norms of contemporary values and institutions were established – but also radically questioned. Besides, as a great political, cultural and social change took place from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the modern period was settled by the influence of rationalism, Capitalism, and a wide technological race.

In spite of the positivist discourse of modern development, extreme violence (Great Wars, Cold War and local wars), social inequality, poverty and intolerance were widespread throughout the world over the 20<sup>th</sup> century, ruining people's belief in a political structure concerned about population needs. We can consider this period as a scenario of opposite extremes; while whole countries were victims of poverty and hunger; others used the cultural industry to display their richness and modernization.

As an answer to these conditions, many movements were organized in order to fight for the end of inequality and war, such as the Movements for Civil Rights in the USA, and the feminist and pacifist movement throughout the world. Besides that, a counter-culture also arose asking for change in social values and costumes, such as

family, sexuality, and general behavior – which should be not constrained by the traditional moral values.

Based on the discussions raised in the course of Literature and Cinema (2014), we believe that, among many other great works, there are three movies produced by the director Stanley Kubrick that deal with different questions about how post-modern society handled this historical background and how it affected life in general: *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *The Shining* and *Eyes Wide Shut*. As each movie was released in a different decade – with leaps of 15 – 20 years –, *2001: A Space Odyssey* in the 60s, *The Shining* in the 80s and *Eyes Wide Shut* in the late 90s, we assume that Kubrick began to hold a more enquiring position in *2001*, to a total pessimistic perspective from *The Shining* to *Eyes Wide Shut* – as, in the period between the production of each movie, the filmmaker probably had the opportunity to observe society and its development in relation to the social movements, moral values and traditional institutions.

We also believe that we can interpret the modern institutions as controlling machines on individual's decisions. The institutions that once were created by men took control of their lives.

### The invisible prison

According to Foucault (2004), in different societies, men developed means of taking control of ordinary life based on the power of higher institutions. For instance, as for the necessity of protecting community from diseases, institutions

were responsible for putting families in isolation in order to prevent any cases of plague. As a result, these people had their lives under the institutions control: while in observation, all their habits were known and their interaction isolated. As the institutions controlled their lives, they had the power to establish norms for the community, which, step by step, would have to be followed by its members.

Esse espaço fechado, recortado, vigiado em todos os seus pontos, onde os indivíduos estão inseridos num lugar fixo, onde os menores movimentos são controlados, onde todos os acontecimentos são registrados, onde um trabalho ininterrupto de escrita liga o centro e a periferia, (...) onde cada indivíduo é constantemente localizado, examinado e distribuído entre os vivos, os doentes e os mortos – isso tudo constitui um modelo do dispositivo disciplinar. (FOUCAULT, 2004, p. 163)

Foucault also discuss about the Panoptic Structure of Bentham, also developed to impose control under one's behavior, described by the following model:

(...) na periferia uma construção em anel; no centro, uma torre; esta é vazada de largas janelas que se abrem sobre a face interna do anel; a construção periférica é dividida em celas, cada uma atravessando toda a espessura da construção; elas têm duas janelas, uma para o interior, correspondendo às janelas da torre; outra que dá para o exterior permite que a luz atravesse a cela de lado a lado. Basta então colocar

um vigia na torre central, e em cada cela trancar um louco, um doente, um condenado, um operário, ou um escolar. (...) Tantas jaulas, tantos pequenos teatros, em que cada ator está sozinho, perfeitamente individualizado e constantemente visível. (FOUCAULT, 2004, p. 166)

The principle of this structure is an organization in which individuals taken under control have their individualities isolated. There is no communication and exchange of ideas, nor the transformation of personalities and values by social interactions; instead, all movements are controlled. As the cells have an opening towards the tower, it is possible to notice that there is someone observing and watching the prisoner's actions, and as these prisoners do not know how often they are being observed, they keep constantly behaving themselves as a response to an unknown, but imposed order. According to Foucault, this effect leads to a feeling of permanent visibility, "É visto, mas não vê; objeto de uma informação, nunca sujeito de uma comunicação" (FOUCAULT, 2004, p. 166).

Based on the hypothesis according to which the movies show how people became affected by modern society, we can also sustain that they deal with how individuals became prisoners of their own institutions, that similarly to the mechanism described by Foucault, consciously or not, disciplines people according to a permanent observation and general rules. For instance, in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, as we travel inside a craft in the outerspace,

we live a sort of *Big Brother Show*, in which all astronauts have their actions and even lives controlled by HAL, a machine that is always observing all their actions. The same happens with the lives of the ape-man in the biggening of the movie, whose fear of being whatched by their predators force them to stay inside their caves. We believe that these examples can be associated with the mechanism of the Panoptican, as the characters model their behavior from the hypothesis of being observed by forces more powerful than theirs.

In our perspective, while in '2001' we observe the development of discipline by the mean of being observed and controlled, in *The Shining* and *Eyes Wide Shut* we can see such control through a subtle mechanism: the model of the modern capitalist bourgeois family and its sense of individuality, a mode of isolating people without the necessity of oppression.

Based on the aforementioned discussion, we will analyze some basic features of the movies, such as, plot, characters, time, space and denouement, aiming to discuss how social changes and institutions' power take place in Kubrick's work throughout the decades.

## Analysis

### 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)

**2**<sup>001</sup>: *A Space Odyssey* was released in 1968, directed and produced by Stanley Kubrick and co-written by Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke. The movie that can be interpreted only as a Kubrick's masterpiece in sci-fi movies can also be considered a framework of uncertainties of a world divided by war and technology,

revolutions and moral traditions. In our point of view, it is a movie about questions concerning the future of the world, a critical piece on the political and social scenery of its period and the utopia of the development, but at the same time of an intensive control of men.

The first scenes of the movie take us back to the life of our ancestors, the apemen. From the very beginning to the last scenes, we observe how the life of the specie was developed through different discoveries of their routine, affected mainly by the most important of them, a tool made with bone. With the discovery of technology, the group of apemen, which first had to fear their enemies and hide themselves in caves, became more powerful and confident when facing them. As stated by Rasmussen (2004), one of the hard tasks of observing the apemen routine is to see how they resemble men; their fight for territory and natural resources (one of the great causes of the Great War I), as well as their feeling of joy by defeating and killing their enemies. According to the author, "*Kubrick rubs our noses in the fact that apeman is, after all, our ancestor.*" (p. 55).

As discussed above, we believe that from what we see in the movie, the apemen is the first group to fear being watched. As explained by Foucault's discussion, despite not being certain of the presence of an observer out of the cave – in this case a predator – the apemen condition their movements and attitudes according to their fears. The power institution is settled by those who had more force in the group, and they obey this or-

der. As the apemen discover technology, they are saved from their enemies.

Moving from the first part, "*The Dawn of Man*", we have a leap of time that leads us to the ultra-modern era of the spaceman. As we see the machines, the spacecraft and its inner part modern architecture and design, the first impression is that technology and development achieved a high level of sophistication. However, when we witness the scenes of the humans we question ourselves: has the technological development taken men to a different social configuration?

The main character of the first scenes is Heywood Floyd, as we travel through space with him, we can observe how humanity achievement became something boring and ordinary to men. Being in the space seems like something normal for Floyd, no adventure or emotion, just boredom. As we are in the future, Kubrick could invest in a society of changes, but that is not his bet, as we see in the social relations inside the spacecraft. Despite the feminist movement struggling against workplace inequality during the 60's and 70's, there is no woman in a position of prestige in the aircraft scenes; on the contrary, when we come across the meeting with the Russian scientists, out of three women, only one speaks, and when Floyd talks to her, his main question is about her husband. Also, there are no black people among the crew, which can be considered an irony, as the African-American Civil Rights Movement had taken place over the decade of the 60's - the period of the movie production and release - leading us to the reflection that,

in this hypothetical future, their fight for equality would have not been achieved.

Another vital question to our analysis is the relation that men develop with technology. At the same time that men are the responsible for the creation of technology, they are represented as dependent on it. Besides the fact that technology is represented as something boring and common, man seems very dependent on it, as it was naturally a part of their lives, not only as a tool, but as a mean of survival. According to Rasmussen (2004, p.68), "*If great achievements are made possible by technology in the year 2001, once-simple activities are made complicated by new circumstances resulting from that progress.*"

The extreme side of this control takes place in the third part of the movie: "Jupiter Mission: 18 months later". In these scenes we get acquainted with HAL, an A.I. machine, responsible for all the functioning of the spacecraft, including the lives of the crew. Besides being a sort of leader of the spacecraft, HAL knows the reasons for the mission to Jupiter – which is not revealed to the astronauts.

Just as in the earlier institutions described by Foucault, under the premise of taking care of the spacecraft and the crew's lives, HAL has its artificial eyes – a screen with a red dot in the center – observing all the parts of the craft, and then controlling man. In a conflict between HAL and two astronauts of the crew, Bowman and Poole, the machine, which, in principle, does not have feelings, decides to take Poole's life. With respect to this movement, we could say that men's cre-

ations, when 'felling' threatened, can turn themselves against their own creators for their own protection. Men became slaves of their inventions.

Whereas in *2001: A Space Odyssey* we can witness men being watched and isolated in the outerspace by the same machines and institutions which they have created, we believe that in *The Shining* and *Eyes Wide Shut*, when Kubrick gets really close to the expected future – the movies were released, respectively, in 80's and 90's – he shows that the post-modern men are so intrinsically connected to the dependence on institutions that they do not need to be thrown out of the Earth to be controlled and isolated from their own society. The two following movies deal with the consolidation of the contemporary institutions in the decade of 80s and 90s, the so-called future expected in the first movie.

From our perspective, returning to the concept of the Panoptic, as the social rules were established through the years, men had to suit their lives to what was considered acceptable in their community, and if they did not accomplish that, they would probably be excluded from their groups. Consequently, men have always been under the control of the social institutions that ruled them, and even if not being watched, as the prisoners of the Panoptic Structure, they have been afraid of being punished. Different from the prison cells from the structure, we see a new resource capable of isolating the contemporary men from society: the individualist model and the modern bourgeois family.

In both movies, we have two families with this prior structure, one that literally decided for the isolation as a form of improving life, and another that despite living in a huge city are prisoners of their own routine, whose social relations were purely superficial or based on relations of commerce and favors. In light of this view, we could observe how a very sophisticated structure can control lives not based on extreme actions, but simply on a diffused philosophy of life developed through the years that eliminates the idea of community and brings up the concept of modern family.

### **The Shining (1980)**

*The Shining* (1980) was directed and produced by Kubrick, and co-written by the novelist Diane Johnson. The movie was based on the book written by Stephen King under the same name, but presenting meaningful differences in relation to the film. *The Shining* in a basic interpretation can be interpreted as a common horror story about a family that goes to an isolated hotel in the high winter and lives moments of insanity and death. Nevertheless, it can also be associated with the American historical background.

The movie tells the story of the Torrance family: Jack, the dad, Wendy, the mother, and Danny, the only son. From the beginning to the end of the movie, we can observe that the Torrances are the opposite of the typical American ideal family. Once more, we can notice that, just like in *2001*, it seems that the period of revolutions have never happened in the world. Wendy stays at home

waiting for her husband, she is tired of doing the housework, and her life is boring and totally dependent on a male figure. Physically, Wendy is not the typical American housewife shown in the movies – probably that blond astonishing figure – she is very tall, with a great black messy straight hair that contrasts with her pale skin. Danny, despite being very cute, is also a problematic boy. He is not happy in his neighborhood, he has got no friends at the new school and he has a weird imaginary friend that, according to him, lives inside his mouth. In this movie, even the imaginary friend is not a typical childish figure. When Danny impersonates the voice of his friend, we hear a weird sound that probably scares and takes out all the pure image of the fantasies of the boy. As we get acquainted with their past we know that he was a victim of physical aggression by his dad, who had had alcoholic problems in the past. Despite their problems, as long as the family is still in the big city, they live finely together. However, when they move to an isolated place we see that the structure of the modern family is doomed to destruction when they have to face only each other. *The Shining* shows the demystification of the traditional family and its perfectness.

As the movie starts, we see that Jack Torrance is applying for a job in a hotel located in an isolated area in the middle of the mountains, the Overlook Hotel. The history of the hotel involves both sides of the American history, the luxury of its inauguration lived by the aristocratic American elite of the early 20th century, and the genocide of the



indigenous North American community, as the hotel was built on the site of a Native American burial ground. The past is always part of the present in the movie – it is present in the Torrance's personal life, as well as it is present in the haunted corridors of the Overlook Hotel. Besides the history of the hotel, Ullman, its manager and Jack's interviewer, tells him that the last man who had occupied the position Jack is applying to, had committed suicide, after killing his wife and two daughters. The job consists in taking care of the hotel during the high winter, and as the hotel is totally isolated of civilization, in few months there is a high probability of Jack, just like the antecessor of the job, becoming insane.

Upon the arrival of the Torrance family to the Overlook Hotel, we are presented to its structure, a huge and classic place, which brings in its decoration the history of the sophistication of a golden era– the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the Native American Indians. As the manager of the hotel shows the indigenous decoration, we can think about the feeling of indifference shown by a civilization guilty of a mass extermination, who even aware of their past, shows the murdered culture stamped on their walls.

The closer we get to the hotel, the more we witness the visions of the little boy Danny, who, besides keeping the weird imaginary friend and being a telepathic child, also has visions of blood and dead people in the hotel. In spite of all the clues that indicate to us that *The Shining* is a horror movie, according to the analysis of Jameson (1992), we are

actually dealing with a ghost story – one concerned with the past of a nation. According to Jameson:

The Jack Nicholson of *The Shining* is possessed neither by evil as such nor by the “devil” or some analogous occult force, but rather simply by History, by the American past as it has left its sedimented traces in the corridors and dismembered suites of this monumental rabbit warren, which oddly projects its empty formal after-image in the maze outside. (JAMESON, 1992, p. 90)

As 2001 can be considered a bet on that the future would not present a great change in society, *The Shining* - which was produced in the predicted future - shows that, in fact, society had not become a better institution. While men became dependent on his own technology in 2001, in *The Shining* and *Eyes Wide Shut* men became prisoners of the institutions and the system they have created.

The Capitalist system and its market machine made the cultural and the critical production a product of its own, – just as it does with everything that can be passive of making profit. As a result of this movement, we witness a crisis in the cultural production which was victim of the banalization of its themes. The emptiness of content generated a society similar to it, empty and meaningless. According to Jameson,

(...) these depthless people, whether on their way to the moon, or coming to the end of another season in the great hotel at the end of the world, are stan-

standardized and without interest, their rhythmic smiles as habituated as the recurrence of a radio-announcer's drawn breath. (1992, p. 87).

The ultimate expression of this emptiness is the attempt of Jack Torrance of being a writer. The reason why Jack decides to work in the hotel is to have time and freedom of mind for writing his book. Jack chooses the isolation as a mean for the expression of his thoughts and creativity; however, the same isolation is the tool for facing his fears when hallucinating about his past, and the past of the hotel. It is not ordinary ghosts that drive Jack into insanity, but the ghosts of the past, both of a nation and of a problematic social structure: the family.

The insanity of Jack can be interpreted as the result of the pressure of being a prisoner of a given model of family, society and professional life. According to Jameson, the writer that Jack intended to be was not his own standard of being an artist, but a standard imposed by the massive American culture – which presented a model of a fashionable author of prestige (cf. JAMESON, 1981, p. 93).

The piece of work that Jack was writing can be interpreted as the representation of a meaningless culture, made of repetition and lack of content. The 'book' was written only with one sentence: "*All work and no play make Jack a dull boy*" – a portrait of the mechanical society which is always concerned with a repetitive movement, with no time for physical or intellectual healthy habits, including the act of thinking and reflecting upon their lives.

Stuck in the ghosts of historicity, Jack cannot end up anything but insane; the representation of the madness that a whole society goes through trying to get rid of their obligations, roles and true desires. As there is no place for Jack in the emptiness of the present, his only choice is to go back to the past, where he can find a chance of leaving the isolation and belonging again to a community.

### **Eyes Wide Shut (1999)**

**E**yes Wide Shut was released in 1999, produced, directed and co-written by Kubrick. The movie was based on the novel *Dream Story*, originally named *Traumnovelle* (1926) written by Arthur Schnitzler. This narrative was the last movie Kubrick directed before he died, and it can be considered a summary of all the questions previously raised in his movies. If in *2001*, still in 1968, we saw the image of a man of the future dominated by their own inventions and institutions – watched and disciplined from their isolation and dependence - in *Eyes Wide Shut*, almost 30 years after the shot in the dark made by Kubrick, we have exactly the outcome of the future contemporary man.

The characters of the movie also contain aspects dealt with in *The Shining*. The emptiness and lack of content reach its ultimate point. In this film, we can observe not only the prison made by the system, but also the tools intended to control social life: money and luxury. The family represented is isolated in its own life in the big city, living with people they have only superficial relations with, basically mediated by materiality.

As a denouement for the context presented in *The Shining*, the society represented in this movie is made of the repeated pages written by Jack with no content; a society based on appearance, money and status. *Eyes Wide Shut* shows the extreme side of the effective era of capitalism, in which people were not only prisoners but also slaves of the objectification of the human being and their relationships.

Apparently, the movie is about the life of a greatly known Hollywood couple, Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, who played the main characters, Bill and Alice Harford. Just as in *The Shining*, despite being presented to a typical American family, we discover throughout the movie that they are also a problematic example of this social structure. From our point of view, regarding the prior movies, the family is a recurrent theme in Kubrick's work, and in all of them, it is seen as a traditional and problematic structure.

Alice and Bill Harford is a couple moved by their image and status. The first sentences of the movie are very important, as they define the superficial aspect of both characters. Bill asks about his wallet and Alice asks him if she looks beautiful. Bill is a doctor, who always uses his profession to profit from all different sorts of situations, offering money or asking favors from everybody around him under the pretext of being a doctor. Alice is an astonishing woman who always has her figure associated with mirrors or comments related to her beauty.

When the couple arrives home, after going to a ball in which the local

aristocracy were gathered, Alice and the doctor discuss their attitudes during that evening. Alice stayed for a long time dancing very close to an unknown man, while Bill was flirting with two models. As the dialogue goes on, Alice admits to Bill that he could not be too pretentious and confident about himself and her fidelity to him, revealing that once she almost left everything behind, their marriage and daughter, because of a man she just looked at during a trip.

This revelation moves Bill's thoughts. Their conversation is interrupted; Bill leaves the house as he needs to see a patient who is at death's door. As he leaves the house, his adventures during a whole night begin. At first, he meets two women, first the daughter of his patient and then Domino, a prostitute. When he meets the daughter of his patient, she unexpectedly declares her love for him, and just like his wife almost had done, she promises to leave everything behind because of him. From our perspective, the attitude of these women represent the uncertainty and instability of the marital life and the family. Despite being apparently happy, both women do not mind changing their lives for a new adventure.

As Bill goes through the night, walking in the streets, disturbed by the images in his mind of Alice with other men, in a kind of both real and surreal experience, he finds in the front door of a pub a flyer of a friend who would have a concert there at that same night. As he meets his friend, Bill enters the major adventure of the movie: he discovers that his

friend is going to play in a weird place and then does everything that is possible to go with him. In order to go to this place, Bill has to hide himself behind a mask and leaves the center of New York to reach a distant region in which the party was going to take place.

The movie structure is all marked by repetitions and dualities. At the same time that we can interpret this process of repetition as a signal of Bill's oneiric state of mind, we believe that this structure is a representation of the historical background of objectification and massive production of things. Not only are objects and things repeated through the scenes (Christmas lights, streets, masks, clothes), but also dialogues between people and even the structure of the movie itself.

The most important point of the process of objectification happens when Bill arrives at the party, which is actually an orgy. The orgy is a kind of ritual in which all men are wearing capes and masks as they have no individuality, and women wear just the mask, displaying their bodies as objects. As each man chooses a woman and the sexual ritual starts, we see a society that reached its ultimate point of boredom. The scenes of sex are extremely uninteresting. Men watch women having sex with no lust; all the participants seem to be in a vegetative state. The highest point of the objectification is the masks and capes with no signal of lives. When we look at the people we see bodies without souls, all covered with similar masks: no individuality, no identity and no content – a massive generation of ghosts.

As the participants identify that Bill does not belong to that ritual they put him in the center of a circle and start discussing what kind of punishment could be given for his attitudes. At this time, one of the women suggests to make a sacrifice in order to them set Bill free. Bill leaves the place with no clue about what was going to happen to the woman. That night he starts to go after clues about those people, the woman who offered to be sacrificed and what all that meant. The fact of the matter is that as soon as Bill starts looking for clues, he begins to be watched. As we approach the end of movie, we discover that Ziegler, the owner of the first party, was present in the orgy, and knows that Bill was also there. He prevents Bill from going after the meaning of that for his own safety and tells him that he had been watched since that day.


The structure of isolation in order to take control of people's lives reaches the ultimate point in *Eyes Wide Shut*. Although being not prisoned in cells, people admit their individualized positions without hesitation. We do not really know who Bill or Alice are, as much as we do not know who those people in the orgy are. The couple that seems so clear to the audience is also a product of the objectification of a society – Alice is purely full of beauty and sensuality, whereas Bill is associated to money and status - that is all we know about them. The characters they incorporate in society is also part of a structure; a structure in which one is being watched and has to be ready to figure out a way to according to the rules. When Bill discovers that he was being

watched, it is not a great surprise to him; being watched is part of the game, and the use of different social masks can be their means for surviving in this social structure.

### Final remarks

By analyzing the aforementioned Kubrick movies, we could observe that there is a fundamental line that goes through the plots that leads the audience to (try to) foresee what the future was holding for us. The technological movement shown in the first movie does not make us a better society in the future.

Instead of getting better, mankind, from the first tool onwards, just gets more and more addicted and dependent on

their own creation, reaching a stage which men do not know how to survive without the machine taking care of everything around him. That is the same of what happens throughout the movies with the political and social structure that society itself has been through: family and capitalism. Time goes by, but these institutions are not overcome; they just keep playing the same model: leads social life to a point of isolation that all citizens are so concerned with their own lives that they cannot pay attention to what is happening around them in this busy material society. Just as the machine takes control of order in *2001*, in the last of Kubrick's movies, money becomes the lord of men, which just turns them into objects with no content. 



### References

**CHION, M.** *Eyes Wide Shut*. London: British Film Institute, 2002.

**FOUCAULT, M.** O panoptismo. In: *Vigiar e punir*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2004.

**JAMESON, F.** Historicism in *The Shining*. In: *Signatures of the Visible*. New York & London: Routledge, 1992.

**RASMUSSEN, R.** 2001: A Space Odyssey – The face in the Machine. In: *Stanley Kubrick: Seven Films Analyzed*. London: McFarland, 2004.

## ***Six Degrees of Separation* and the concepts of simulacra and culture industry**

RODRIGO MANZ DE PAULA RAMOS<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at the University of São Paulo. E-mail: rodrigomanz@gmail.com

**Abstract:** The purpose of this essay is to apply Max Horkheimer's and Theodor Adorno's concept of culture industry and Jean Baudrillard's concept of simulacra - or the loss of real - in the interpretation of Fred Schepisi's movie, *Six Degrees of Separation*. This study will point out how the movie illustrates these concepts by portraying fictional and yet realistic individuals' lives, conveying thus a criticism on the post-modern life style under the strong influence of values imposed by the media.

**Keywords:** Adorno. Horkheimer. Culture Industry. Baudrillard. Simulacra.

*Six Degrees of Separation* tells us a story that takes place in New York and is centred on the encounter, and its further developments, between Paul, a poor, brilliant and ambitious young con man, played by Will Smith, and a high-society couple of money-coveting art dealers, Ouisa and Flan Kittredge, played respectively by Stockard Channing and Donald Sutherland. We do not know much about Paul's background, but it is safe to assume that he is a poor African-American young man who is trying to change his life seeking social and cultural ascension by creating a new image for himself; a socially seductive image of an intelligent, well cultured and educated young man, son of a respected and influential Hollywood actor and director, Sydney Poitier.

One night, Paul meets Trent Conway, an MIT student who gives him detailed information about people from his social circle, and who teaches Paul how to behave as one of them in exchange for sexual favours. Thus, by submitting himself to a process of commodification of his body, Paul gets the information necessary for him to build himself a new image. For that, he learns details of high-society people's lives, their manners and their speech variant, and memorises culturally curious anecdotes and facts. All this to be able to simulate a different person, to become someone who would be accepted by the high circles of society, one that would belong to it. Around the 22 minute-mark of the movie, in his first encounter with the Kittredges, Paul is asked by Geoffrey, a rich politician from South Africa, how it feels being "black in America", to what he responds saying he does not feel American nor black. This shows how radically different is the image he is trying to construct.

The image created by Paul is one feature of the movie that can exemplify Baudrillard's concept of *simulacrum*. For the philosopher, an image or a sign has four successive phases:

it is the reflection of a basic reality  
it masks and perverts a basic reality  
it masks the *absence* of a basic reality  
it bears no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum.  
(BAUDRILLARD, 2010, p. 1560)

Paul creates an image that belongs to the third phase, since he masks the absence of a basic reality behind his image by sustaining it with forged facts that correspond to the real world. He is very convincing in telling stories of his alleged father, a public and admired figure whom he knows by reading his biography; he knows many details of the Kittredges and other acquainted families and explains with eloquence his alleged thesis about *The Catcher in the Rye*. According to Baudrillard (2010, p. 1558), "*To simulate is to feign to have what one hasn't.*", and that is exactly what Paul does. He simulates having money, influence, academic education and even an identity dissociated from the social status of his skin colour. Around the mark of 28 minutes and 40 seconds of the movie, Paul gives a speech about imagination and how it is God's gift to help humans cope with reality and with themselves. Again, that is what he is doing; by making use of his ingenuity, his imagination and the information he got from Conway and from books, Paul manages to live a completely different reality. Will Smith's character intelligently endues his new identity with values and symbols of the culture industry which Geoffrey and the Kittredges admire and hold as glamorous. Besides his flattering character, politeness, erudition and famous father,

Paul seduces the high-society trio by offering them the part as extras in the alleged cinematographic production of the successful Broadway musical, *Cats*, an icon of pop-culture. Even though we find out later in the movie that Flan dislikes *Cats*, he is fascinated with the idea of participating in its success, even if just as an extra. Peter Barry says that Baudrillard is concerned with:

'the loss of the real', which is the view that in contemporary life the pervasive influence of images from film, TV and advertising has led to a loss of the distinction between real and imagined, reality and illusion, surface and depth. The result is a culture of hyperreality, in which distinctions between these are eroded. (BARRY, 2009, p.84)

In that sense, Paul is not the only one creating images; the Kittredges also do that. They build up an image of an art loving, sophisticated and happy family around themselves when, in fact, their real interest lies in money. Their children, whom they barely know, do not like them. So strongly do they believe in the roles they play that they do not see themselves for what they really are. However, after Geoffrey agrees in raising the offer for a Kandinsky's painting (35 minute mark), the Kittredges get elated with the prospect of making money. Their happiness is so that Ouisa says, "*Who said 'when an artist dream, they dream of money'? God, I must be such an artist.*" and Flan compares Geoffrey (the source of the money) to God. This scene reveals their true selves; the art and cul-

ture they possess and know, for them, are just a commodity, simply a mean to enrich themselves with status and capital. Their fascination with pop-culture, their covetousness for profit by selling art, and the sophisticated image they use as a facade for their business enclose the Kittredges in the system of Adorno's and Horkheimer's culture industry; a culture that reduces art into a commodity, that creates and recreates homogenized social values and relationships, enthralling the individuals' consciousness, contributing for maintenance of the *status quo*. The *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* explains that:

The production of such art is also complicit with what Adorno and his fellow German social critic Max Horkheimer called the 'culture industry', meaning the constellation of entertainment businesses that produce film, television, radio, magazines and popular music – all phenomena created by mass technology in which the lines between art, advertising and propaganda blur. (LEICHT, 2010, p. 1107)


By the end of the movie, Ouisa wakes up from that hypnotized state thanks to her experiences with Paul. She then comes to the realization of how empty her life had been, how it was reduced into a quest for money and prestige to maintain her life style. Even her experiences with Paul had become a commodity in the form of an anecdote to entertain and attract more buyers. On the other hand, Paul uses illusion to

change his *status quo* and ascend socially, but he does not want money; even with all his cunning he only takes the necessary to get by. It seems that what he really cherishes are the experiences he has and the things he learns. He also seems to enjoy defying society's values just as he does with the place or status imposed onto him. For example, when he goes to a fancy restaurant with Rick and asks him to dance. He is defying and criticising the conservatism of those bourgeois in a much similar manner to that of the modernist artists in the beginning of the twentieth century. This is in consonance with:

[...] [what] Adorno would assert on many occasions, [that] the only legitimate form of art that can do some justice to the immense suffering in the world is the autonomous art of modernism, which, through its apparent detachment from reality, critiques the world as it is, holding up the promise of a better future. (LEICHT, 2010, p. 1107)

The greatest advantages in using the concepts of culture industry and *simulacra* when analysing *Six Degrees of Separation* lie on the fact that they are at the central topic of the movie and are complementary to each other. The first concept explores the simulating capability of signs, which is the essence of the later, to create illusions that alienate their subjects from reality, depriving them of consciousness and criticism and imposing specific social roles and models. However, the movie shows us, by Paul's exam-



ple, that human power of abstraction and imagination can also be used, according to philosophers such as Nietzsche and Adorno, in a critical, enlightening and liberating way. 



## References

**BARRY**, P. "Post-Modernism". In: *Beginning Theory: an introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester University Press, 2009.

**BAUDRILLARD**, J. "The Divine Irreference of Images". In: *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010.

**LEICHT**, V. B. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010.

**SCHEPISI**, F. *Six Degrees of Separation*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc., 1993.

## Education and the Nuclear Family: an analysis of *Lolita*, *A Clockwork Orange* and *Eyes Wide Shut*

1 English  
undergraduate  
student at  
University of São  
Paulo. E-mail:  
professor.fil@  
gmail.com

FILIPPE R. SANTOS<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** This paper aims to analyze three films by Stanley Kubrick: *Lolita* (1962), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), and *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999). By looking at the portrayal of the family as a social institution, the analysis is focused on the tensions inside the nuclear family, as sexual tension in *Lolita*; repression and State's machinery in *A Clockwork Orange* and social reproduction in *Eyes Wide Shut*.

**Keywords:** Education. Kubrick. Nuclear Family.

### Nuclear Family and its origins

The most basic sociological definition of “family” is the institution that binds people together through blood and marriage. In common sense, family is usually related to “nature” and “law”, which is why it is so important to understand it historically, once “nature” and “law” are conceived by many as unhistorical concepts.

The concept of family changes with time and place, and has mostly changed together with political systems in the western society. Phillipe Ariès (1965) argues that the family – as we know today, a private, domestic circle founded upon mutual affection – is actually a relatively new concept, developed throughout political and cultural changes in Europe. Ariès argues that “(...) in the medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist.” (ARIÈS, 1965, p. 125), showing that the process of formation of the modern and bourgeois family occurred through tensions which ended up being masked and considered forbidden inside of a family's core, such as sexual desire, competition, and violence (ARIÈS, 1965; PERROT, 1991).

As Ariès argues, the rise of attention and affection paid to children happened together with the rise of the modern European states, having France as example. With the rise of the state and the idea of citizenship, the emerging notions of childhood were consolidated by the new concept of Education, in which all families should give their children to undergo State's care and education, establishing a demarcation of a specific stage of life. Such separation becomes important as means of surveillance and control, in which children are subjected to become moral and disciplined adults, as Foucault also argues in *Discipline and Punish* (1977).

The general movement in which the nuclear family was constituted is from sociability to privacy, and in the seventeenth century, Ariès writes about the concept of childhood flourished. Therefore, this is also the historical moment that the concept

of family found its first “full expression” (ARIÈS, 1960). In the “full expression” of the nuclear family, the tensions inside its core were to be regulated or transferred to different social places. Sexual desire was banished from the nuclear family, since its true political and religious function in the modern state is to reproduce and maintain social structures, through marriage, patrimony and law.

The forbidden desire led to two different aspects in the social role of women; firstly, the married woman had her role decreased, once her new social position implied a simple way of reproduction and caring of her children, being susceptible to be punished by law if she did not fulfill her social duties. Secondly, there was an increase of prostitution, now determined to satisfy men’s desires that were not to be placed inside the nuclear family. The social places of prostitution flourished and were placed in the world of men, who had to manifest its power in the public and domestic spheres.

Perrot (1994) argues that inside the nuclear family the father’s powers were twofold. Besides dominating the public space with his political rights, it was also domestic to domain woman and children. If children did some “public offense”, or any kind of robbery, and was taken under State’s power to prison, the father had the power to refuse receiving them back, letting them in prison. Similar power relations were applied to women, who had no power to challenge men’s wills. Man is the master in the nuclear family. He is the master first and foremost through the power of money, Perrot writes; it

was through money that men were able to build their own little empires, *un rêve arriviste*, in which the consumption of products were intense, such as cigars and books, due to social status, and even prostitution.

The history of the nuclear family is of great importance when it comes to understanding and interpreting our social and historical moment. Most of the research done by the historians from the *nouvelle histoire* contributed to this new paradigm, yet, new resources to understand the social and historical tensions in society, and also in the nuclear family, rest in fiction.

### Family, Fiction, History

Fiction also deals with different concepts of family and it is a social and historical record of those concepts. With the rise of the bourgeoisie, thus the rise of the novel, family was represented and depicted as the core of social life, once the bourgeois values were centered in the “family values”. Family is mostly the way in which heritage and reproduction is guaranteed, taking marriage as the official means of financial and cultural reproduction.

The tensions masked by the historical and social organization of family are a common *topos* for the European modern novel, as we can see in *Middlemarch*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Le Rouge et Le Noir*, *Madame Bovary*, etc. The tensions – sexual desire, marriage crisis, violence, and cultural and financial heritage – are also explored and constitute one of the most important

*topoi* of the modernism movement; they are mostly depicted and explored – social and psychologically – as in *La Symphonie Pastorale*, in French modernism, or in *Mrs. Dalloway*, in England. Such as in novels, films are also forms of representing and questioning the social functions of the nuclear family. In this sense, it may be even more fruitful to explore the different representations of family in a novel and its film adaptation.

The forms of novels and films register the perspective of a determined social moment, and, as Adorno theorizes, socio-historical content is embedded in artistic form (ADORNO, 1996). Therefore, the study of such forms are of great importance to understand the meanings of the nuclear family and its reproduction; by seeing these forms sociologically, we may be able to interpret them as politic oriented forms of criticism of our contemporary social life.

Taking this into consideration, Stanley Kubrick's works *Lolita* (1962), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), and *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999) were selected to be analyzed, as well as , the novels that were used to produce the films: *Lolita*, by Nabokov; *A Clockwork Orange*, by Anthony Burgess; and *Dream Story*, by Arthur Schnitzler, respectively. The analysis of both novels and films may be fruitful to understand different ideas of nuclear family, its tensions and crisis, and even to offer a sociological perspective to interpret Kubrick's works.

## Lolita

**L**olita (1962) is certainly a controversial movie when it comes to family, once

it deals with many issues, mostly pedophilia. The critics of the movie tend to see it as an amusingly condense of Nabokov's characterizations and themes, even though Kubrick had to adapt the movie because of the censorship. Both film and novel are seen as an allegory of the relation between the old and the new world, the ambiguity of the traditional European who faces the vulgarization of America, even though he falls in love with it, he finds it wildly inappropriate (SHELTON, 1999).

What interests us, in fact, is the relationship between the conflicted mother, Charlotte, and her daughter, Lolita. Even though Humbert's forbidden desires for Lolita and its development are the focus of both the book and the film narratives, the analysis of this side tension may be of great value for the interpretation of the film.

Charlotte and Lolita are in constant conflict, both having Humbert as an object of desire. In the film, Lolita is constantly interrupting the attempts of her mother to attract Humbert, putting herself as a barrier or questioning Charlotte's position as a mother. Much of the tension in the dialogues between Charlotte and Lolita are related to the social expectations of motherhood, as Charlotte is clearly in opposition to them, and Lolita's behavior.

After the ball, when Lolita arrives and interrupts Charlotte's moves on Humbert, Lolita asks her mother about her dance with Clare Quilty, stating that "all the girls are crazy about him". Charlotte denies her moves on Quilty "That's

neither here nor there”, Lolita asks, “Since when?”. Not only did Lolita know about her mother desires for Quilty and Humbert, but she also put herself opposed to her mother - competitors for the same objects, Humbert and Quilty. It is the establishment of a triangle of desire that motivates the action, and, as James Naremore argues, Humbert sees himself as both a romantic swain and a guilt-ridden degenerate (NAREMORE, 2007). The tension happens between the two supposed roles of mother and child. The desire takes place inside the family resulting in competition between mother and daughter, as the constant fights between Charlotte and Lolita happen. However, Lolita still has some respect for her mother, as it is expressed when she finds out her mother is dead, leading her to a sudden mourning. Then, Lolita replaces her mother’s role, being the new woman under the power of a man; then again she constitutes a family with Humbert; then with Quilty, and again in the end, when she is pregnant and married to another man.

Little has been said about the family relation in both film and novel. Taking the traditional criticism on the film into account, the vulgarization of the nuclear family by American culture may be taken as a cause to the tensions between Charlotte and Lolita, since they are now able to move from their expected roles. Moreover, Michael McGehee (2011) argues that the tensions are the result of the liberal American family in opposition to the traditional European family, making Humbert’s desires possible to happen, even leading to the formation of a new family

after Charlotte dies. More than that, some critics see the relationship established between Humbert and Lolita as incest, not as if Lolita had taken her mother’s place, but actually the creation of a new tension instead of a new family, once she was considered his daughter, and socially introduced as so.

In the novel, the conflict is much more developed, as we can see the constant refusals and fights between Lolita and Charlotte. If Charlotte greatly accounts religion, Dolly, or Lolita, insists to refuse it, rejecting her mother’s will to go to church, and instead staying alone at home with Humbert. Lolita’s refusal looks increasingly defiant, as she holds a red apple in her hands, which McGehee sees as a representation of a Christian myth, Adam and Eve, and after Charlotte leaves, Lolita offers her apple to Humbert, both metaphorically and literally (McGEHEE, 2011; NABOKOV, 1989).

### A Clockwork Orange

Adapting Anthony Burgess’s novel, Kubrick produced *A Clockwork Orange* after *2001: A Space Odyssey*. It was the only film by Kubrick on the modern British society, later setting off a firestorm of protest from British conservatives and being banned by the British Board of Film Censors, which allowed it to a limited run. The film received the New York Film Critics Award, even though many important critics disliked it due to its ‘decadent’ content (NAREMORE, 2007).

The clockwork metaphor has been a tradition in sciences, both physical and

social, by social control and behavior modification, which has obviously much to do with Burgess's novel and Kubrick's adaptation. Relevant criticism on both film and novel relate the process Alex goes through with the power and control of State over individuals, mostly on the confluences of science and State.

In both, film and novel, the nuclear family is in its borderline, as one of the important members of the family, the son, therefore, the reproduction and maintenance of the nuclear family, does not fit in the role he was supposed to. His violence, lust and disrespectful behavior are no more a responsibility of the family, as the State interferes to control the deviant subjects, as Alex himself.

In the beginning, there are signs of caring by Alex mother, who could not dedicate herself too much to her son, due to family's finances, As Alex says: "*[It] was true there being this law for everybody not a child nor with child nor ill to go out rabbiting*". In the film, there is a dialogue between Alex's parents, asking themselves if he was in fact working. There is the suggestion of an economic crisis, as violence also rises, which families have to cope with, even if it means rejecting a child, as Alex's parents will later do.

In the first State's intervention, Deltoid appears as the "Post-Corrective Adviser", suggesting the traditional ways of social and moral coercion have failed on Alex, that is to say, family and school. Apparently, the social structure in which Alex is in should be enough to his education and social insertion, but as Deltoid says "*You've got a good home here, good lov-*

*ing parents, you've got not too bad of a brain. Is it some devil that crawls inside you?*" (p. 20).

Later, Alex is "treated" by the Ludovico method, leading him to be a brand-new *nice* citizen. Having repressed Alex instincts and desires, the second part of the film is the visit to the same places and people Alex had in the first time. When he visits his family, he finds out he was replaced, mostly for financial problems as it appears, but also for his inability to fulfill his role as a son. Alex tries to react violently, but ends up controlling himself. The inexistence of any other kind of familiar help is something to be considered in film. Alex has no alternative than being under the nuclear family's protection or the State's repression - work and limited family relations are the centre in which this nuclear family rotates.

The memory of family has been erased and is considered unimportant, grandparents have no importance in both novel and film, and besides his nuclear family and the State's power, Alex has no one to turn to. Violence also happens inside the nuclear family, even though it was not manifested physically; the rejection of Alex and also his manifested anger on his parents happen as the result of social tensions that are reflected inside family.

As Gehrke argues, Alex "incorporated each new discourse and practice as he was incorporated into it, but in so doing he has found new ways to please his desires. In the end, the modern goal of disciplining or curing violence simply succeeds in opening new pathways to new

forms of violence” (GEHRKE, p.149, 2006). Differently from the film, the British version of novel ends with Alex daydreaming about marriage and fatherhood, which may be seen as the successful interference of the State’s machinery to put Alex under control.

## Eyes Wide Shut

Kubrick’s last film, *Eyes Wide Shut*, is considered one of the greatest ones. Most criticism on the film has analyzed it in a physiological perspective, but we should rather see it sociologically, as Kreider (2006) argues, “Kubrick’s films are never only about individuals; they are always about Mankind, about human history and civilization” (KREIDER, p.182, 2006). Based on Arthur Schnitzler’s *Dream Story*, both film and novel are important sources of comparison and historical content, and as Rosenbaum (2006) argues, “Kubrick made this movie convinced that relationships between couples have not significantly changed over the past seventy-odd years, and whether you find it a success probably depends a lot on whether you agree with him” (ROSEMBAUM, p. 246, 2006).

The nuclear family is the centre of the narrative, whether inside or out of it, Bill’s, or Fridolin’s, in the novel, repetitive actions have this direction: he seeks satisfaction and then returns to his family, whether he had his sexual or financial desires satisfied or not. The relationship between parent and daughter happens with the suppression of any reference of an adult life, which is reduced to a schooling

practice. Differently from the novel, there is a strong emphasis on the reproduction of the family and its values.

As part of the middle class, both cultural and financial capital are fundamental to keep the same social position or rise in a capitalist society. In the film, Bill seems to be on the pole of money and depends on Alice to have his social position, having her both as a symbol of power – a beautiful woman in his possession – and cultural sophistication, since she has cultural knowledge, but due to financial problems was unable to have her art gallery working.

The scene in which Alice teaches her daughter math seems to be mostly representative of the family relations faced in the nuclear structure - the important knowledge to learn is how to quantify the opportunities of money: “Joe has how much more money than Mike?”, Alice reads. Seconds before, Bill represses his thoughts on Alice betrayals and behaves naturally in front of her daughter, playing well his role of father.

In the film, the focus on the daughter’s education is significantly stronger, as it is much more related to contemporary life than in Schnitzler’s time. In a sociological perspective, the efforts are for the rise or maintaining the same position of family in cultural and financial capital, and in a wider sense, the reproduction of family and, therefore, social structure and *status quo*. Differently in Kubrick’s adaptation, the novel ends with a type of renewal of family, while in the film, tension and finance capital reign.

## Family, Kubrick and the Uses of History

By the analysis of the three films, we can ask ourselves the social meaning and perspectives they have to offer. Considering their period of production and the issues in which they are made in, we may interpret Kubrick's works historically and sociologically. If we take Kubrick's works as a whole, the theme of nuclear family is treated widely. In *2001*, the nuclear family continues the same, as its foundation in the modern state, even though the film is placed in a futuristic time, social structure remains the same, while in *The Shining* the destruction of the nuclear family is taken to its limits. From this perspective, we may draw a line of socio-historical interpretation of Kubrick's films.

From the films, we may apprehend that even after the massive changes in politics, protests and liberation movements in the 1960s, social structures in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, thus the nuclear family itself remains the same. As a result of the events in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, mostly after the 1950s, they may be seen as intensifiers of family tensions, even though the social and political structure will always tend to preserve and protect the nuclear family.

Historical content is embedded in the films, as the crisis in *A Clockwork Orange*, which may be directly related to the social crisis that was taking place at the time. The power of the State's machinery over the nuclear family and the erase of memory is an element of great importance in the novel. Lukács' ideas on the

historical novel seems to be useful to understand the experience of individuals in both novel and film, as the new patterns of social interaction in the novel reflect a kind of 'social amnesia'.

In *Eyes Wide Shut*, the nuclear family seems to be the same as it is in the novel, but the role of money is intensified in relation to the Schnitzler's time, as the presumed liberation of women that took place during the 20<sup>th</sup> century had no effect. "The simplest yet most universal formulation surely remains the widely shared feeling that in the 60s, for a time, everything was possible: that this period, in other words, was a moment of a universal liberation, a global un-binding of energies", Jameson (1984) argues.


The feeling of possibility and liberation is no longer present in Kubrick's films, but there is a feeling of repression and the conservation of the nuclear family. As the feminist movement and other social movements in the United States, it seems that the 1960's had never happened in comparison to Kubrick's work, and as we could interpret it, the social achievements have disappeared or undergone a 'social amnesia'. This social amnesia is mostly represented in the way Bill and Alice behave, reproducing the nuclear family structure to the utmost degree, as it is intensified in late capitalism.

The reproduction of this social structure means the maintenance of the *status quo*, thus, inequality in all aspects. Changes in the structure of the nuclear mean political changes, and the State's machinery has as one of its functions the control and reproduction of family, in its



financial and cultural capital, as we could see in *A Clockwork Orange* and *Eyes Wide Shut*. The result of the unresolved tensions and decadent desires lead to the end of the ideal nuclear family or to problematic ones, as we could see in *Lolita*.

Understanding the nuclear family's social history through fiction leads to a wider view of tensions and social func-

tions attributed to the institution of family. Changes in social structure, moreover, in the nuclear family, have great impact in the relations of power and in politics. Kubrick's works offer a different view on these social issues, rather questioning the so considered social progress and the assuring that a conservative society and capital reign. 

## References

**ARIÈS, P.** *Centuries of Childhood: a social history of family*. New York: Vintage, 1965.

**ADORNO, T.** *Aesthetic Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

**BURGESS, A.** *A Clockwork Orange*. New York: Norton & Company, 2011.

**COCKS, G.** (ed.). *Depth of Field: Stanley Kubrick, Film, and the Uses of History*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2006.

**JAMESON, F.** Periodizing the 60s. *Social Text*, No. 9/10, The 60's without Apology (Spring - Summer, 1984), p. 178-209.

\_\_\_\_\_. Historicism in "The Shining". In: *Signatures of the visible*. New York: Routledge, 1991.

**LOLITA.** Stanley Kubrick (Director) Format: DVD. New York: Warner Home Video, 2007.

**A CLOCKWORK ORANGE.** Stanley Kubrick (Director) Format: DVD. New York: Warner Home Video, 2008.

**EYES WIDE SHUT.** Stanley Kubrick (Director) Format: DVD. New York: Warner Home Video, 2008.

**McGEHEE, M.** *Lolita and Transatlantic Family Structures. Nabokov Studies*, Volume 12, 2009/2011, p. 131-145.

**NAREMORE, J.** *On Kubrick*. London: British Film Institute, 2007.

**NABOKOV, V.** *Lolita*. New York: Vintage, 1989.

**PERROT, M.** Roles and Characters. In: ARIÈS, P. & DUBY, G. *History of the private life: from the fires of revolution to the Great War*. New York: Belknap Press, 1994.

**RAMUSSEN, R.** *Stanley Kubrick: Seven Films Analysed*. London: McFarland, 2004.

**SCHNITZLER, A.** *Dream Story*. New York: Penguin Classics, 1999.

**SHELTON, J.** 'The word is incest': sexual and linguistic coercion in *Lolita*. *Textual Practice* .Vol. 13, Iss. 2, 1999.

## Arts, Market and Culture in Woody Allen's *Small Time Crooks*

LUCAS AMORIM DOS SANTOS<sup>1</sup>

**1** English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. E-mail: lucas-santos2@hotmail.com

**2** HOLDEN, S. Just Take the Money and Run? Nah, She Wants Class and Culcha. The New York Times, New York, May 19th, 2000. Available at <<http://www.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9C00E0DD143AF93AA25756C0A9669C8B63>>.

**3** BRADSHAW, P. Fun-loving criminals. The Guardian, London, Dec. 1st 2000. Available at <[http://www.theguardian.com/friday\\_review/story/0,3605,404961,00.html](http://www.theguardian.com/friday_review/story/0,3605,404961,00.html)>.

**Abstract:** This essay aims to analyze Woody Allen's *Small Time Crooks* (2000), considered by many a minor movie in this filmmaker's celebrated career. Characters and plot will be considered in order to show how the movie addresses a major topic in Cultural Studies, namely the differences between High and Low Culture.

**Keywords:** Cultural Industry. High and Low Culture. Woody Allen.

By the time *Small Time Crooks* (2000) was released, most of its audience and critics stated more or less the same verdict: quite simple and neat movie; not Allen at his best, but one can have two or three laughs; a good pasttime, but easily forgettable. The New York Times' review (one of the most favorable ones about the movie) described it as "naïf" and "silly"<sup>2</sup> and The Guardian's review called it "lightweight and shallow movie" with a "succession of cracking one-liners"<sup>3</sup>. In these good-but-not-enough and bad-but-not-enough sort of general opinions, *Small Time Crooks* (STC) was consumed by audience and critics as any other disposable merchandise produced by Hollywood and, thus, completely forgotten in Allen's long filmography.

As a matter of fact, *STC* is far from being one of the director's masterpieces and it frequently resembles Allen's "early funny films", since it presents us with a good deal of physical comedy, gags which are not so well connected to the development of the plot; and it does not feature a narrative full of formal experimentations - as we have in *Annie Hall* (1977) or in *Stardust Memories* (1980), for example -, neither a seemingly magical-oriented plot - as in *Midnight in Paris* (2011) or *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985)-, and nor a Bergmanian dismayal anguish - as in *Another Woman* (1988).

However, if we want to have a better appreciation of *STC*, an understanding of it beyond a simple piece of entertainment, a deeper look at the issues that the movie raises is necessary.

*STC* presents us with the goofy petit thief and part-time dishwasher Ray (Woody Allen), married to the former stripper and celebrity-TV-shows lover Frenchy (Tracey Ullman), who decides, with the help of Ray's friends Denny (Michael Rapaport), Tommy (Tony Darrow), Benny (Jon Lovitz) and May (Elaine May), Frenchy's stupid cousin, to open a cookie store beside a bank in New York, so these small time crooks could dig a tunnel in the store basement towards the bank safe and steal its millions. The thieves' inability to carry out this operation is incredibly funny and it really catches the viewers' attention.

The unaware viewer could mistakenly say that this plot is simply a re-creation of *Take the Money and Run* (1969), whereas the postmodern critic would probably praise Allen's quotation to the 1958 Italian picture *Big Deal on Madonna Street* (*I soliti ignoti*). But Allen always has some cards up his sleeves that save him from producing repetitive movies (maybe only the themes of his movies are repetitive) or postmodern pictures (since he does not simply quote the forms and techniques of European *auters*, but he knows how to historicize these forms and add a certain social critique to them).

The robbery operation (which takes, more or less, one third of the movie) is surprisingly followed by a key-turning point in the plot: the selling of cookies turns out to be so highly profitable that, after the robbery failure, Ray, Frenchy and the other racketeers become millionaires out of it overnight – having to deal now with the “fancy” and “sophisticated” lifestyle of the New Yorker *nouveaux riches*. In this sense, what seemed to start as a goofy and flat comedy becomes a narrative about the protagonists' (un)adaptability to tread their ways on a social class, different from the one they previously belonged to (the urban working-class of New York) and all the consequences that this economic rise brings to their lives – in short, a narrative that deals with social and cultural issues.

Tracey Ullman's acting is spectacular and hilarious and it makes the movie even funnier and more enjoyable during its second part. We know that her character, Frenchy, is a fan of the world of high

society and upper-class sophistication from the first scene in which she appears onwards: she is lying on her bed, in her small and poorly furnished apartment, watching Princess Diana on TV and fascinated by the clothes she is wearing. Ray, who needs his wife to help him with the robbery plan, tries to “buy” her sympathy by offering her a small gift: chocolate. But not any kind of chocolate – “*These are Belgium*”, says Ray.

As a millionaire, Frenchy is not completely satisfied in having plenty of money and being the manager of her cookies company – she also wants to be part of a “sophisticated” and “refined” cultural élite who appreciates drinking wine and going to the opera. That is the image of “class” that Frenchy wants to acquire for herself. “*Class is something you can't fake and you can't buy, Ray!*”, she says to her husband.

But that is exactly what she is going to do in the film. Frenchy is strongly willing to enter the world of high society by purchasing and consuming arts, as if books and paintings (for example) were merchandise available in a supermarket of high culture. She does not even dissociate food from arts – “*knowing the finer things*”, as she puts it, is understanding about “*food and wine and painting and books*” – inside her mind, everything is kept in the same package of consumption.

Her joining the realm of arts is, therefore, totally degraded because she cannot understand pieces of art as being shaped and influenced by socio-historical processes (which may form their deepest and truest meanings); on the contrary,

Frenchy only sees these pieces as some sort of cultural cement to enhance her *nouveau riche* status.

Then, Frenchy hires the English bon vivant David (Hugh Grant) to give her and Ray “lessons in life” – smarten them up by acquiring a “better vocabulary” and knowledge in arts. Going to college is not an option for them, for four years is a long time; they would rather take a “private crash course” on high culture. Frenchy assures David that she “*would make it very worth your while*” (in other words, she would pay him a good deal of money).

It is interesting to notice how Allen updates the Pygmalion myth to the neoliberal America at the eve of the twenty-first century: instead of presenting us a story of the classy sort-of-intellectual white man shaping the tastes and the intelligence of his female companion (*My Fair Lady* (George Cukor, 1964), *Pretty Woman* (Garry Marshall, 1990) and even *Annie Hall*), the director gives us a character (Frenchy) who, using the entrepreneurial logic, voluntarily purchases the services of a private Pygmalion. Tracey Ullman’s character is certainly one of the best female creations of Woody Allen, for she really portrays the exact model of a figure who pervades the American social scenario of the urban cities nowadays: the wannabe intellectual millionaires who long for being seen by people not as a standard greedy shallow and money-oriented kind of businessmen (which they are, indeed), but as somebody who is really interested in the beauty and in the sublime of the Humanities and the Arts.

In the United States, perhaps more than in any other part of the world, the relations between the enormous capital of these shallow new rich élite and the functioning of cultural industry are explicit: the super rich patronize (or even own) museums, expositions, art foundations, publishing houses, movie studios, etc, whatever gives them good publicity in order to expand their businesses. Hundreds of superficial “private crash courses” on literature and philosophy, for example, spread throughout New York and Los Angeles and they are frequently attended by members of this social group. Woody Allen himself says, in an interview in the extra features of the DVD version of the movie, that Frenchy and David were definitely inspired by the new rich figures that he has met in Hollywood. Naming the protagonist “Frenchy” may imply to the viewer the idea of certain cultural sophistication (“France” and “French”), as well as the idea of market hegemony (“Franchise” is the idea that a police officer suggests to increase the profits of *Sunset Cookies*).

Another good hint for the viewer to notice that the main theme of the movie is not a bank robbery or the ups and downs of a marriage is a very short scene in which David, Frenchy and Ray are taking a walk in the city and the Englishman points to a house across the street and informs them that Henry James used to live there. If we do not pay careful attention to this information, we watch this scene only as one more comic passage of the film (Ray and Frenchy confuse the writer with Harry James, the jazz musician). But if we stop for a second and think

about Henry James' fiction, we can have a glimpse of what *STC* is really about: in his novels and short stories, we are frequently presented to American well-to-do characters living or touring in Europe in search of a "true experience" in contact with fine arts and cultures that the Old World has to offer – unlike the nineteenth century America, where wealth was abundant, but it seemed to lack the cultural refinement rooted in Europe due to its Ancient History. But this search is, of course, mediated by money that these Americans own – they are, just like Frenchy, willing to buy the European culture and wear it as an accessory. Marcos Soares summarizes this question reading Henry James' novels:

Em *Os Embaixadores* (1903), por exemplo, o protagonista Chad Newsome, sofisticado e sensível aspirante e a pintor que recebe dinheiro da família rica em Boston para financiar sua ambição artística, vai encontrar no mercado publicitário parisiense a verdadeira vocação para seu talento [...] Diversos desses protagonistas [James' protagonists], desde Daisy Miller, da novella com o mesmo título (1878), até Adam Verver de *A Taça de Ouro* (1904), vão a Europa em busca de experiências turísticas descritas em guias de viagens conhecidos e, portanto, desde sempre têm uma relação com os lugares que visitam mediada pela indústria cultural (SOARES, 2013, p.82-83)

David is also a kind of posh intellectual: he admits, a little bit embarrassed, that he did not study Arts in the

university, "*only Literature*"; then he "*inevitably wound up as a stockbroker*"; after that he "*dropped out [the world of finances], went to Japan, became a Buddhist, blah blah blah*"; ran an agricultural business (a vineyard) and he is currently a private art dealer. He plans to seduce Frenchy and gradually take possession of her money.

Ray, however, is the character opposed to the affection and the lifestyle of this cultural *élite* – Frenchy says that "*opera freaks him*" and he admits that he gets sleepy while watching modern theater or visiting churches; he hates wearing tuxedos and cannot stand abstract paintings (or any paintings at all); he despises school and the only thing he would like to learn is how to spell "Connecticut"; the haute cuisine is disgusting for him; as a millionaire, he misses the days when he was an active thief.

Frenchy, anxious for acquiring culture, warns him: "*you better wise up, 'cause if I grow and you stay as stupid as you are, we're gonna have big problems, Ray*". The different paths that husband and wife choose to take in the second part of the movie is what unfolds the narrative. But we cannot watch this second part only as a simple narrative of disintegration of marriage and love growing thinner – a recurrent stage in Hollywoodian romantic comedies that the couple needs to go through before the happy ending, when man and woman get back together and finally realize they belong to each other forever.

It is important for us to understand that the different lifestyles that Ray and Frenchy choose to follow are, as

a matter of fact, different cultures deeply rooted in American social history. In other words, different lifestyles that depict the differences between social classes in the United States of America.

As for Frenchy, we have already pointed out how she represents the *nouveau riche* class, interested in arts only as adornment.

We could argue, on the other hand, that Ray is bound to a lifestyle that resembles the millions of working-class Americans'. His habits, tastes and opinions frequently match the ones that the lower classes of big cities have, roughly speaking.

Some of these habits, tastes and opinions that make the character of Ray a representative figure of the poorer and humbler classes are explicit in the movie: his despise of the "high culture" of the millionaires; his dislike for fancy gastronomy (he misses eating cheeseburgers and meatballs for lunch, he enjoys drinking Pepsi and "*sucking a Bud*"); instead of operas, he prefers to watch TV shows and products of mass culture (he confuses the movie *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* with *Treasure Island*); he is a baseball fan (a sport which is historically related to the working-class); as a millionaire, he only wants to go to Florida, swim and carry on a simpler, non-affected and pedantic life; he also spent some time in prison (the solution that the government and the incarceration business had found for getting rid of poorer people in America).

After addressing the issues that the movie very subtly raises, it is almost impossible to think about it again as a

simplistic funny movie or a love story, although elements of these two genres are abundant throughout the movie. This possibly happens because Woody Allen knows that if he wants to keep making movies that deal with serious issues (social class differences, relations between arts, intellectuality and market, for instance), with a minimum of professionalism (gifted actors, good production, investment and distribution), these movies need to have some commercial appeal – and flat comedies and chick flicks are highly profitable.

Towards the end of *STC*, the viewer is surprised (and so is Frenchy) by one more turnabout in the plot: the accountants of the *Sunset Cookies* have been stealing Frenchy and Ray's money for a long time and now they have just become poor again, losing their house and all the other goods they owned to pay their debts.

"*Fortunes, they change hands*", says David. The changes of fortune in *STC* are swift, unexpected. Frenchy and Ray become millionaires almost out of the blue and lose everything the same way – almost as if gaining and losing a huge quantity of money was something usual and natural, a minor and smooth everyday process. The tone of the movie – lightweight, not very long, "easy" to watch and understand, swift scenes, the soft and lipid tune of Benny Goodman's *Stompin' at the Savoy* playing all the time, narrative clean as a soap opera – may also help to contribute to this idea of "naturalness" in the changes of fortune. Needless to say, much of this ideological notion is rooted

in a society completely ruled by the logic of the capital in all its instances.

In this society depicted by the movie, everybody is a small time crook – the accumulation of capital is decisively linked to the practice of heist. Ray and his friends are crooks trying to rob a bank; the police officer who catches them is a crook when he covers the robbery and demands a share in the profits of *Sunset Cookies*; David is a crook when he wants to seduce Frenchy to have her money; the accountants are crooks; Frenchy is also a crook when she steals an expensive cigarette case from David. When *Sunset Cookies* becomes a highly profitable enterprise, the company is presented on a television show which praises its corporative success but does not question how the company achieved it and became what it is (the original idea for the cookies being only a façade for a robbery attempt).

At first sight, the movie seems to end with a happy ending: husband and wife get back together – David leaves Frenchy after hearing about her bankruptcy and Ray fails in stealing an expensive necklace from the rich socialite Chi Chi Potter (he steals the fake necklace and keeps the authentic one in the safe, when he was supposed to do the opposite). Frenchy, disappointed with David, steals the valuable Duke of Windsor's cigarette case from him and decides to go to Florida with Ray. They reconcile after she understands, disenchanted, that her flirt with the high society world failed and Ray was right all the time. A very fake kiss (the actors' lips do not touch) closes the movie.

Does this victory of popular culture over high culture contribute to the happy ending of the movie? Was Ray all the time right when he criticized Frenchy's taste for refinement? If this is a happy ending, and Allen's filmography is not full of them, it is not a completely satisfactory one.

Perhaps it may be interesting to briefly remember the assumptions that Raymond Williams made about this phenomenon called "culture" in order to better understand this "happy ending" (and even the entire movie).

The author of the classic *Culture and Society* (1958), analyzing the Great Britain of his time, strongly believed that what we call "culture" could mean an entire way of living. Not only are the refined arts part of culture, but also habits, traditions, beliefs, non-canonical artistic expressions from the lower classes, etc - all of these could be part of the culture of a certain society.

Williams opposed his more materialistic and anthropological ideas on Culture to the ideas of elitist thinkers such as Matthew Arnold, T.S. Eliot and F.R. Leavis. For them, Culture was a realm apart from social life and it meant only the best and finest pieces of art and philosophy created only by the best and the finest geniuses. Arnold, for example, described Culture as "sweetness and light". For these thinkers, this highly prized Culture should be protected by true gentlemen who were the only ones able to enjoy the spiritual richness of a Shakespeare's play, for example. In Arnold's opinion, in the mid 1860's, "as

classes medias ascendentes são vulgares [...] e as classes trabalhadoras são, na melhor das hipóteses, filisteus ou, na mais provável, ‘brutos e degradados’. Cabe então à educação treinar uma aristocracia do espírito que dê conta de salvar o future” (CEVASCO, 2003, p. 44).

Thus, this authoritative elite who decided what culture is and what is not, what true art is and what is not, these advocates of Minority Culture are reborn in Allen’s movie as the millionaire patrons of arts characters. If David and Frenchy were to end up together in the film, they would probably resemble the couple Frank and Queenie Leavis.

For Williams, culture should not comprehend only the Great Tradition of arts and it should not be controlled and defined by a minority. Williams’ idea of Common Culture advocated for democracy and social equality. The poorer classes also produced their traditions and works of art throughout History and they should be taken into consideration as well as the works of that Great Tradition.

Unlike many people say, Williams did not despise or ignore the Tradition and only enjoyed the productions of the working class. Williams respected all the literature that Arnold, Eliot and Leavis praised, but he believed that the access to this Tradition should be open to everybody, regardless of their social class. Towards an egalitarian society, the poorer classes’ productions and achievements also need to be seen and understood. A truly progressive society, as Williams wished, would be one in which

all men and women could be able to attribute meanings and values to cultural manifestations, understanding their historicity.

In Williams’ words:

[...] a Common Culture is not the general extension of what a minority mean and believe, but the creation of a condition in which the people as a whole participate in the articulation of meanings and values, and in the consequent decisions between this meaning and that, this value and that. This would involve, in any real world, the removal of all the material obstacles to just this form of participation. (WILLIAMS, 1968, p. 35)

Back to our movie, we can finally come to the conclusion that neither the Minority culture (David, the *nouveau riche* Frenchy and the patrons of art are its representatives) nor the lower class culture (Ray and his friends are its representatives) by themselves can mean true happiness for the protagonist couple.

Let us try a dialectic argument: although she is consuming arts as supermarket products, Frenchy says she was a good student in high school (but she “could not afford the studies because there was always an emergency”) and, despite her dumbness, she seems to really make a sincere and honest effort to learn about this world of high culture. And what if she realized someday that these pieces of art have deep socio-historical meanings? What if she understood that they are not simply supermarket merchandise? What if she could suddenly see, after so much



time in contact with the artistic world, that Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, beyond a love story, depicts sexism in Victorian Age, for example? It is necessary not to ignore the "finer arts", as Ray does, in order to understand that they might bear meanings that may be used in progressive ways towards an egalitarian society.

When Ray is warned about his despise for the world of arts, he does not pay attention to the advice given by Frenchy's cousin, May (and neither do we, viewers, for we tend to think that May is a "dumb" old lady):

MAY: "Maybe Frenchy wasn't so wrong to try and make something out of it. You [talking to Ray] *underdo everything!* You know, there's more to life than turkey meatballs!"

Would the lower class culture of Ray, by itself, be enough for Frenchy to find happiness at the end of the movie? That is difficult to answer. But we can be sure that a society ruled by a wealthy minority, and in which not everybody has access to the "great arts" and the culture of poorer classes are also not taken into consideration - a society in which meaning of cultural manifestations are not democratically discussed and the cultural industry keeps producing piles of trash, while a feeling of anti-intellectualism grows fonder every day in the heart of the nation - this society is quite distant from achieving a progressive and revolutionary idea of Common Culture. y



## References

**CEVASCO**, M. E. Contrapontos teóricos: cultura de minoria X cultura em comum. In: *Dez lições sobre estudos culturais*. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2003.

**SOARES**, M. C. de P. A figura do escritor em 'Meia-Noite em Paris' de Woody Allen. *Itinerários* (UNESP. Araraquara), v. 36, p. 81-97, 2013.

**WILLIAMS**, R. The Idea of Common Culture (1968). In: *Resources of Hope*. London: Verso, 1989.

# American Culture of Exclusion: a semiotic approach to the protagonist's situation of exclusion in Kubrick's *Lolita*, *The Shining* and *Eyes Wide Shut*

MARCELA PRADO SIQUEIRA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. E-mail: marcela\_pradosiqueira@hotmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <<http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=3508>> Accessed on Jan. 22, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/303897/Jim-Crow-law>>. Accessed on Jan. 22, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Available at: <[http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000040/bio?ref\\_=nm\\_dyk\\_qt\\_sm#quotes](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000040/bio?ref_=nm_dyk_qt_sm#quotes)>. Accessed on Jan. 22, 2015.

**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to comment on the culture of exclusion that is incorporated in American society. In order to study this “exclusion” practiced by the same ethnical group, three different characters of three different Stanley Kubrick’s movies were chosen: from *Lolita* (1962), the character of Humbert Humbert; from *The Shining* (1980), Jack Torrance; and from *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), Dr. William (Bill) Harford. The commentary will also be supported by Claude Zilberberg’s semiotic theory on the *Principle of Exclusion* and *Principle of Participation*.

**Key words:** Exclusion. Semiotic. Stanley Kubrick. Zilberberg.

## Introduction

American society has not been built as a culture of mixture. Multiculturalism and miscegenation were taboo concepts that the powerful white elite would avoid in any circumstance, as seen in anti-miscegenation laws<sup>2</sup> and the *Jim Crow*<sup>3</sup> movement of racial segregation, for instance. However, this analysis aims to comment on “segregation” from a different perspective. The exclusion to be presented here is practiced by men of the same ethnical group. Similarly to the character’s situation, Stanley Kubrick was also an outsider: “As a Jew in a Gentile world, Kubrick would – like Freud – use his position as an outsider with a deep sensitivity to social injustice to expose the dark underside of society.” (COCKS, 2006, p. 189). Even in the filmic industry, Kubrick was independent from the massive Hollywood system, according to Cocks (2006, p. 190).

The three chosen characters for this analysis are: from *Lolita* (1962), Humbert Humbert, the European professor that falls obsessively “in love” with an American nymphet; from *The Shining* (1980), Jack Torrance, the wannabe writer that gets mad and tries to kill his own family; and from *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), Dr. William (Bill) Harford, the money-man excluded from the rich society orgies.

Despite the fact that Kubrick only read books for pleasure after he was nineteen years old<sup>4</sup>, all these movies are adaptations from novels that he had chosen to film, such as *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) by Arthur C. Clarke and *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) by Anthony Burgess. Cocks (2006, p. 186) claims that all Kubrick’s movies “display a basic taxonomy: (1) violence; (2) systems of control; and (3) inherent human evil”. It seems that he wants to show that it does not matter who you are, human na-

ture is always egotistical, manipulative and violent.

The analysis of the excluded characters and the reasons for their exclusion will follow the chronological order of the movies, focusing on one character at a time. It will also be supported by Claude Zilberberg's semiotic theory on the *Principle of Exclusion* and *Principle of Participation*. The next section will explain this theory briefly.

### Zilberberg's semiotic theory

A semiotic analysis is not the focus of this article; however, an element of Zilberberg's conceptual framework will be used to examine the situation of exclusion that the characters suffer in Kubrick's movies.

According to this aspect of his theory, all cultures are developed based on a range of degrees of acceptance, defined at its extremes by the concepts of unity – *Principle of Exclusion* –, or concepts of mixture – *Principle of Participation* (FONTANILLE; ZILBERBERG, 2001, p. 27). Therefore, depending on the way each culture reacts to outsiders, it can be denominated a culture of triage (from total exclusion to its relative prevalence) or a culture of mixture (from total participation to its relative prevalence). The ones that operate with the mechanism of triage deal with the opposition *pure vs. impure*, restraining cultural circulation, whilst the mechanism of mixture respects the cultural exchange in which no opposition is presented. It is a junction of different individuals (FIORIN, 2009, p. 118).

In the present case, the analysis will focus on the culture of triage, due to the fact that the aforementioned characters, at some point, are excluded from the groups or classes they aim to be related to. Zilberberg (2004) claims that when an individual wishes to move from his/her class to another one, it creates a tension between the classes and the presence of this single individual is then considered “weird” or “bizarre” to the other class. This idea is better explained by the following expression:

#### SITUATION OF AMALGAM

$[C1 \rightarrow [a,b,c,d] + [\omega]]$

(ZILBERBERG, 2004, p. 85)

C1 – Class

a,b,c,d – Members of the C1

$\omega$  – Different individual

If the different individual is considered an intruder or some kind of disqualification for the class (C1), as if contaminating it by his/her presence, he/she is eliminated (*operation of elimination* – ZILBERBERG, 2004, p. 89) by the mechanism of triage. Consequently, the class (C1) will remain “pure” and the different individual will remain an outsider.

Having briefly explained the concepts of mixture and triage, it is possible to begin the analysis and understand how the triage mechanism works in the American culture.

### Professor Humbert Humbert

Naremore attests that, in *Lolita*, one of Kubrick's aim was to create a parody of the “*well-made Hollywood romantic*

*comedy*" (2007, p. 101). Lolita figures as a representation of the United States, which is considered young and beautiful, but promiscuous, vulgar and permissive by the "civilized" European, in this case, embodied by professor Humbert Humbert. His contact with the nymphet causes in him a mixture of repugnance and excitement, which turns him almost into a slave-father figure to the girl. His conflicting feelings towards Lolita are most apparent when he grants her every wish as soon as they start living together, due to the fact that he does not know how to deal with the situation. He seems worried about being watched by the neighbors (*surveillance*), showing that the USA is not the land of freedom everyone looks for.

Humbert is a romantic and masochist – a civilized, anachronistic, alienated European who is excited by the philistine Lolita and enslaved by his emotions to such a degree that he becomes a servant to his captive. (NAREMORE, 2007, p. 111)

The American Industrial Culture is also something that bothers Humbert, also because he cannot understand it. Lolita's mother, Charlotte Haze, is the greatest example of it. She falls in love with Humbert and does not make any effort to hide it; on the contrary, she struggles to make it vulgarly explicit. Charlotte is the mediocre representation of American middle class, she is a pseudo-intellectual housewife, who speaks foreign words (especially French), owns false famous pictures hanging in her house's walls and loves Hollywood celebrities.

All of these details make Humbert uncomfortable and disgusted when he is around her; the only reason he marries her is to be near Lolita, as he cannot comprehend her mother's way of life nor the cultural principles she unconsciously follows. Raymond Williams defends that there is a mass culture and it is as valid as any other cultural representation of a class; he also points out the concept of *hegemony*, which presupposes the existence of something that is in its totality true, corresponding to the reality of social experiences. Charlotte, as any other American, lives in this *hegemony* fabricated by culture (in her case, American mass culture), that Humbert cannot comprehend. Charlotte is the only character of the movie that truly accepts Humbert; therefore, she dies.

Humbert faces his "arch-enemy" Quilty, the admired American celebrity who writes awful plays and asks Lolita to act in an artistic pornographic movie, besides being her lover long before Humbert. Quilty is nothing but a charlatan; he follows Humbert and Lolita wherever they go after her mother's death.

Quilty [...] is a cynic and sadist – a writer of American television shows and Hollywood films who easily makes a conquest of Lolita. He whisks her off to his castle, tries to force her to act in pornographic "art" movies, and then casually tosses her aside. The master of every situation, he enjoys humiliating Humbert and makes wisecracks even when he is being shot to death. (NAREMORE, 2007, p. 111)

Humbert feels betrayed by Lolita when, by the end of the movie, after she disappeared, he finds out that she and Quilty have kept a relationship and that she had run away from him to stay with the charlatan. And that is the ultimate reason why Humbert gets mad and kills Quilty.

In the last conversation between Lolita and Humbert, she is older, married to an American working class man and pregnant. At this point, it is possible to notice that Humbert is really in love with the girl, as he asks her to abandon everything and begin a life with him. He is ridiculously mad. Lolita does not seem happy in her current situation, but she does not feel anything about Humbert. Therefore, pitilessly, she sends him away, excluding him from her life forever. According to Zilberberg, the situation of amalgam would be configured as shown below:

#### SITUATION OF AMALGAM

[C1 → [Lolita, Quilty] + [Humbert] ]

Despite the fact that Lolita and Quilty also do not stay together, they belong to the same class, the Americans, which has a different culture and way of thinking from Humbert's. They do not want him to be in their class, not because he would disqualify it, but because they do not care about him. It could be interpreted as the manifestation of the *American Exceptionalism*, which proves the uniqueness of its culture and social practices when compared to the European, for instance.

### Jack Torrance

**T**he *Shining* is a movie about American nightmares, such as the Indians' genocide (the Overlook hotel was built on an Indian cemetery) and the inferior role women play in society. There are many lines of interpretation for this movie: it can be read as a horror movie (in its reality, ghosts and telepathy are real for the characters); or everything that occurs is nothing but the protagonist's imagination (in this case Jack Torrance's), or all the events are *fantastic*. According to Todorov<sup>5</sup>, *fantastic* is a supernatural event that cannot be explained by the laws of reality (2004, p. 30). It can be classified as *fantastic uncanny* – the imagination creates the events – or *fantastic marvelous* – the events are real, so the laws of reality have to be modified (TODOROV, 2004, p. 50 – 63). In the movie, it is difficult to affirm which kind of *fantastic* is being presented. The *uncanny*, in Freudian theory, comes from the notion that an individual who goes through a traumatic situation will face much difficulty to overcome it, living in a never-ending repetition of events. That is what happens to the main character, Jack Torrance.

Jack is a pastiche writer that dreams of social ascension. He dreams of going back to the 1920's, the golden years for the American elites:

The twenties were the last moment in which a genuine American leisure class led an aggressive and ostentatious public existence, in which an American ruling class projected a class-conscious and unapologetic im-

5 Num mundo que é exatamente o nosso, aquele que conhecemos, sem diabos, sílfides nem vampiros, produz-se um acontecimento que não pode ser explicado pelas leis deste mesmo mundo familiar. Aquele que o percebe deve optar por uma das duas soluções possíveis; ou se trata de uma ilusão dos sentidos, de um produto da imaginação e nesse caso as leis do mundo continuam a ser o que são; ou então o acontecimento realmente ocorreu, é parte integrante da realidade, mas nesse caso a realidade é regida por leis desconhecidas para nós. [...] O fantástico ocorre nesta incerteza; ao escolher uma ou outra resposta, deixa-se o fantástico para se entrar num gênero vizinho, o estranho ou o maravilhoso. (TODOROV, 2008, p. 30 – 31)

age of itself and enjoyed its privileges without guilt, openly and armed with its emblems of top-hat and champagne glass, on the social stage in full view of the other classes. (JAMESON, 1992, p. 95)

This ostentatious posture of the ruling classes, as Jameson affirms in the quote above, is what Jack aims to accomplish. He wants to be respected and rich, as in a mixture of Jay Gatsby and Fitzgerald. The ball scene is a great illustration of it, because it is his dream and he is the ruler of all, not the servant (the ghosts he creates are there to serve and please him, one of them even opens the door of the store-room where Wendy locks him in). However, Jack is not as rich as Gatsby is and he is not as good as a writer as Fitzgerald was. According to the Marxist ideas on the division of society, there are two basic classes in it: the Bourgeoisie (owners) and the Proletariat (workers)<sup>6</sup>. Jack is a proletariat; he was a school teacher (an occupation that he seems to be ashamed of), and now he is a hotel caretaker. Stuart Ullman, the hotel manager, is kind to Jack and his family when they arrive in the Overlook Hotel; however, he makes it clear that they are nothing but employees.

Ullmann points out that all liquor (of the gold Ball Room) has been from the premises, for insurance purposes another subtle reminder that the Torrances are employees, not guests. (RASMUSSEN, 2004, p. 245)

Therefore, Jack will not belong to the high level society he dreams of; he will

never be a guest or a manager in the Overlook. The same way, he will never be the writer he aims to be, and his frustration is reflected by the repetition, as Freud explains, of the sentence “*All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy*” in the novel he was supposedly writing during his “stay” at Overlook.

#### SITUATIONS OF AMALGAM

[C1 → [Guests, Ullman] + [Jack] ]

[C2 → [American writers] + [Jack] ]

The situations above summarize the classes Jack is excluded from, and he is conscious of that. Perhaps that is the reason for his madness. It is possible to claim that he sees the reason for his dreams’ frustration in his family. Wendy, his wife, is mistreated by him; she does not stand for what she believes and seems to be a sadomasochist, because she never complains, being a submissive female character. She figures as the representation of the male resentment for the feminist movement in the USA at that time. Jack tries to kill her using a baseball bat in a madness burst, because she was spying his writings.

His son, Danny, is also his victim. In the beginning of the movie, Wendy tells a doctor that once Jack, who was drunk, dislocated Danny’s shoulder because he was messing with his papers. From this moment on, Danny started to “shine” (see ghosts, spirits and talk to an imaginary friend, Tony). According to Rasmussem (2004, p. 280), all the characters that “shine” have this experience after a moment of “emotional upheaval”. Wendy has it when she is looking for her

<sup>6</sup> Available at: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/367344/Marxism/35147/Class-struggle>> Accessed on Jan. 28, 2015.

son to protect him from his crazy father with an axe. Another character that has this special ability is the chef of the Overlook, Dick Hallorann, who comes to the hotel to save Wendy and Danny from Jack. However, Jack kills him, whereas Wendy and Danny manage to escape from Jack, excluding him from his own family.

#### SITUATIONS OF AMALGAM

[C3 → [Wendy, Danny] + [Jack] ]

This last situation explains that Jack is excluded from his family because he cannot deal with his traumas; therefore, he lives in a circle he cannot escape from. Coincidentally or not, he dies in the Labyrinth of the Overlook's garden. The Overlook Hotel itself is actually one of the movie's character, as it is also a labyrinth created by Jack (studies were done to prove that the spatial arrangement of the hotel is impossible to be real). The Room 237, the "haunted one", is where Jack has a frustrated fictional sexual fantasy, similar to the other events he creates in his mind. In the end, the only place Jack belongs to is the hotel, the materialization of his dreams, where he will rest in peace. The *fantastic* remains until the last scene, in which Jack is seen in an old picture hanging on the Overlook's wall, smiling at the July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1921 fancy ball.

#### Doctor William "Bill" Harford

*Eyes Wide Shut's* central focus is, inside and outside the movie, money. The poor interpretation of the protagonists, Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise,

is visible on screen; however, they represent money and it seems that Kubrick wanted to show it intentionally; the secondary actors are much better at acting, though. The reification of people is the fuel that moves all monetary interests in the movie.

Doctor William Harford, or simply Dr. Bill (a suggestive name) is a social climber that, because of the services he renders, is invited to fancy parties, such as the one in the beginning of the movie, at Victor Ziegler's house. There he meets an old friend, Nick Nightingale, who abandoned medical school to become a pianist. Bill is also "working" at this party when he is called to assist a prostitute called Mandy, who was having sex with Victor only because she has had a drug overdose.

In a conversation with his wife Alice, she confesses to him that she once dreamt about cheating on him with a naval officer they met at a hotel they had stayed during a previous vacation. Bill feels uncomfortable by listening to such confession, and that is the point when his "adventures" begin.

After visiting a patient that had just died, Bill starts wandering the streets of New York in search of sexual experiences. He meets a prostitute named Domino, but he cannot have sex with her; however, he pays her a great amount of money. After that he meets his friend Nick, and finds out that he is about to play at another place that seems mysterious, considering that he has to know a password to get inside. Bill, excited by the idea of an adventure, insists on

going with him, even if it might ruin his friend's life. In order to get the costume he needs to enter this "party", he goes to a closed costume rental store. By offering money and showing his doctor identity card, the owner agrees to help him.

After this brief summary of the beginning of the movie, it is possible to notice that Bill seems to control everyone around him, making use of his money and status; everyone is an object made to fulfill his interests. Bill has a great apartment and has money to buy whatever he wants.

He flashes his professional credentials and hands out fifty - and hundred - dollar bills to charm, bribe, or intimidate cabbies, clerks, receptionists, and hookers - all members of the vast economy on whom the enormous disparities of wealth in America are founded. (KREIDER, 2006, p. 289)

However, he works in the service sector. He is not an aristocrat and this is very well illustrated in the scene that shows his and his wife's routine; there is nothing "special" about it. It is similar to Karl Marx's idea of the alienated labour, in *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, that "alienation of labour is seen to spring from the fact that the more the worker produces the less he has to consume"<sup>7</sup>. Bill has many things to consume; however, not as much as he thinks. His status may be powerful when he shows his identity card in a hotel or a hospital to get information and special access, but when it comes to really rich people places, his access is denied.

Before talking about Bill's exclusion, it is important to make a comment about the women in the movie. They also play a role that suits Bill very well. According to Kreider (2006, p. 281) "almost everyone in this film prostitutes themselves, for various prices". Therefore, the prostitutes - Mandy, Domino and Milich's daughter- that Bill meets are also a representation of his wife, Alice. All of them are beautiful, especially Alice: "a former art gallery manager who now stays at home to care for her daughter" (RASMUSSEN, 2004, p. 335) and in order to "keep" her beauty<sup>8</sup>, she is surrounded by mirrors in her house. The same concept of repetition mentioned above in Jack Torrance's section can be applied here. For Bill, all the prostitutes are a repetition of his wife, considering he cannot overcome the traumatic situation he imagines of being betrayed by her.

Bill goes to the mysterious party Nick has told him, in Somerton mansion. It is a kind of satanic orgy exclusively for very rich people, who get there in limousines while Bill arrives in a taxicab whose driver he "buys" to keep waiting for him. Everyone there wears masks, and so does Bill, which seems to be a metaphor that rich people always hide who they really are. The ritual begins, with a satanic-like music playing and the master of ceremonies saying weird words inside a circle of naked masked women. After some time, each of them chooses one guest and goes with him to other rooms of the mansion where they have sex. One of them chooses Bill and advises him to leave while he

<sup>7</sup> Available at: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/367344/Marxism/35145/Analysis-of-society>>. Accessed on Jan. 28, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Interesting to notice that the name of their daughter is Helena, which according to Greek mythology, was the most beautiful woman in the world. (Available at: <<http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Go-Hi/Helen-of-Troy.html>>, 2015). Therefore, when it is said that Alice stays home to take care of her daughter, one possible interpretation is that Alice's only occupation in the movie is related to her appearance (reification).



has time, because everyone will soon find out he does not belong there. But such advice only makes him more intrigued and excited to be there. He walks through the rooms and watches all the luxury acts; however, they do not have sensuality. The masked bodies make the sex practice robotic and mechanic, with no pleasure involved. Using the theory of signs concepts by the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, they are all signifiers without signified. Bill did not understand what was happening there, what the rich people entertainment was about. Understanding it or not, Bill is identified as an intruder and is excluded from there humiliated.

Upon confirmation that he crashed the orgy without an invitation, Bill is forced to remove his mask, thus revealing his individual identity in a situation where scandal could ruin his career. Then he is ordered to remove all his clothes, which implies not only a loss of personal dignity (he is not, after all, being invited to have sex with other naked people) but possibly threatened with unspecified bodily harm. Torture? Mutilation? This bizarre crowd seems capable of anything. (RASMUSSEN, 2004, p. 348)

At this point his exclusion begins. In this situation he is saved by one of the prostitutes that surrenders in a sacrifice in his place. Afterwards, he learns that she was the woman from Victor's house, Mandy, and that she died from a drug overdose. Later he also finds out that the other prostitute, Domino, who he did not have sex with, had HIV. Twice "his infe-

riors", the prostitutes, save him. However, he is not satisfied due to the fact that he did not get what he wanted; he would never be a part of Victor Ziegler's class. Victor tells him, at the end, that he was at the orgy and that nobody there killed Mandy, it was just a staging to make Bill afraid. In this conversation at Victor's place, he alerts Bill of his own place in society, "as a member of the serving class" (KREIDER, 2006, p. 292). He can never return to Somerton, because that was a place for powerful people and he cannot even mention who they are. "In other words, they're 'all the best people', the sorts of supremely wealthy and powerful men who can buy and sell 'ordinary' men like Bill and Nick Nightingale, and fuck or kill women like Mandy and Domino" (KREIDER, 2006, p. 294). Therefore, the situation is:

#### SITUATIONS OF AMALGAM

[C1 → [Victor, powerful people from the orgy] + [Bill] ]

Bill's exclusion of the class deals with his disqualification to be one of its members. His presence would spoil the existence of the class, considering that he is only an ordinary man. He has money to control people around him, but he is nothing but a simple member of the American working class that does not have power or influence to get an invitation to "rich people's orgies".

### Final Remarks

As mentioned in the introduction, Stanley Kubrick was also an outsider, such as the characters analyzed in this

article. In his movies, the human nature is shown as egotistical and violent, being capable of doing anything to get what it wants. Zilberberg's semiotic theory is based on this behavior. People tend to exclude (mechanism of triage) what/who they consider different or disqualified, and in America such mechanism was very explicit with movements of segregation and prejudice against "minorities", such as women, homosexuals and Jews.

Humbert, Jack and Bill were considered disqualified to be in the class they aimed to belong to. Each of them reacted in different ways when facing their frus-

trations: Humbert, the European, kills his enemy Quilty, who he considers to be the reason for his exclusion; Jack, the proletariat, tries to kill his family, but ends up dying because of his own madness; and Bill, the serving class member, who does not act violently, on the contrary, seems cowardly afraid of what happened and hides himself back in his family.

People's behavior is something very complex and Stanley Kubrick gave all his spectators a taste of it in his great works, showing the world that American society is *shallow* and restricted. Y



## References

**COCKS**, G. Death by Typewriter. In.: *Depth of Field: Stanley Kubrick, Film, and the Uses of History*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2006. p. 185 – 217.

**FIORIN**, J. L. A construção da identidade nacional brasileira. Ed. Bakhtini-ana, São Paulo, v.1, n.1, p. 115-126, 2009.

**FONTANILLE**, J.; **ZILBERBERG**, C. *Tensão e significação*. Tradução de Ivã Carlos Lopes, Luiz Tatit e Waldir Beividas. São Paulo: Discurso Editorial/Humanitas, 2001.

**JAMESON**, F. Historicism in “The Shining”. In.: *Signatures of the Visible*. New York & London: Routledge, 1992. p. 82 – 98.

**KREIDER**, T. Introducing Sociology. In.: *Depth of Field. Stanley Kubrick, Film, and the Uses of History*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2006. p. 280 – 297.

**NAREMORE**, J. Dolores, Lady of Pain. In.: *On Kubrick*. London: British Film Institute, 2007. p. 97 – 117.

**RASMUSSEN**, R. Eyes Wide Shut: The Waking Dream. In.: *Stanley Kubrick: Seven Films Analysed*. London: MacFarland, 2004. p. 330 – 357.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Shining: unsympathetic vibrations. In.: *Stanley Kubrick: Seven Films Analysed*. London: MacFarland, 2004. p. 232 – 284.

**TODOROV**, T. *Introdução à Literatura Fantástica*. Tradução de Maria Clara Correa Castello. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2008.

**ZILBERBERG**, C. *As condições da mestiçagem*. Tradução de Ivã Carlos Lopes e Luiz Tatit. In: CAÑIZAL, E. P.; CAETANO, K. E. (org.). *O olhar à deriva: mídia, significação e cultura*. São Paulo: Annablume, 2004. p. 69 –101.

## Electronic References

**FREUD**, S. *The Uncanny*. Available at: <<http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/freud1.pdf>>. Accessed on Jan. 29, 2015.

**WILLIAMS**, R. *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory*. Available at: <[http://www.extrememediastudies.org/extreme\\_media/2\\_mobiles/pdf/capsules\\_williams\\_base\\_super.pdf](http://www.extrememediastudies.org/extreme_media/2_mobiles/pdf/capsules_williams_base_super.pdf)>. Accessed on Jan. 28, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Culture is Ordinary*. Available at: <<http://artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/Gustafson/FILM%20162.W10/readings/Williams.Ordinary.pdf>> . Accessed on Jan. 28, 2015.

## Tempo é dinheiro: a pressa para aprender inglês

MARIANA LETTIERI FERREIRA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aluna de graduação em Inglês na Universidade de São Paulo. E-mail: lferreira.mariana@gmail.com

**Resumo:** A atual necessidade mercadológica de aprender inglês favoreceu a proliferação de escolas de idiomas em nossa sociedade. Com o objetivo de atrair o maior número de alunos, a promessa de um aprendizado rápido é vendida e apresentada por meio do discurso publicitário. A análise da construção desse discurso na criação do interesse por esses cursos de curta duração é produtiva e abre espaço para a discussão deste artigo, levando em consideração a escolha de imagens e produção desse tipo de discurso.

**Palavras-chave:** Dinheiro. Discurso. Inglês. Publicidade. Tempo.

Vivemos em uma sociedade onde aprender inglês é sinônimo de melhores posições no mercado de trabalho, um fator de prestígio e até mesmo uma necessidade no mundo globalizado. O resultado disso é o surgimento de diversas escolas de inglês interessadas em obter o maior número de alunos. Este artigo pretende analisar propagandas de algumas dessas escolas, tendo como foco a aprendizagem de um novo idioma em um curto espaço de tempo. Não entrará em mérito a eficácia das metodologias, mas sim a construção do discurso publicitário na criação do interesse por esses cursos rápidos. Conforme apontado por Orlandi (1999), “a análise de discurso concebe a linguagem como mediação necessária entre o homem e a realidade natural social.” (p.15). A realidade que o mundo vem nos apresentando nos últimos tempos é a de que temos que fazer tudo o que podemos o quanto antes, e não deixar nada para depois. Dessa forma, as escolas de inglês tiveram de adaptar seus cursos e sua publicidade para atrair as pessoas que vivem nessa realidade.

Contudo, defender o ensino de uma língua estrangeira baseando-se em argumentos tão simplistas é minimizar a dimensão educacional da aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras, segundo a qual aprender uma outra língua contribui para que nos reconheçamos enquanto sujeitos pertencentes a uma cultura e reconheçamos nossa língua materna, contrapondo-a à língua e culturas estrangeiras. Ao mesmo tempo, esse tipo de visão acentua os objetivos imediatistas da aprendizagem de língua, que, inevitavelmente, acabam por constituir alunos e professores. (CARMAGNANI, 2001, p. 120)

A escolha por esse tipo de discurso - texto agregado a uma imagem - leva em consideração que “na análise do discurso, não menosprezamos a força que a imagem tem

na constituição do dizer. O imaginário faz necessariamente parte do funcionamento da linguagem.” (ORLANDI, 1999, p.42), e são as imagens que acabam muitas vezes por impactar na propaganda e dizer mais até que o próprio discurso escrito.

Levando em consideração todas as imagens, o contexto imediato de veiculação foram as páginas da internet das escolas e mala direta via e-mail. Entretanto, algumas propagandas foram veiculadas em jornais e revistas. O contexto mais amplo refere-se ao aprendizado de um idioma rapidamente, utilizando o tempo das férias, ou então a configuração do curso, em dezoito meses (Figura 3); ou montando um plano de estudos específico (Figura 4), que permitiria aprender o idioma de forma rápida. As condições de produção são as escolas de idioma que pagam por campanhas publicitárias, para aumentar o número de alunos.

As propagandas são endereçadas àqueles que desejam aprender inglês rapidamente, atrelando-o, na maioria das vezes ao sucesso e desenvolvimento profissional (Figuras 1, 2, 3 e 4). Também são oferecidas opções de cursos no período de férias (Figuras 5, 6, 7 e 8), o que seria outro atrativo àqueles alunos que não conseguiriam conciliar um curso ao longo de um semestre.

O que vemos com mais frequência - por exemplo, se observarmos a mídia - é a produtividade e não a criatividade.” (ORLANDI, 1999, p.37), o que é o caso das propagandas analisadas, inclusive a mesma campanha pode possuir mais de uma imagem, como

é o caso das Figuras 7 e 8, que veiculam o mesmo produto de uma mesma escola. Ainda assim são utilizadas imagens diferentes, que podem atrair mais alunos por meio de diferentes situações engraçadas, ou que sabemos que não podem ser aceleradas na vida real. Afinal, “todo discurso é tecido pelo discurso do outro. (BRANDÃO, 1994, p. 46).

A polifonia é perceptível em todas as propagandas.



Figura 1 - Propaganda Seven Idiomas



Figura 2 - Propaganda Cultura Inglesa - Intensivo Férias



Figura 3 - Propaganda Wise Up



Figura 4 - Propaganda Cellep - Progress



Figura 5 - Propaganda Cultura Inglesa - Intensivo Férias



Figura 6 - Propaganda Cellep - Intensivo Férias



Figura 7 - Propaganda Cultura Inglesa - Intensivo Férias A



Figura 8 - Propaganda Cultura Inglesa - Intensivo Férias B

Todas as propagandas refletem a ideologia do *status* que o inglês agrega à vida profissional e o famoso “tempo é dinheiro”. Sendo assim “a ideologia não é ocultação, mas função da relação necessária entre linguagem e mundo.” (ORLANDI, 1999, p.47) e também “a publicidade é entendida como mais um aparelho ideológico que garante a existência material da ideologia e, conseqüentemente, a manutenção do *status quo*.” (CARMAGNANI, 2001, p. 111).

Ao analisar as imagens diretamente, levando em consideração alguns conceitos apresentados por Kress e van Leeuwen (1999), todas, com exceção da Figura 3, são imagens de oferta, pois indiretamente oferecem as condições e os cursos que estão vendendo. A Figura 3, apesar de não apresentar um rosto, remete fortemente à figura do Uncle Sam, que foi vastamente veiculada nos Estados Unidos para recrutar jovens para servi-

rem o exercito do país. É uma imagem de “pedido” - se você quer ser um coordenador, precisa falar inglês. Aliado a isso, esse tipo de imagem reforça o poder que a língua inglesa pode trazer para a sua vida. Fora isso, o *close*, ou seja, a aproximação reforça esse desejo e nos envolve na propaganda.

É visível a diferença no *layout* da Figura 3. Essa escola tem o seu público composto, majoritariamente, por executivos e pessoas do mundo corporativo. O apelo da imagem é direcionado aos interesses desse público.


A Figura 2 apresenta uma pessoa - provavelmente um executivo - que não tem tempo a desperdiçar. Então usa-se a figura com uma distância pública - levando em consideração que essas distâncias são imaginárias - Kress e van Leeuwen (1999) propõem que este tipo de distância mantém as “identidades”, ou seja, você não vai conhecer a pessoa do comercial nem ela irá conhecer você -, entretanto nos envolvemos com esse tipo de imagem, pois podemos nos reconhecer nesse tipo de situação.

Na Figura 1, optou-se pela escolha de bonecos impessoais, somente a cor diferencia o aluno do curso dos outros profissionais. Inclusive o texto desta imagem é interessante, pois de certa forma há uma

justificativa para o curso ser rápido, que é o fato de “aprender tudo o que *precisa*”, ou seja, o objetivo é comunicar-se e poder desempenhar um papel em situações corriqueiras.

As Figuras 5 e 6 trazem a mesma imagem, a de um foguete que comunica muito mais do que apenas a rapidez. Um foguete alcança lugares que são considerados inalcançáveis ou de difícil acesso. Dessa maneira, ao utilizar esse tipo de imagem, a escola procura mostrar que o curso além de ser rápido, irá muito além dos outros oferecidos pelos concorrentes.

É notável a intertextualidade das propagandas, e muitas vezes as vozes se misturam, independentemente da escola. O discurso muda pouco, na tentativa de internalizar-se no possível aluno.

Feitas essas considerações, podemos concluir que no caso do discurso publicitário, as imagens falam muito mais do que os textos escritos. A riqueza de sentidos por trás de uma simples imagem complementa as poucas palavras que são ditas/escritas em uma peça publicitária. Nada é ao acaso, e no caso das imagens analisadas, estas foram muito bem “utilizadas” com a mensagem que querem passar: cursos rápidos de inglês. 

## Fontes das Figuras

**Figura 1:** Disponível em <[http://e.infoseven.com.br/preview\\_htm.php?id\\_cmp=2104418&idem=39709&iu=4750&atmem=TEZFULJFSVJBLk1BUk-lBTkFAR01BSUwuQ09N](http://e.infoseven.com.br/preview_htm.php?id_cmp=2104418&idem=39709&iu=4750&atmem=TEZFULJFSVJBLk1BUk-lBTkFAR01BSUwuQ09N)>. Acesso em 18 dez. 2014, às 13h.

**Figura 2:** Disponível em: <[https://crisoliveiraportfolio.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/cinglesa\\_mai2012\\_trifato\\_22x305cm1.jpg](https://crisoliveiraportfolio.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/cinglesa_mai2012_trifato_22x305cm1.jpg)>. Acesso em 16 dez. 2014, às 21h05.

**Figura 3:** Disponível em: <<http://wiseup.com/>>. Acesso em 16 dez. 2014, às 21h10.

**Figura 4:** Disponível em: <<http://br.cellep.com/>>. Acesso em 2 jan. 2015, às 22h30.

**Figura 5:** Disponível em: <<https://media.licdn.com/media/p/5/005/097/181/129dba4.png>>. Acesso em 16 dez. 2014, às 21h15.

**Figura 6:** Disponível em: <<http://br.cellep.com/>>. Acesso em 2 jan. 2015, às 22h30.

**Figura 7:** Disponível em: <[http://payload212.cargocollective.com/1/0/29838/6546025/anuncio%20Cultura%20Inglesa%20Academia\\_o.jpg](http://payload212.cargocollective.com/1/0/29838/6546025/anuncio%20Cultura%20Inglesa%20Academia_o.jpg)>. Acesso em 16 dez. 2014, às 21h.

**Figura 8:** Disponível em: <<http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-oBQKwwDXZew/TOOsAMmB9zI/AAAAAAAAAOI/sji-8XTmcI0/s1600/cultura+inglesa+noiva.jpg>>. Acesso em 16 dez. 2014, às 21h.



## Referências Bibliográficas

**BRANDÃO, H. N.** Polifonia e estratégias de monofonização. In: *Anais de Seminários do GEL*, vol. 1, 1994.

**CARMAGNANI, A. M.** As escolas de línguas e o discurso publicitário: Construindo o desejo da língua estrangeira. In: CARMAGNANI, A.M. & GRIGOLETTO, M. (org.) *Inglês como língua estrangeira: identidade, práticas e textualidade*. São Paulo: Humanitas/FFLCH - USP, 2001.

**KRESS, G. & VAN LEEUWEN, T.** Representation and interaction: designing the position of the viewer. In: JAWORSKY, A. & COUPLAND, N. (ed.). *The discourse reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 1999. p. 377 - 404.

**ORLANDI, E. P.** *Análise de Discurso: princípios e procedimentos*. Campinas: Pontes, 1999.



# Attitudes toward homosexuality in the Anglophone African press

RYAN MARTINEZ <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at Universidade de São Paulo. E-mail: ryan.martinez@usp.br

**Abstract:** In recent years, Africa's political context has been characterized by the reinforcement of colonially-inherited laws against homosexuality. The arguments used by both supporters and opponents of such laws are linguistically marked by the use of particular words that materialize their views on identity, morality and sexuality. These words can be found not only in traditionally opinionated texts, but also in those taken as neutral, such as news articles - in which the choice of quotations plays a role in the construction of meaning. This article attempts to trace the diffusion of opinions on homosexuality in the Anglophone African press by taking into account 120 electronic versions of news articles from four different countries and analyzing their vocabulary automatically in and out of direct discourse using a computer algorithm. The results show singularities of the debate in each of the four different contexts, which are argued to be related to legislation and social indexes. As a whole, differently from what is often argued, the results suggest attitudes toward homosexuality in Africa are not homogeneous, revealing a complex portrait of local cultures. A tendency for journalists to mark their opinion more through primary discourse than by the manipulation of secondary discourse was also detected.

**Keywords:** Africa. Cultural Studies. Discourse Analysis. Homosexuality. Sentiment Analysis.

## Introduction: Discourse and Media

It is often said that complete impartiality is unachievable, even though it should be journalism's main motto. According to Bakhtin (1997), language is inseparable from ideology: it naturalizes our perspectives, used as a standpoint for any statement we utter, being consciousness possible only through the adoption of signs shared by a specific community, and having meaning only within it (BAKHTIN, 1997, p. 31 - 38). The impact of this on the presuppositions and social role of journalistic discourse contradicts its own pretensions. Rather than the longed-for objectivity, one may find newspapers affiliated to a particular ideology, reproducing it and arguing against their opponents more or less openly. In spite of the romanticized idea of unbiased journalism being so widespread, the existence of explicitly right or left-wing newspapers comes as no surprise to readers, who may often prefer to read texts that match their own ideas rather than the ones that contradict them. On the other hand, newspapers hold power over their readers' opinions, but can only do so by sounding trustworthy to them.

In fact, media is part of a wider social frame: they are not only senders, but receivers of discourses that circulate in their social context. By looking at media in a particular region, it is possible to characterize another social institution of that area and its ties with the bigger picture. Therefore, we believe that contrary to a common presupposition, given the plurality of discourses and social contexts with which media discourse establishes contact, it could not be considered homogeneous, which is also true about Western media itself. Even in current times, when globalization seems to homogenize institutions, there is still room for different presuppositions in news coverage, as shall be observed in this article.

### **An overview of attitudes toward homosexuality in Sub-Saharan Africa**

**A**n otherwise not very often remembered country, Uganda, has been recurrently brought into the spotlight of international news in Western countries since 2009. Ugandan politicians have been discussing and trying to pass a bill that would punish homosexuality with death penalty, alarming human rights groups around the world. In spite of the attention this bill draws, anti-homosexual laws are not news in Uganda, as a milder version of the bill has existed since its foundation as a nation-state.

Uganda is not an isolated case in the region. In 2014, a bill was proposed in Kenya condemning foreign homosexuals to

death by stoning, and Kenyan homosexuals to life imprisonment; however it was not approved. According to a 2014 report by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), homosexuality is illegal in 78 countries, out of which 37 are in Africa, making it the continent with the highest number of homophobic states. Exceptional states - such as South Africa, where homosexuality was legalized in 1998 and same-sex marriage in 2006 - have their gay rights laws constantly under attack by certain sectors of society (MSIBI, 2011, p. 61-62). One can argue the situation in South Africa is not too distant from that of some Western countries, including Brazil.

Even if at first sight harsh anti-gay laws seem to be a striking difference between part of Africa and the West, the origins of these laws may be analyzed as having little to do with local cultures, and much to do with the West itself. Former European metropolises, which are now Portugal, England, Belgium and Netherlands, had laws against what was originally called “sodomy” or “buggery”. When their own laws were imposed on their colonies, the term chosen to refer to homosexuality was the now prevalent “unnatural sexual practices”. South Africa’s currently dropped law was imposed by Dutch colonization, whereas the rest of Anglophone Africa inherited it from the British Empire. France had no such laws, and the consequence of this is visible when one compares Anglophone and Francophone African legislation (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 2008). Anti-gay legislation in European countries

was completely dropped only in the second half of the twentieth century, as the major press and mass culture changed its attitude toward it. Still, the effects of long-lasting institutionalized homophobia are felt in these societies until today.

Nowadays, the defense of an alleged 'African cultural identity', debate around innateness and Christian values are at the core of the discourses used in Africa to support anti-gay laws and attitudes. Byekwaso (2014), lecturer and columnist of *New Vision*, a Uganda's state-owned newspaper, uses the first two arguments to defend the Ugandan anti-gay bill. According to him, gay rights activists are "self-seeking individuals in organizations claiming to be civil society advocates but in actual fact serving the interests of some sections of Western countries" (NEW VISION, 2014). Avoiding religious arguments, he appeals to philosophy: "according to Aristotle, there is nothing nature put in place by accident. For that matter, nature did not put in place male and female by accident. [...] Therefore, for a man to have sex with a fellow man is against the necessary order of nature".

The answers to these arguments have been circulating for a long time. Cheney (2012) wrote in response to them by emphasizing the Western origins of both anti-gay attitude and Christianity. Another recurrent counter-argument is the massive presence of Western conservative churches in African countries and their influence on them (see KAOMA, 2011), which would be the source of African gay hatred. According to Cheney (2012), "[...] the similarities in the discourses used by

anti-gay religious leaders in both places thus indicate a link between African and U.S. culture wars over homosexuality." (p. 82). These similarities include equating homosexuality to pedophilia, sexual assaults and destruction of the traditional family by "recruiting" people into homosexuality, as well as the "learned behavior" argument, none of which are unknown to the Western context. Ironically, the only exclusively local element of African homophobic discourse is saying that this discourse is part of the African cultural identity, all the rest being an import of Western conservatives. Mssabi (2011, p. 64-68) lists anthropological and historical studies, as well as anecdotes, which show that same-gender sexual contact was common both before and during the colonization of Africa. Mssabi, not without reason, sees the words "gay" and "homosexual" as Western constructs which do not apply there, as same-gender sexuality had different connotations in pre-colonial African societies. According to the author, genders in Yoruba and Igbo culture before colonization were not necessarily associated to biological sex, among other examples.

In regard to the nature versus nurture debate, studies on animal homosexual behavior are abundant and often called upon to prove that homosexuality is "natural", as well as studies which suggest a genetic source for homosexuality and its presence in various societies (see LAVAY, 2010, for a layman-friendly collection of them). Nevertheless, these arguments are not commonly mentioned in dialogue on homosexuality in Africa.

Opposing the idea of Africa as completely hostile to homosexuality, there are a number of Africans who either disregard homosexuality as an important topic - arguing that politicians should worry about more relevant issues such as poverty - or explicitly defend gay rights and fight for them, even in extremely hostile environments. As an example, the prominent Kenyan writer Binyavanga Wainaina came out as gay through a literary piece in 2014, following a wave of anti-gay laws being proposed in a number of countries. He claims to have received words of support from fellow Africans. As a more representative example, a CNN report (2014) offers a comprehensive view of Ugandan religious leaders' attitudes. According to them, even though 96% of Ugandans are said to be against homosexuality, most religious leaders interviewed by CNN preferred to deal with it as a forgivable sin, or a different view that should be accepted, rather than a crime punishable by death. Also according to them, most Ugandans think this law is far-fetched and that politicians should focus on more "down-to-the-ground" issues. They are said to have no contact with homosexuals in their everyday lives, which would make such discussion irrelevant. As it becomes obvious from all sides of these discussions, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the state and its population, which comprises a whole diversity of standpoints. The press is yet another element of the social context.

English-speaking African mass culture seems to increasingly validate homosexuality as a pertinent topic, regardless

of their perspective on the subject. There is enough openness for the issue to be debated on popular television programs, often with heated comments from the audience being indiscriminately transmitted (see NTV, 2012, for a representative example from Kenyan television).

The thriving local movie industry has also shyly started to depict it. Nollywood, as is called the Nigerian film industry - the second most productive in the world - reaches all Sub-Saharan Africa. Nollywood movies that dare to depict homosexuality do so in an ambivalent manner. In spite of the trend of portraying homosexuality in a negative light, some of them bring very vivid same-gender sex scenes, in spite of censorship, which shocks conservative sectors of African society and suggests some fascination with it. Telling her experience in the streets of Nigeria, Green-Simms (2012) says producers, sellers and consumers are reluctant to acknowledge the existence of such movies in the presence of foreigners, but they are, at the same time, extremely popular.

One of the most well-known movies on the subject, *Men in Love*, is representative of such ambivalence. In the plot, a character played by the Nigerian star Muna Obwekie seduces and sexually assaults a married man (John Dumelo), 'turning' him into a homosexual. Genitals are the only off-limit things in this scene. In the end, Obwekie's character is arrested not because of the sexual assault, but after the Nigerian anti-homosexuality law, and Dumelo's character wife performs a well-succeeded exorcism to make

her husband straight again, accompanied by Christian chants.

Both in Kenyan TV and Nollywood, the issue of homosexuality in Sub-Saharan Africa is shown to be not one of complete ostracism, as it was in the West until the second half of the 20th century, but rather of a topic under debate, even if the fight sometimes seems unequal.

In the written press, this vast array of standpoints on homosexuality is revealed through subtle language devices. This article has these language devices as its focus, discussing both the intertextual relations they establish and how they relate to their context of production and ideology. In particular, this article concentrates on how local Anglophone African media differs on this topic from global sources due to the singularities of its context, as well as to which extent such differentiation occurs and through which language features.

In order to clarify what is meant by “positive” and “negative” attitudes toward homosexuality in the press, and how such attitudes are manifested through language, a Ugandan news article on the anti-gay bill shall be compared to non-African news on the same topic.

The comparison between a headline from the newspaper *Daily Monitor* (2014) and the international sources, Reuters (2012) and G1 similar headlines, can give ground to the assertion that this specific article holds a particularly negative attitude toward gay people. International sources mark either an apparently neutral or positive position on the issue:

*Daily Monitor*: “MP’s to pass gay’s bill as Christmas Gift to Ugandans”.

*Reuters*: “Uganda Says Wants to Pass Anti-Gay Law as ‘Christmas Gift’”.

*G1*: “Lei Homofóbica será Votada Novamente em Uganda”.

The last one is the most explicit in regard to its opinion. For them, the subject of discussion is a “homophobic law”, where the pejorative term “homophobic” marks an explicitly positive attitude toward the gay community. The difference between the other two is a bit more subtle: Reuters chose to put the negative-attitude expression “Christmas gift” in inverted commas, which indicates they are reproducing someone else’s opinion, not their own. Indeed, the sentence was said by parliamentarians, although *Daily Monitor* chose to use it as their own words, without inverted commas or reporting verbs. In their headline, it is implied that both parliamentarians and Ugandan citizens want that bill to pass, that it is not a matter under debate, but a consensus. *Reuters’* headline makes no distinction between sectors of that society: they are all Uganda, a unified whole. *G1* refrains from making such a judgement of the citizens’ opinions.

On the body of the text, words, expressions and quotes mark attitude. About the speech of a parliamentarian in favor of the law, the newspaper calls approving it “a point of national importance”. This shows a bias toward what comes next. Moreover, the parliamentarian’s self-definition is quoted by *Daily*

*Monitor* without inverted commas, which again confers ambiguity to whether they are just reporting or manifesting their opinion through his words: “Latif Ssebaga, who described himself as a chief mobiliser of members of Parliament who cherish our values, norms and religious beliefs”. The possessive pronoun “our”, in this ambiguous context, conceptualizes the parliamentarian, the newspaper and its readers as one entity. The same meaning effect of unification can be seen in the parliamentarian’s use of “our”: “we assure *our* people”. All of this would make an uninformed reader conjecture that the demand the house is trying to approve is very popular and that there is a lot of pressure on them coming from the population.

Moreover, the existence of “our values, norms and religious beliefs” implies that someone else’s standards are involved in the discussion. Given the aforementioned discourse on how Africa and homosexuality are mutually exclusive, the implied counterpart is Western society. In other words, this whole sentence is a reiteration of anti-gay arguments circulating in that society. It is not a direct reference to their “values, norms and religious beliefs” as a whole, which would certainly encompass divergent views, but only to the ones that apply to this situation and that support the journalists’ position on it.

Their choice of whose voices should be included also reveals a bias. The only people quoted by the article are parliamentarians who agree with the law, as well as the law’s text itself. Uganda’s par-

liament has 385 seats, but only the majority (261) that voted for the bill was given voice, let alone the Ugandan population and gay activists. Not giving voice to a certain group in major media is a manner of delegitimizing its existence. In contrast, Reuters emphasizes that “rights groups have criticized [the bill] for its draconian penalties against homosexuals” and G1 affirms it has led to “international clamor”.

The text discussed above (as well as its linguistic features through which homophobia is shown) is typical not only of the Ugandan press, but of the Anglophone African press as a whole. Nevertheless, the Anglophone African major press is characterized by a tension between positive and negative attitudes, considering that homosexuality is a topic under discussion in these countries. To test such a hypothesis, this article intends to mechanically look for similar linguistic patterns in a corpus composed of major newspaper articles from Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

As for the role and impact of this kind of text on these societies, the digital versions of newspapers analyzed can only be aimed at an urban literate English-speaking population. The role of English in most African countries is not that of a native language, but of a state language more often used for institutional purposes than everyday communication, the latter being generally done in more than 2000 local languages or in a local *lingua franca*, such as Swahili, predominant in the Lake Victoria region. This article shall not delve in literacy, urbanization and sociolinguistic matters, which vary among

the countries dealt with. Nevertheless, it is relevant to notice that, according to the 2014 United Nations (UN) development report, from the countries included here, South Africa has the highest human development indexes, whereas Uganda has the lowest.

## Theoretical framework and method

This article aims to identify the attitudes of each piece of news by its vocabulary and direct discourse marks. Up to this day, there is no computer model capable of dealing with every factor that contributes to natural language comprehension. From the news article, one can notice perspectives are shown through a number of linguistic elements: the choice of the quotes, their setting within the article and the constraint of boundaries between reported speech and original text, the word choice and factors upon which lies the understanding of every linguistic manifestation, such as syntax, pragmatics, etc. These last aspects shall not be taken into account by the computer model.

As a linguistic phenomenon, reported speech has been referred to as “discourse about discourse” (BAKHTIN, 1997, p. 144), meaning that every sentence attributed to a third person in a text is inserted within it not merely for the reproduction of someone else’s words; they are called upon to be commented on, either to be condoned or condemned. According to Bakhtin (1997, p. 148), a quoted text has meaning only in relation to the text in which it is inserted. This fact reflects

the mechanisms of communication itself: an utterance only makes sense within a community, and can only be interpreted from the perspective of a receiver within it.

Similarly to the receiver’s background and world knowledge, which contribute to his or her interpretation of new information, texts lay the frames through which a quote is supposed to be interpreted by its intended receiver - in our case the newspaper readers. Such frames may be more or less explicitly opinionated, varying from taking a source’s words as absolute truth to conceptualizing everything as relative. There are also varying degrees of demarcation of quotes, from complete isolation from the rest of the text to complete incorporation. These two factors - agreement and demarcation - are mutually independent. For our purpose - defining attitudes - reported speech demarcation matters inasmuch as it is used to the establishment of stances.

To understand the linguistic specificities of media discourse, specifically the established formal features of news articles, as well as how opinions manifest through them, this article relies particularly on the concept of boundary maintenance. It refers to the relation between primary discourse (i.e. the text someone is directly exposed to) and secondary discourse (a discourse reported in the primary discourse), in terms of how their voices overlap. Such convergences and divergences may be identified by looking at features such as usage of direct and indirect discourse, the setting of a quotation within a news article and word choice

(FAIRCLOUGH, 1995). In other words, this article looks at how the formal features that introduce someone's opinion in a news article reveal a stance toward that opinion.

The clearest voice overlap occurs in the absence of a formal feature that attributes a speech to its source, making it sound as if it were part of the primary discourse. To refer to this kind of overlap, the term "unsignalled" shall be borrowed from Fairclough (1995, p. 57). This is seen in the *Daily Monitor* article headline. Another kind of overlap is identified when, in indirect speech, the reporting verb is placed after the reported sentence, foregrounding and legitimizing it. Fairclough cites the following sentence as an example: "The evil traffickers are the most serious peace-time threat to Britain, warned a top team of MPs" (1995, p. 59).

Finally, convergence and divergence of voices may be spotted by the localization of marked words, such as "gift" mentioned above, as well as marked reporting clauses such as "raising a point of national importance" and adjectives in general. The usage of marked words without inverted commas (either un-signalled or signalled by indirect discourse) is a strong indicator of attitude. Consider, for instance, the news article passage from the *Daily Monitor* on Latif Ssebagala, "who described himself as a chief mobiliser of members of Parliament who cherish our values, norms and religious beliefs". The vocabulary here reveals an attitude, but it is the absence of inverted commas that suggests it is shared by both primary (the news

article) and secondary discourse (the MP's utterance).

Regarding vocabulary, this article subscribes to Bakhtin's idea that signs are established, disseminated and have meaning only within a certain community, being inseparable from an ideological function (1997, p. 36-37). For our purpose, this means that it is necessary to identify words associated to a particular ideology in the specific context of African news articles about homosexuality. The lexicon associated with a certain stance was elaborated based on the observation of arguments used on both sides of the discussion, as exposed in section 1.2., as follows<sup>2</sup>.

**Negative attitude lexicon:** CUSTOM, NORM, TRADITION, un-African, VALUE, Western, ENCOURAGE, LURE, PROMOTE, RECRUIT, BEHAVIOR, HABIT, disease, disorder, medical, nature, natural, PRACTICE, sick, treatment, unnatural, anti-religious, Allah, Bible, evil, God, holy, SOMODOMY, gay agenda, gay rights agenda, gay lobby, pro-gay.

**Positive attitude lexicon:** ahistorical, amnesia, TRADITIONALISM, PURITAN, DIVERSITY, freedom, HATE, hatred, HARASS, DISCRIMINATE, INTIMIDATE, SHAME, HOMOPHOBIA, JUDGE, INDIVIDUAL, TOLERANCE, acceptance, VIOLENCE, PRIVACY, STIGMA, prejudice, repressive, gender, orientation, secular, FUNDAMENTALISM, MINORITY, CONSERVATIVE, evangelical lobby, religious lobby, evangelical agenda, EXTREMISM, FASCISM, equality, inequality.

Considering that news articles follow a more or less standardized lan-

2 It is emphasized that all words in capital letters indicate lexemes. Each of them includes every pertinent form of that particular unit. For example: HARASS includes "harass", "harassed", "harassing" and "harassment".



guage, and that the subject here - homosexuality in Anglophone Africa - is even more circumscribed, the formal features identified above are enough to build a somewhat efficient sentiment analysis algorithm to the specific purpose of automatically identifying opinionated passages in news articles written by Anglophone African journalists in recent years. This article intends to conduct what Liu (2012) calls “document level” sentiment analysis, that is, to identify in circumscribed texts the prevalence of positive or negative attitudes toward a single entity, understood as homosexuality, with no regard to particular aspects.

Although this approach is referred to as sentiment analysis, our domain and object of analysis differs from what it is generally applied to, respectively, the market and explicitly opinionated texts about consumer goods. As a consequence, differently from standard sentiment analysis, the so-called “sentiment lexicon” (words like “good”, “bad”, “awesome”, etc.) is irrelevant for our purpose, giving place to the hand-selected lexicon above. Being sentiment analysis algorithms Natural Language Processing tools, just like any tool, they do not need to be restricted to a certain domain or specific purpose, even if it is generally associated with intrinsically capitalistic needs.

One can argue this machine approach is limited and does not fully substitute human interpretation. First, because such a binary approach leaves aside a number of the debate’s nuances, all of which are not denied in this article, including common stances such as partial acceptance of

homosexuality, acceptance of homosexual individuals but not of their habits, or condemnation of homosexuality but not sympathetic to its criminalization. In our approach, the first two would fall under the label of ‘positive’ attitude, whereas the last would fall under ‘negative’. Also, this model is designed to deal with indirect opinions, but fails to understand direct ones. This is due to a presupposition that news articles, due to genre constraints, are never explicit in regard to their opinions. Nevertheless, some samples of the corpus bring direct opinions from quotations with low boundary maintenance. The model is therefore incapable of correctly attributing a sentiment to passages such as one found in a Kenyan *The Star* article: “gay rights movement should be criminalized”. Similarly, a hypothetical sentence such as “our journalists think homophobia is very nice” would count as a positive attitude sentence, because it contains the word “homophobia”. Nevertheless, most of the corpus is composed of indirect opinions, making our limited algorithm reasonably accurate.

The purpose here is to be able to summarize a large amount of data into representative numbers that can shed light on our subject as a whole. The use of a computer algorithm to interpret the data is coherent with the purpose of exploring the topic in a general manner, choosing for instance to explore many newspapers from four different countries (which means more than four different realities) rather than concentrating on a particular place or newspaper. Nevertheless, all the singularities that are being left aside are

crucial to the understanding of this subject as much as the broader understanding this article seeks. Also, the analysis of a large corpus is much more representative than that of a small one.

The Python-based algorithm detects the occurrence of the positive and negative lexemes, taking into account whether or not they occur in inverted commas, subsequently having their values assigned to two different variables, one for high (HBM) and another for low boundary maintenance (LBM). These variables have a starting value of 0. The occurrence of a negative word decreases a variable's value by one, whereas a positive word increases it by one. After all occurrences have been considered, the variable corresponding to LBM has primacy over the other one in the final verdict. If it is higher than 1, the article is considered to have a positive attitude toward homosexuality. The opposite happens if the value is lower than -1. If the value lies between -1 and 1, the article is considered to be ambiguous. In that case, the HBM variable is analyzed, to check whether the news article is biased toward quotations with a particular attitude. For this variable, the values have to be higher than 2 or lower than -2 to determine a bias. Otherwise, the article is finally marked as undetermined in regards to its attitude. These values were generated by experimentation with a number of texts not included in the final corpus. Finally, for each newspaper, the values are summed up to define overall positive attitude value, overall negative attitude value and overall attitude.

The corpus consists of 120 news articles from the digital versions of nine different newspapers: *Daily Monitor*, *New Vision* (Uganda), *Daily Nation*, *Standard*, *The Star* (Kenya), *Punch*, *Vanguard* (Nigeria), *Sowetan* and *Times* (South Africa). Although some of these websites publish news by major global sources, such as BBC, Reuters and AFP, only locally-written articles were selected. All of them contain the words "gay", "homosexual" or "homosexuality" in their headlines and none are opinion articles, although these were used to gather the lexicon and run tests for accuracy.

## Results and analysis

The results obtained through the algorithm were as follows. For each newspaper, 15 articles were analyzed.

Ugandan newspapers:

*Daily Monitor*: Positive bias: 2. Negative bias: 10. Overall corpus bias: -8.

*New Vision*: Positive bias: 3. Negative bias: 9. Overall corpus bias: -6.

Kenyan newspapers:

*Daily Nation*: Positive bias: 4. Negative bias: 4. Overall corpus bias: 0.

*The Star* (5 articles only): Positive bias: 1. Negative bias: 1. Overall corpus bias: 0.

*Standard* (10 articles only): Positive bias: 4. Negative bias: 3. Overall corpus bias: 1.

Nigerian newspapers:

*Punch*: Positive bias: 2. Negative bias: 4. Overall corpus bias: -2.

*Vanguard*: Positive bias: 7. Negative bias: 4. Overall corpus bias: 3.

South African newspapers:

*Sowetan*: Positive bias: 9. Negative bias: 2. Overall corpus bias: 7.

*Times*: Positive bias: 6. Negative bias: 1. Overall corpus bias: 5.

It follows that the results form a continuum from Ugandan newspapers to South African ones, with Kenya and Nigeria in a debate zone. Such diversified results, rather than tendentious ones, reinforce the original hypothesis of this article: although the treatment of homosexuality by the local press differs from that of globalized sources, gay rights are not unanimously opposed by the media. Even in places where it is criminalized, homosexuality is a topic under heated discussion, with an openness that surpasses that of Western society before social movements came into play. The results for Kenya and Nigeria would suggest that these are the countries where homosexuality is more ambivalent, at least when it comes to the media. Uganda and South Africa would be the most conservative and progressive ones, respectively. Indeed, these results correlate with a number of factors of such countries. Uganda's hype around death penalty for gay people and South Africa's legalization of same-sex marriage are the most evident ones. It is also relevant that these results match the human development indexes of these countries: the lower the HDI, the more homosexuality is opposed.

Nigeria, where laws criminalizing public display of affection between people of the same gender and gay rights groups were recently approved, on the

grounds that anti-gay sentiment is unanimous, has results that show more complexity in what concerns journalism. Adetiba's (2014) opinion article on the gay bill is a manifest example of a counterpoint to the alleged unanimity in Nigeria. Apart from the growing cultural interest on the theme, as seen from Nollywood, Google statistics show that Nigeria is the third country where the term "gay sex pics" is searched more often, the second being South Africa and the first Kenya (METRO, 2014). Internet access has to be taken into account when interpreting these data, as it is more widespread in these three countries than in Uganda, for example. Kenya comes across as slightly more open to the subject of homosexuality. On the Kenyan newspapers analyzed, examples of opinion articles favorable to homosexuality abound, in spite of anti-gay legislation in force. Take Mutua (2015) as a recent example.

Therefore, the results obtained from news articles offer a representation of media stances on homosexuality which corroborates trends observed in opinion articles and other local cultural and legislative elements. News articles reveal the attitudes of the society they are inserted in, including their likes, dislikes, and uncertainties. All of these are manifested through words, established within communities to whom the world functions in a particular way. It might be argued that words naturalize points of view, transforming abstract ideas into what social groups perceive as concrete elements of their lives, even if they cannot be perceived as concrete by another

social group. Therefore, words and opinions reveal to have a strong connection, to the point of being possible to relate a particular word usage to a certain mindset, as was done in this article.

In the specific context of Uganda, what comes as a surprise is that, even though *Daily Monitor* and *New Vision* are respectively independent and state-owned, there is no difference in their attitude toward this topic. Current Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's regime has an oscillating attitude in relation to freedom of press. On the one hand, the beginning of his long-lasting mandate, in 1986, maintained the relative openness of his predecessors, when compared to the extremely hostile environment of Idi Amin's government, when the press became exclusively state-owned. On the other hand, many of the independent Ugandan journalists have been repeatedly called to court by his regime for subversive news, being *Daily Monitor*, an openly oppositionist newspaper, one of the most frowned upon by Museveni, and still one of the most high-circulating and relevant ones (TABAIRE, 2007).

The role of direct discourse in the corpus was unexpected. Out of the 120 articles, only 3 had their attitudes effectively disambiguated by taking into account direct discourse. Also, in 79 of them, the attitude value of HBM text was 0, while LBM was either higher or lower. In 30, the value of HBM matched that of LBM in being positive, negative or undetermined, the latter corresponding to 11 of the 30 occurrences. In 11, HBM and LBM didn't match, meaning one was

positive and the other, negative. This suggests a pattern on how HBM and LBM interact when building a discourse in this specific genre. There is a tendency of being less biased in quotation choice, giving voice to different opinions even if primary discourse directs them to a particular stance. Doing so is part of the already mentioned attempted neutrality of journalistic discourse. Slightly less common is the tendency to give voice only to those who agree and, even less common, to preferably let dissonant voices in.


## Conclusion

This article attempted to capture the present state of homosexuality in Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole from a linguistic perspective, emphasizing the language features that relate to stances on the topic on a particular discursive genre: news articles. As far as discourse and language studies are concerned, it led to the observation of patterns in the meaning of reported speech in news articles, especially in relation to the manifestation of the sender's subjectivity in a genre constrained by objectivity. On that note, the corpus came across as very prolific in examples of opinion manifestation. It is possible to hypothesize that controversial issues give more ground for opinionated texts in this genre, and that the study of texts on topics under debate may lead to a better understanding of opinion-related discursive features.

Regarding Africa and homosexuality, this article depicts societies that find themselves in earlier stages of global processes constrained by local factors. Al-

though this article has been employing the word “West” as opposed to “Africa”, as post-colonialists and pan-africanists usually do, Africa is far from being clearly separate from the West. Furthermore, the effects of colonialism itself over African cultures cannot be ignored, from its border divisions and official languages to religion, morality and even the concept of homosexuality itself, which now comes to Africa from the “West” to be interpreted through ideologies which were also inherited from the “West” through cultural contact. In spite of sharing a single origin, these are contradictory, as is the Western culture itself and any culture as they change. As suggested by Canagarajah (2005), cultural exchange with the West is inevitable, but not

necessarily harmful.

In this specific case, the cultural elements that Africa has absorbed from the West are now contested in it exactly because it excludes and imposes harsh limits on certain people. The analysis of the news articles shows that, after receiving a strict model of sexuality, Africa is now receiving the reaction against it also through the discourses that start to circulate in that society, which can be said to be as much “Western” as the discourses they oppose. Nevertheless, the discursive and cultural aspects of the debate are but one point of it. Further studies with different focuses and approaches (economic, literary, political, etc.) might help understand this process and its various nuances as it goes on. 



## References

**BAKH'TIN**, M. *Marxismo e Filosofia da Linguagem*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1997.

**CANAGARAJAH**, S. Reconstructing Local Knowledge, Reconfiguring Language Studies. In: *Reclaiming the Local in Language Policy and Practice*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers, 2005. Chapter 1.

**CHENEY**, K. Locating Neocolonialism, Tradition, and Human Rights in Uganda's Gay Death Penalty. *African Studies Review*, 2012. v. 55, n. 2, p. 77-95. Available at: [http://www.academia.edu/1053858/Locating\\_Neocolonialism\\_Tradition\\_and\\_Human\\_Rights\\_in\\_Uganda\\_s\\_Gay\\_Death\\_Penalty](http://www.academia.edu/1053858/Locating_Neocolonialism_Tradition_and_Human_Rights_in_Uganda_s_Gay_Death_Penalty)>. Accessed on May 2, 2015.

**CNN**, 2014. On Homosexuality: Uganda's Religious Leaders. Available at:

<http://edition.cnn.com/2014/10/16/world/africa/on-homosexuality-ugandas-religious-leaders/index.html?iref=all-search>>. Accessed on Jan. 15, 2015.

**DAILY MONITOR**, 2014. MPs to pass gays bill as Christmas gift to Ugandans. Available at: <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/MPs-to-pass-gays-bill-as-Christmas-gift-to-Ugandans/-/688334/2545046/-/plk9rjz/-/index.html>>. Accessed on Jan. 1, 2015.

**FAIRCLOUGH**, N. Discourse representation in media discourse. In: *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Longman: London, 1995. p. 54 -69.

**G1**, 2014. Lei Homofóbica será votada novamente em Uganda. Available

at: <http://g1.globo.com/mundo/noticia/2014/08/lei-homofobica-sera-votada-novamente-em-uganda.html>>. Accessed on Jan. 15, 2015.

**GRENN-SIMMS, L.; AZUAH, U.** The Video Closet: Nollywood's gay-themed movies. 2012 *Transition* v. 107 n. 1, p. 32-49. Available at: [http://www.academia.edu/3590070/\\_The\\_Video\\_Closet\\_Nollywood\\_s\\_Gay\\_Themed\\_Movies](http://www.academia.edu/3590070/_The_Video_Closet_Nollywood_s_Gay_Themed_Movies)>. Accessed on May 5, 2015.

**HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH.** *This alien legacy: the origins of "sodomy" laws in British colonialism.* 2008.

**INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS AND INTERSEX ASSOCIATION,** *State-sponsored homophobia.* 2014.

**KAOMA, K.** Exposing Trafficking in Bigotry. *Conscience*, v. 32 n. 2 p. 34 - 37.

**LEVAY, S.** *Queer science: The use and abuse of research into homosexuality.* The MIT Press, 1996.

**LIU, B.** Sentiment analysis and opinion mining. *Synthesis Lectures on Human Language Technologies.* 2012, p. 1-167.

**METRO,** 2014. Kenya and Nigeria really like gay porn despite homophobic attitudes. Available at: <http://metro.co.uk/2014/11/03/kenya-and-nigeria-really-like-gay-porn-despite-homophobic-attitudes-4933330/#ixzz3bcz2SYIO>>. Accessed on May 20, 2015.

**MSIBI, T.** The lies we have been told: on (homo) sexuality in Africa. *Africa Today.* 2011. v. 58 n. 2 p 54-77.

**MUTUA, M.** William Ruto's anti-gayism stand is hypocritical. Available

at: [http://www.sde.co.ke/m/?articleID=2000161537&story\\_title=-prof-makau-mutua-william-ruto-s-anti-gayism-stand-is-hypocritical](http://www.sde.co.ke/m/?articleID=2000161537&story_title=-prof-makau-mutua-william-ruto-s-anti-gayism-stand-is-hypocritical)>. Accessed on May 29, 2015.

**NEW VISION,** 2015. Technicality has defeated the people on homosexuality. By BYEKWASO, N. Available at: <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/658383-technicality-has-defeated-the-people-on-homosexuality.html>>. Accessed on Jan. 15, 2015.

**NTV,** 2012. #theTrend: The Gay debate. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Au4Gl7QW5Sk>>. Accessed on Apr. 1, 2015.

**REUTERS,** 2012. Uganda Says Wants to Pass Anti-Gay Law as "Christmas- Gift". Available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/13/us-uganda-homosexuality-idUSBRE8ACOV720121113>>. Accessed on Jan. 15, 2015.

**TABAIRE, B.** The Press and Political Freedom. In: Uganda: Back to the Future?. *Journal of Eastern African Studies.* v. 1, n. 2, p. 193-211.

**UNITED NATIONS,** 2014. Human Development Report 2014: Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience. New York: United Nations Development Programme 2014. Available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr14-report-en-1.pdf> >. Accessed on May 29, 2015.

**VANGUARD,** 2014. Much ado about the gay marriage bill. ADETIBA. M. Available at: <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/01/much-ado-gay-marriage-bill/>>. Accessed on May 30, 2015.

# Terminological appropriation for subjectivity construction through discourse in Victoria Santa Cruz's poem *Me Gritaron Negra*

SANDRO SILVA ROCHA<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The poem of the Peruvian poet Victoria Santa Cruz, *Me Gritaron Negra*, is an example of how one can artistically make use of discursive devices in order to address political issues of identity. Based on her personal life story, Santa Cruz traces back the path she has taken from shame to pride, showing the strength of the violence imbued in the racist discourse she had to face, and how her acquiring awareness of that discursive construction made her powerful enough to fight back.

**Keywords:** Discourse. Peru. Victoria Santa Cruz. Racism. Social Change.

Victoria Santa Cruz's poem at the same time fights against racism by making use of discursive devices and shows the path that the author has taken until she realizes how racism was built through discourse and how she makes use of that understanding to fight it back. As a way to assist in the recreation of the author's feelings as well as its evolution process – from labeling, to mirror identification, to self-denial, to self-acceptance, and finally up to terminological appropriation and a counter-discourse production – the poem makes use of enriching elements other than that of a rhymed speech, such as sound coming from musical instruments and voices coming from the chorus. Before moving on to the poem, we will take a brief look at the issue of racism, specifically in Peru.

Peruvian population is, nowadays, constituted by 2% of black people<sup>2</sup> and, similar to most of other countries in the Americas, it had a slavery-based colonial economy beginning in the 1520's. During colonial times, African people who came or were brought to Peru played an important role in settling the Spanish colonies in America, either as free citizens or as slaves. As time went by, the role Afro-Peruvians played in Peruvian society was diminished and, again, such as in most of the American countries, due to the reinforcement of the image of the white Europeans as the "superior race" - which received scientific contribution from the Nazism in the middle of the 20th century - black people started being discriminated according to their skin color, creating a social-economic hierarchy called "pigmentocracia"<sup>3</sup>.

The discourse that claims the superiority of the white European race against the inferiority of the black African one - and other ethnic groups - is difficult to be dated, and is continually spread up to current days. Although in some countries, such

<sup>1</sup> English undergraduate student at University of São Paulo. E-mail: sandro.silvarocha@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <http://internacional.universia.net/latinoamerica/datos-paises/peru/poblacion.htm>. Accessed on: Nov. 10, 2014

<sup>3</sup> "En pigmentocracia los españoles estaban en la cima de la jerarquía, mestizos en el centro, los indígenas por debajo de estos, y en el último escalón social se hallaban las poblaciones negras." Available at: <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afroperuano>. Accessed on: Nov. 25, 2014.

as Brazil, we are able to see, at a certain degree, a profound miscegenation, the ways of racial discrimination vary from different times and places, with its forms ranging from segregationist Laws (racial segregation in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the United States, Apartheid from the middle up to the end of the 20th century in South Africa, etc.), up to inequalities regarding the access to social and economic opportunities, and down to verbal offenses.

Racism is a ubiquitous problem, it shares a strong linkage to a Western-centered globalization and has similarities in every place of the world, hence why we understand that such poem can be analyzed regardless of the fact that it was written and performed in the Spanish language in Peru. In spite of the fact of it being a literary work, the way it makes use of discursive devices is worth of attention, for it is very well made with elements which may be discussed in the field of discourse analysis. Thanks to that, it is possible to analyze racism in Peru by making use of theoretical texts dealing with racism in Brazil, which shares even more similarities due to both countries' same regional location.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze how racism is presented in discourse and to show one of the ways in which discourse is used to address such issue. In the text we will deal with, it is easy to notice how racial discrimination is subtly built up in discourse and how effective it is in its violent purpose by posing the racial *difference* in a hierarchical set, giving negative attributes to

the black color, which is extended, then, to the color of someone's skin.

The situation of the insult which inspired the poem is detailed by the author in an interview given to a show of the Peruvian channel *TV Perú*. There, Santa Cruz narrates the time when a white family moved into her neighborhood and how they openly expressed their distaste for having a black child playing with other children on the streets, and how they avoided any relationship with her because of her skin color. For Guimarães (2003), the situation of insults are commonly claimed to be the consequence of conflicts. However, he denies such commonsense by stating that the insult itself may give rise to a conflict. And it seems, through Santa Cruz's accounts of the fact that the situation indeed happened such as the latter. In his article, too, insults coming from neighbors make up the second greatest number of denounced cases of racial insults in Brazil, being in its majority white women insulting black women. The cases of insults presented in Guimarães' article have many different reasons. In Santa Cruz's case, the reported reason was a dispute of a game placed on the street among the children of the neighborhood.

First, the poem starts with a narration situated in the past, at a time when the author is five years old. She gives then the viewer/reader an account of how she was attacked and offended on the street, and behind the word lied a racist discourse (in Spanish, "negra"). By then, Santa Cruz identified herself with the "label" and, at the same time, inter-



nalized all the negative aspects linked to the term with which her new neighbors ascribed her. In order to illustrate how the hidden truth is present in such label, I bring here Guimarães' article (2003), which deals with "Racial Insult in Brazil":

[S]ince the social and racial position of the insulted is already historically established by means of a long process of prior humiliation and subordination, the very term that designates them as a racial group ('preto' or 'negro') has already become in itself a pejorative term, capable of shorthand use, unaccompanied by adjectives and qualifications. The term 'negro' or 'preto' thus comes to be a verbal or chromatic synthesis of a whole constellation of stigmas relating to the makeup of a racial identity. More than the term, the color itself acquires this symbolic stigmatizing function, as the synonyms listed in vernacular language dictionaries clearly show: dirty, stained, lugubrious, dreadful, grievous, accursed, nefarious, perverse, and so on. Stigma can be so deep-seated that a Black person could be offended, for example, by a reference as subtle as this one: 'também, olha a cor do indivíduo' ('Besides, look at the individual's color'). (GUIMARÃES, 2003, p. 136)

Thus, as her life goes on, she suffers from not being able to get rid of such stigma linked to her identity. Here, it is convenient to analyze the other elements

of the performance: it is possible to see, from the beginning and up to that point, that the beats of the percussion are at a low pace, indicating perhaps the author's depression for not being able, despite the efforts, to change the situation where she is in - change her skin color and other African traits she has (thick hair and lips, etc). The voices coming from the chorus have an angry and violent tone, indicating the violence once felt.

But at a certain point, she stops stepping back and finds no way out other than stepping forward. It is interesting to see here the variety of meanings one may come up in order to interpret the opposition "stepping back"/"stepping forward", since it is the turning point of the whole poem, which is divided in two parts by this very opposition. When she was first called "negra", she understood it as an offense (as it really was the intention), and "stepped back". With this "stepping back", the author may mean that: a) she did not want that label because of the implicit negativity that came with it; b) she may also have understood it as a warning not to come close to the "other" and keep the boundaries which separated Peruvian people by their skin colors, or; c) finally, she may have wanted to say that she recognized the diminishing intention coming with the verbal violence and had no other choice than to "step back".

So, at a certain point of the poem, she decides not to step back anymore and that is when the whole suffering is transformed into strength to resist racial segregation. From then on, the beats of the

percussion get faster and more vibrant, bringing a renewed energy to the performance, indicating the energy she gets from assuming her identity, yet attributing a new meaning to it. The chorus' voices, which once shouted angrily against her, now come from herself with a confident, powerful and vibrant tone, more melodiously than the previous ones.

When she finally understands that the whole matter is not with the word "negra" itself, but with the (racist) discursive chain embedded in it, she decides to appropriate the word and construct, as a black person, her counter-discourse, now ascribing to the word "negra/o" all the positive characteristics and associations she could encounter, be it in its sonority or in the positive aesthetic qualities of the black color, etc. Here, she assumes the role of 'founding subject', according to Foucault (1970), where the poet voluntarily proposes a meaning to, in this case, not an empty word, but a word filled with negative characteristics up to that point in its historicity.

She could never deny - even when she wanted to - her identity, because of the natural inexorability of one's skin color. However, she manages to choose denying not the identity itself, but the discourse embedded in it and that is when she "finds the key" not to step back anymore. Dealing with the construction of identities through discourse, she creates a counter-discourse in order to face the previous one with which she was addressed (attacked) on the street when she was five and that followed her for a lifetime.

It is possible to draw a parallel with the Brazilian scenario of appropriation of the term "negro" by the "movimento negro" (Black political movement) in order not only to set ourselves free from the stigma associated with the word "preto", but also to include other non-white people under such identity denomination, as Magalhães (2004) claims in her article "Interdiscursividade e conflito entre discursos sobre raça em reportagens brasileiras".


By appropriating the word "negra/o", Victoria Santa Cruz inverts then the whole meaning of it, in order to use the term which describes her social identity without being diminished by it. It is noticeable that the word itself does not change along the poem, only the attitude, along with the musical elements that assume another perspective, another color, another rhythm, thus, another meaning. The process adopted by the poet, in an indubitable strength for its well-developed artistic work, is already theorized by Fairclough (1992) under one of the types of intertextuality, called metadiscourse. The author says:

"Metadiscourse implies that the speaker is situated above or outside her own discourse, and is in a position to control and manipulate it. This has interesting implications for the relationship between discourse and identity (subjectivity): it seems to go against the view that one's social identity is a matter of how one is positioned in particular types of discourse. [...] subjects are in part positioned and constituted in discourse, but they also engage in practice which

contests and restructures the discursive structures (orders of discourse) which position them.” (FAIRCLOUGH, 1992, pp. 122-123)

The poem here shows how identities are shaped by discourses in such a level that the poet herself takes a long time of her life believing that the label with which she was ascribed was the only one possible, and reflects the whole “sad true hidden in it”. Fortunately, discursive constructions can be and indeed are deconstructed once she finally notices that words might have different meanings, depending on the context or the speaker by whom they are used.

The aim of this paper was to show how an artistic work could explicit the historicity of a discourse, and, on one

hand, how this very discourse/discursive chain could make itself present through a single word, despite all the cruelty and selfishness concerning a privileged ethnic group, embedded in it. On the other hand, Santa Cruz’s poem also makes use of a multimodal text in order to intervene socially through the discursive devices available to her. Indirectly, it has shown how discursive chains can be deconstructed and given other meanings through one’s agency. In the multimodal text here analyzed, through its artistic composition of different communicative elements, we were able to see the beauty and the (black) power present in such construction of meaning produced by the Peruvian poet Victoria Santa Cruz. 



## References

**FAIRCLOUGH**, N. Intertextuality. In: *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992. p. 101-136.

**FOUCAULT**, M. Orders of Discourse. Inaugural lecture delivered at the Collège de France. *Inform. Sci. Soc.* 10 (2), 1970, p. 7-30. Available at: <<http://goo.gl/RIRF8W>>. Accessed on Jan. 17, 2015.

**GUIMARÃES**, A. S. A. “Racial Insult in Brazil”. In: *Discourse & Society*, v. 14. no. 2, March 2003, p. 133-151. Available at: <<http://goo.gl/n68hxR>>. Accessed on Jan. 17 2015.

**MAGALHÃES**, C. Interdiscursividade e Conflitos entre Discursos sobre raça em reportagens brasileiras. In: *Linguagem em (Dis)curso - LemD*, Tubarão, v. 4, 2004, n. esp., p. 35-60.

**SANTA CRUZ**, V. *Me Gritaron Negra, Victoria Eugenia Santa Cruz*. [s.d.]. Available at: <<http://youtu.be/F5vPoqDkMF0>>. Accessed on Jan. 21, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Victoria Santa Cruz: Me gritaron negra*: depoiment given to the TV show “Retratos de TV Perú”. Available at: <<http://youtu.be/754QnDUWamk>>. Accessed on Jan. 21, 2015.

## Turma da Mônica Jovem x Mônica Teen: estratégias de tradução

MILENA LOPES GUIMARÃES MOURA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aluna da  
Graduação em  
Letras (Inglês) na  
Universidade de  
São Paulo. E-mail:  
milenamoura92  
@gmail.com

**Resumo:** Ao se pensar que as histórias em quadrinhos abarcam características peculiares, é preciso refletir sobre a dificuldade em se traduzir tal gênero textual. A tradução de HQs nos apresenta diversas peculiaridades, dentre elas estão a presença marcante de humor e oralidade. Tendo em vista tal processo e o crescimento nos números de exportação de quadrinhos brasileiros, o presente artigo pretende analisar as estratégias de tradução utilizadas nas versões em português e inglês da *Turma da Mônica Jovem* intituladas “O Príncipe Perfeito” e “The Perfect Prince”.

**Palavras-chave:** História em quadrinhos. Oralidade. Tradução.

Direitos de  
imagens  
reservados  
à Maurício  
de Souza  
Produções Ltda  
- 2015. Imagens  
utilizadas  
meramente  
para fins de  
apoio, consulta  
e inspirações.  
Proibida a  
reprodução para  
fins comerciais.

### Introdução

Há alguns anos as histórias em quadrinhos têm se difundido mundialmente, e é muito comum no Brasil termos acesso às histórias de várias partes do mundo. Engana-se, porém, quem pensa que processo inverso não acontece: a exportação de quadrinhos brasileiros é algo bastante difundido, embora ainda recente.

Apesar de internacionalmente difundidas, as histórias em quadrinhos ainda são vistas com preconceito diante do mundo acadêmico. De acordo com Aragão e Zavaglia (2010):

“O alcance dessa forma de linguagem no cenário mundial depende da tradução, cujo volume – notável – é um fenômeno visível em diversos países. Entretanto, o estudo específico da tradução de histórias em quadrinhos, que vem se desenvolvendo gradativamente, ainda não é substancial, tanto no âmbito das Ciências da Linguagem como no dos Estudo da Tradução. A pouca ênfase dada a esse tipo de pesquisa está ligada, em grande parte, a uma série de estereótipo de atribuídos a essa forma de mídia, que, muitas vezes, é vista como literatura menor. No entanto, é justamente a conjugação da imagem e do texto em sua configuração, aliada ao grande número e à heterogeneidade de publicações na área, que tornam as histórias em quadrinhos um material valioso para a investigação científica.”(ARAGÃO e ZAVAGLIA, 2010, p. 436 e 437)

Dentro desse contexto, as histórias da Turma da Mônica, com um histórico de popularidade que completa 50 anos, vêm sendo distribuídas em uma versão em inglês no Brasil e também em alguns países. Muitas traduções são feitas no próprio país de destino, mas as revistas *Mônica's Gang*, *Mônica Teen* e *Monica y su pandilla* têm sido traduzidas na própria editora Panini, no Brasil.

Nesse sentido, o presente artigo busca refletir acerca da tradução de HQs no Brasil, analisando mais especificamente estratégias de tradução utilizadas pela editora na elaboração da versão em inglês da *Turma da Mônica Jovem*.

## O ato tradutório e a correspondência

**D**e acordo com Aubert (1997), o tradutor,

“[...] escravo do texto e/ou autor do original e atrelado às restrições impostas pelas diversidades linguísticas e culturais [...]deveria na medida do possível e do impossível [...]tornar-se um mero canal, livre de ruídos, ou outras obstruções à passagem plena do texto original à sua nova configuração linguística.”(AUBERT,1997, p.7)

A presente definição faz com que, de maneira geral o tradutor, que faz transparecer “tais ruídos”, seja considerado um mau profissional, e os que o fazem de maneira automática e não reflexiva apareçam como figura secundária, sem mérito pessoal. O autor, a partir de tal reflexão, passa a discutir sobre até que ponto é possível interferir e/ou modificar o texto de partida.

Aubert (1993) ressalta que da(s) necessidade(s) de tradução surge um bloqueio parcial ou total na relação *emissor-receptor*, que é causada pela interferência de variação linguística, em que se faz necessária produção de uma segunda mensagem correspondente à primeira, para que o ato comunicativo se efetive. Essa segunda mensagem, que correspon-

de à intenção da primeira e que é essencial para que o ato se complete, é a tradução da primeira. Embora as mensagens não sejam completamente iguais, elas “produz[em] ou *perceptivelmente procura[m] produzir* efeitos de sentido similares aos pretendidos no primeiro[atô comunicativo]” (p. 11).

É preciso lembrar que o tempo de produção da segunda mensagem pode variar, podendo ser produzida simultaneamente ou ocorrer muitos anos após a produção da mensagem original.

Vimos que o bloqueio comunicativo é gerado pela interferência da variação linguística, e é necessário ressaltar que tal processo pode ser causado por diversos fatores, bem como a variação regional, geográfica, temporal, social, individual, de canal e até mesmo circunstancial. Engana-se, portanto, quem pensa que traduzir é “passar um texto de um idioma para o outro”. Vimos brevemente que traduzir não é simplesmente “passar” ou “transferir”, e denota de um mecanismo complexo de reflexão acerca do texto original para que sua função se concretize; a tradução tem várias vertentes e ocorre até mesmo em textos intralinguais.

## Quadrinhos e a tradução

**C**oloca-se, portanto, que embora rica e interessante, sob vários aspectos, a história em quadrinhos não é fácil de ser traduzida, e tal dificuldade é causada pela presença de humor, oralidade e relação imagem-texto apresentadas nas histórias.

Segundo Souza (apud Aragão e Zavgaglia, 2010: 441),

“[...] o grande problema das traduções

de gêneros humorísticos é a falta de naturalidade nos contextos da língua de chegada, pois muitas vezes o humor é construído a partir da desconstrução de valores culturais e linguísticos próprios do contexto da língua e da cultura de partida. Esses problemas são reforçados pela presença da imagem, que muitas vezes limita as possibilidades de tradução e, diferentemente do texto, com frequência não pode ser manipulada pelo tradutor.” (Souza, 1997: 45)

Segundo Camilotti e Liberatti (2012, p.97) “o fato é que a tradução das HQs apresenta-se como um desafio ao tradutor, por se tratar de um gênero textual que atravessa as fronteiras linguísticas e passa para um território que abrange questões culturais, sociais, políticas e ideológicas”.

### **Análise comparativa entre edições em inglês e português**

A história original “O Príncipe Perfeito”, da Turma da Mônica Jovem, foi lançada no Brasil em 2009, enquanto sua versão em inglês foi publicada em 2013. Como já citado anteriormente, os quadrinhos da Mônica são traduzidos para 50 idiomas diferentes e comercializados em mais de 120 países, sendo que os tradutores residem nos próprios países de chegada; entretanto, os quadrinhos da *Mônica Teen* são produzidos pela própria editora Panini no Brasil. Não há modificação nas imagens, tal fato permite uma certa liberdade em relação ao tamanho dos balões.



Fig. 1 Capa da edição em português



Fig. 2 Capa da edição em inglês

Observa-se no seguinte quadrinho que a expressão raio se perde na tradução, pois não há uma expressão correspondente no idioma de chegada. Uma alternativa seria o uso de “where the hell you are?”, para que se mantivesse o teor de irritação do personagem, embora este seja mantido pela própria imagem.



Fig. 3 Trecho do quadrinho em português

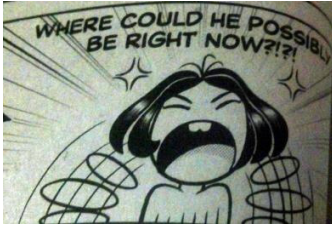


Fig. 4 Trecho do quadrinho em inglês

No quadrinho seguinte, os carneirinhos do sonho do personagem Cascão estão praticando o esporte *parkour* e o estrangeirismo é mantido em ambas as versões, porém com uma nota de rodapé (embora o esporte já seja bastante difundido mundialmente):



Fig. 5 Nota de rodapé em português com explicação sobre o esporte



Fig. 6 Nota de rodapé em inglês com explicação sobre o esporte

A rima, muitas vezes, também tende a se perder, como podemos observar nos quadrinhos abaixo:



Fig. 7 Quadrinho em português demonstrando a rima



Fig. 8 Quadrinho em inglês demonstrando a perda da rima

No exemplo seguinte, os tradutores optaram por uma domesticação<sup>2</sup> da fala de Cascão, pois no original eram feitas menções a fatos comuns aos brasileiros que poderiam não ser identificados por um leitor de outro país:

2 O termo *domesticação* foi utilizado baseado na leitura de Aubert (1997).



Fig. 9 Cascão faz referência a fatos da realidade brasileira



Fig. 10 Fala de Cascão é adaptada

No exemplo seguinte, a expressão “cara pálida” não aparece na versão em inglês, perdendo relativamente um jogo cômico entre os personagens:



Fig. 11 Cascão usa um termo típico do português brasileiro



Fig. 12 Termo é perdido na tradução

No exemplo a seguir, nota-se como a tradução para o inglês demanda o uso de mais palavras do que no uso original, e isso gera uma modificação no tamanho do balão de fala. Na versão em português, Cebolinha diz “vou fazer de tudo pra ficar na minha” enquanto que na versão em inglês, J-Five diz “but I’m going to do everything in my power to mind my own business”. Além disso, o adjetivo *encanada* é substituído por *be focused on*, perdendo relativamente o tom original.



Fig. 13 Balão da fala do Cebolinha menor



Fig. 14 Balão da fala do Cebolinha maior

Nos quadrinhos seguintes, demonstra-se na versão em inglês o uso da expressão

*hilarious* ao invés de *funny*, pois há a necessidade de se manter a troca de letras feita por Cebolinha - que em português se dá pela substituição de ‘r’por ‘l’, e em inglês, ‘r’ por ‘w’—obedecendo assim a sonoridade da língua de chegada:



Fig. 15 Cebolinha troca as letras ‘r’ por ‘l’



Fig. 16 Em inglês Cebolinha troca ‘r’ por ‘w’

As onomatopeias também sofrem alteração devido à sonoridade da língua de chegada:



Fig. 17 Onomatopeias do português brasileiro

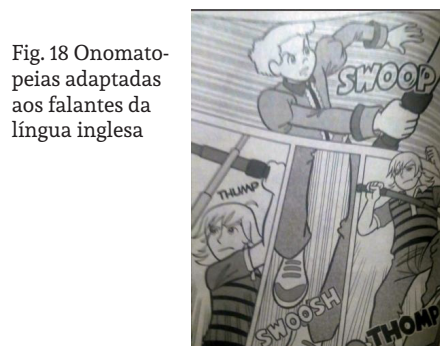


Fig. 18 Onomatopeias adaptadas aos falantes da língua inglesa



No exemplo a seguir, o estrangeirismo<sup>3</sup> *açai* foi mantido na versão em inglês. Optou-se apenas por não utilizar o complemento “na tigela”. O *açai*, embora originalmente brasileiro, já é conhecido em vários outros países, e mesmo que o leitor estrangeiro não o conheça, a sentença começa com “let’s have some”, o que faz o leitor presumir que *açai* é algo comestível. Além disso, a imagem também os leva a essa reflexão.



Fig. 19 Termo ‘açai’ no quadrinho em português



Fig. 20 Termo ‘açai’ é mantido nos quadrinhos em inglês

Nos quadrinhos abaixo, observa-se a mudança do nome do personagem *Tonhão*; após alguns anos ele passou a ser chamado de *Toni*, devido a sua mudança de aparência. Tal jogo com o aumentativo de *Toni* se perde em inglês, em que o termo *Big Mark* é utilizado remetendo ao termo *alvo*.



Fig. 21 Tonhão se torna Toni em português

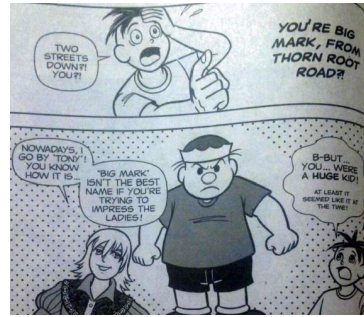


Fig. 22 Big Mark se torna Tony em inglês

Na tradução para o inglês apresentada a seguir o termo “cara de azia” acaba por perder seu sentido original ao passar por um processo de *literalização*<sup>4</sup> e ser traduzido por “you look a little sick”, que em português seria algo como “você parece meio doente”.



Fig. 23 Cebolinha usa a expressão “cara de azia”

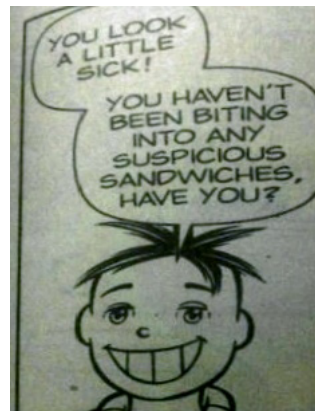


Fig. 24 J-Five usa a expressão “you look a little sick”

3 O termo estrangeirismo foi utilizado baseado na leitura de Aubert (1997).


4 O termo literalização foi utilizado baseado na leitura de Aragão e Zavaglia (2010).

## Considerações Finais

A partir da análise das duas versões de traduções, foi possível perceber que o trabalho com HQs por vezes, embora atinja o mesmo objetivo, não corresponde à intencionalidade e tom dos personagens na versão original. O humor, a oralidade e a rima muitas vezes são perdidos ao serem traduzidos e o termo traduzido por vezes precisa ser parafraseado, aumentando relativamente o tamanho das falas e perdendo em partes a fluidez original.

Outra consequência frequente da tradução de HQs é a *literalização*, em que os termos são tomados ao “pé da letra”, desconsiderando a oralidade e intencionalidade dos termos originais.

Nas duas versões apresentadas pode-se perceber que os tradutores optam por uma mescla de estratégias, resultante talvez do processo de tradução feito a várias mãos. É quase impossível, portanto, identificar uma unicidade de escolha; entretanto, por meio da análise comparativa, foi possível perceber as “estratégias gerais”.

Considerando, por fim, a enorme importância cultural e acadêmica das histórias em quadrinhos e o interesse pessoal da autora pelas HQs da Turma da Mônica, buscou-se por meio deste artigo analisar as estratégias de tradução utilizadas pelos tradutores da editora Panini na tradução das HQs da Turma da Mônica para o inglês. 



## Referências bibliográficas

**ARAGÃO, S. M.; ZAVAGLIA, A.** Histórias em quadrinhos: imagem e texto em tradução. *TradTerm*, v. 16, 2010. p. 435-463.

**AUBERT, F. H.** Modalidades de tradução: teoria e resultados. *TradTerm*, São Paulo, v. 5.1, 1998. p. 99-128.

\_\_\_\_\_. Introdução. In: \_\_\_\_\_. *(In)fi-delidades da tradução: servidões e autonomia do tradutor*. Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 1993. p. 7-14.

**CAMILOTTI, C.; LIBERATTI, E.** Desvendando os segredos da tradução de quadrinhos: uma análise da tradução de Romeu e Julieta, da Turma da Mônica. Disponível em: <<http://seer.bce.unb.br/index.php/belasinfeis/article/download/7530/5814>>. Acesso em: 30 Maio 2014.

**MARELONKA, E.; NICOLAU, G.** Entrevista com Maurício de Souza. Disponível em: <<http://www.producaocultural.org.br/wp-content/uploads/livroremix/MauriciodeSouza.pdf>>. Acesso em: 30 Maio 2014.

**REIS, D.** Tradução e formação do mercado editorial dos quadrinhos no Brasil. JORNADA DE ESTUDOS SOBRE ROMANCES GRÁFICOS, 3. Anais. Universidade de Brasília, 2012.

**SOUZA, M. de.** *Turma da Mônica Jovem: O Príncipe Perfeito*. 9. ed. São Paulo: Panini, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Mônica Teen: The Perfect Prince*, 9th ed. São Paulo: Panini, 2013.

**VENUTI, L.** A formação de identidades culturais. In: \_\_\_\_\_. *Escândalos da tradução*. Tradução de Laureano Pelegrin, Lucinéa Marcelino Villela, Marileide Dias Esqueda e Valéria Biondo. EDUSC: Bauru, 2002. p. 129-167.

# Questão da Fidelidade em Tolkien: uma análise comparativa entre as duas traduções de *As Aventuras de Tom Bombadil*

JESSICA ELZA HAAK RAGONI<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English  
undergraduate  
student at  
University of São  
Paulo. E-mail:  
jessica.ragoni@  
usp.br

**Resumo:** O presente artigo possui como objetivo discutir o conceito de fidelidade, questionado na esfera tradutológica e abordado por diversos teóricos, incluindo Arrojo. Os conceitos sobre tradução desta autora serão utilizados como fundamento teórico para uma análise comparativa entre duas traduções publicadas no livro de poemas *As Aventuras de Tom Bombadil*, de J.R.R. Tolkien. Considerando que a tradução de um livro como esse – com elementos poéticos complexos e diversas influências literárias – representa uma tarefa árdua para o tradutor e uma perda para o leitor, a edição bilíngue da editora Martins Fontes, que apresenta traduções de William Lagos e Ronald Kyrmse, teria como propósito proporcionar ao leitor duas possibilidades de leitura que se complementam para reduzir essas perdas.

**Palavras-Chave:** Tradução. Poemas. Fidelidade. Tolkien.

## Introdução

J.R.R. Tolkien, além de autor de obras mundialmente conhecidas, é o criador de um universo complexo e com influência de múltiplas culturas e línguas. A tradução de qualquer uma de suas obras representa uma tarefa intrincada para o tradutor e uma incontestável perda para o leitor. Por isso, a solução encontrada pela editora Martins Fontes na publicação do livro de poemas *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* foi a de proporcionar duas possibilidades de tradução para o leitor: uma que pode ser considerada mais “literal” semanticamente e outra que enfatiza seu formato poético. É inevitável uma comparação entre as duas, assim como uma reflexão sobre o problemático conceito de fidelidade.

Dessa forma, o propósito deste artigo é desenvolver uma análise dos aspectos sintáticos, semânticos e fonológicos de cada uma das traduções em comparação com o poema escrito por Tolkien, de modo a identificar os mecanismos pelos quais os tradutores tentaram se aproximar da obra de Tolkien, levando em consideração os objetivos por eles mesmos estabelecidos.

O artigo possui como embasamento teórico os conceitos tradutológicos de Arrojo, que partem do princípio de que a tradução é um processo complexo de interpretação por parte do tradutor, o qual constrói significados a partir de sua visão de mundo e os incorpora no resultado final de sua tradução. Assim, trechos das duas traduções publicadas pela editora Martins Fontes foram selecionados para exprimir os objetivos e

conceitos de cada um dos tradutores, ao mesmo tempo em que uma comparação entre ambos é estabelecida para abordar o conceito questionável de uma tradução “fiel ao original”.

### **Fundamentos Teóricos, Pressupostos Metodológicos e Introdução de *Corpus***

**D**e acordo com Arrojo (1992), a visão logocêntrica da linguagem que permeou o campo linguístico alegava que um texto apresenta um único significado “transcendental”, i.e., “imune à passagem do tempo e acima de qualquer viés de interpretação” (Arrojo, 1992, p. 38). Segundo essa visão, o “original” é um objeto com significados fixos que devem ser descobertos pelo leitor. Desse modo, a função designada para o tradutor seria a de descobrir os significados e conservá-los no texto meta, de modo que só poderia ser estabelecida uma fidelidade com a única interpretação possível retirada dos significados fixos do texto fonte. Arrojo, no entanto, refuta tal teoria, substituindo-a pela visão desconstrutivista, a qual é influenciada pela arbitrariedade do signo defendida por Saussure, afirmando que o significado se encontra na “trama das convenções que determinam, inclusive, o perfil, os desejos, as circunstâncias e os limites do próprio leitor” (Ibidem, p. 39).

Assim, o leitor – e, consequentemente, o tradutor – seria um criador de significados a partir de convenções e circunstâncias que o constituem como indivíduo; e o texto “deixa de ser a repre-

sentação ‘fiel’ de um objeto estável que possa existir fora do labirinto infinito da linguagem e passa a ser uma máquina de significados em potencial.” (Arrojo, 2007, p. 23). Para fazer jus a tal caracterização do texto, Arrojo propõe que este passe a ser visto como um palimpsesto: um texto que é apagado e reescrito de acordo com os diferentes contextos em que é lido, interpretado e traduzido. Assim, a incumbência do tradutor, ao invés de ser a preservação dos significados “originais” de um texto fonte – uma vez que não há um significado único e estável para cada texto – é a de produzir novos significados, baseando-se em suas próprias circunstâncias. Através dessa lógica, se mais de um tradutor se encarregar de traduzir um mesmo texto, as traduções resultantes serão distintas, visto que o contexto e o perfil pessoal dos tradutores serão diferentes. Em uma situação como esta, é inevitável o surgimento da questão de fidelidade através de uma comparação entre as traduções produzidas.

Contudo, se um texto não possui um significado único e fixo, não é possível uma tradução ser fiel ao texto fonte. A fidelidade de uma tradução, portanto, será associada à leitura do “original” feita pelo tradutor, influenciada pela sua visão de mundo. A tradução resultante poderá ser considerada fiel se ela seguir a visão do tradutor e os objetivos de sua tradução (Arrojo, 1993, p. 24). Assim, ao invés de comparar duas traduções produzidas para o mesmo texto fonte para definir se uma seria mais fiel ao “original” do que a outra, é possível analisá-las

de acordo com os objetivos que o tradutor delineou para sua tradução e se o tradutor foi fiel a eles ou não. Este será o objetivo deste artigo.

A metodologia utilizada terá por base uma análise comparativa entre duas traduções de um poema pertencente ao livro escrito por J.R.R. Tolkien e intitulado *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (*As Aventuras de Tom Bombadil*). A edição bilíngue da editora Martins Fontes apresenta, além dos poemas em inglês, a tradução em português de William Lagos e Ronald Kyrmse, assim como uma apresentação de cada um especificando seus objetivos e métodos. William Lagos define que o objetivo principal de sua tradução é ser “o mais fiel possível ao significado do original” (Tolkien, 2008, p. 4). Para tanto “a versão foi feita em versos brancos, isto é, sem rima, para acompanhar com exatidão o original” (Ibidem, p. 4). Logo, o foco de sua tradução é o resgate de imagens e representações presentes no texto fonte, sacrificando os elementos que constituem o formato poético do poema em inglês.

Ronald Kyrmse, por outro lado, tem como objetivo elaborar uma tradução que proporcione ao leitor a impressão de que fora “composta em nosso próprio idioma” (Ibidem, p. 73). Para tal propósito, ele tenta manter, em sua tradução, certos “elementos que remontam à antiguidade mais remota” (Ibidem, p. 72), tais como a métrica – responsável pelo ritmo do poema – e a rima – tanto no final quanto interna. Segundo Lagos, a tradução de Kyrmse difere-se da sua, uma vez que a fidelidade, na tradução deste, é “bus-

cada na métrica, no ritmo, nas cesuras, nas aliterações, no esquema por rimas, na modificação do formato das estrofes” (Ibidem, p. 4). Kyrmse, portanto, busca reproduzir o conteúdo semântico dos poemas “originais” ao mesmo tempo em que tenta preservar a forma poética presente no texto de Tolkien. Partindo de tais pressupostos, analisaremos a fidelidade das traduções do poema homônimo ao livro – “The Adventures of Tom Bombadil” – aos objetivos estabelecidos pelos próprios tradutores através de comparações entre o poema “original” em inglês e a tradução de Lagos e a de Kyrmse, assim como entre as traduções em si.

## Análise

Ao dar preferência à preservação do conteúdo semântico, em detrimento do formato poético do texto, Lagos produz uma tradução detalhada e, muitas vezes, literal que pretende resguardar o que ele considera, a partir de sua leitura da visão e das intenções de Tolkien, ser o significado do poema. Para tanto, o tradutor tenta resgatar todas as associações e ideias importantes do “original” ao traduzi-lo para o português.

Uma ilustração dessas associações são as comparações e metáforas que Lagos conservou na versão em português, ao invés de simplesmente omiti-las ou substituí-las por um correspondente mais habitual, como em “surgiu Castor-texugo, com sua testa cor de neve” (Ibidem, p. 8); “dormiu feito um pão bem jogado, ressonando como um fole” (Ibidem, p. 10); e “zumbiu como uma abelha” (Ibidem, p. 12). Outro conceito mantido

do “original” são as redundâncias que poderiam ter sido consideradas irrelevantes pelo tradutor ou editor: “volte a dormir de novo” (Ibidem, p. 7). Provavelmente por questão de ritmo, essa mesma redundância foi eliminada na tradução de Kyrmse.

Apesar de Lagos conseguir se manter na maior parte de sua tradução, segundo suas próprias palavras, “o mais fiel possível ao significado original” (Ibidem, p. 4), algumas alterações são dignas de destaque. Em uma das estrofes na segunda metade do poema, o segundo verso do poema “original” é repetido – “bright blue his jacket was and his boots were yellow” (Ibidem, p. 133) – com a adição apenas de uma vírgula depois de “was”. Contudo, na tradução de Lagos, ao invés do tradutor repetir o mesmo verso que escrevera – “sua casaca azul brilhante e suas botas amarelas” (Ibidem, p. 5) – ele o alterou, ocasionando no seguinte verso: “de azul brilhante era sua casaca e calçava botas amarelas” (Ibidem, p. 11). É possível supor que essa alteração seria o resultado de um desejo de criar sentenças mais complexas ao invés de manter as frases e o estilo simples do poema de Tolkien.

Outro provável resultado de uma preferência estilística do tradutor é a introdução de reticências, as quais são inexistentes no “original”, em diversas estrofes, como, por exemplo, em: “Ôpa, Tom Bombadil!... Veja só o que a noite lhe trouxe!.../Estou aqui atrás da porta... Finalmente, consegui pegá-lo!.../ (...) /Pobre Tom Bombadil... Ele vai te deixar pálido, duro e frio!...” (Ibidem, p. 9). Em apenas

uma estrofe, Lagos acrescentou seis reticências, o que poderia indicar uma tentativa, por parte do tradutor, de proporcionar ao leitor a impressão de uma fala mais pausada.

Em suma, o maior contraste entre o “original” e a tradução de Lagos, resultado da preferência pelo conteúdo em detrimento da forma, é a expansão demasiada dos versos que quebram com a fluência harmoniosa e o ritmo característicos do poema de Tolkien, o que acarreta uma estrutura semelhante à prosa, mas em versos.

Kyrmse, por outro lado, manteve em sua tradução a maioria dos elementos considerados poéticos: esquema de rimas, aliterações, assonâncias, formato das estrofes e métrica irregular. Desses elementos mencionados, o esquema de rimas e a métrica irregular são típicos de uma época mais remota, durante a qual foi composta, por exemplo, a epopeia *Beowulf*. Para conservar essa influência da literatura anglo-saxônica, entre outras, foi necessária a preservação dos elementos característicos dessa época.

O esquema de rimas no final do verso é facilmente identificável como rimas emparelhadas:

“Tom sai correndo. A chuva cai, trazendo frio,	A
fazendo anéis, as gotas despencam sobre o rio;	A
o vento sopra, as folhas se agitam na torrente,	B
Bom Tom entra depressa numa toca à sua frente.	B

(Ibidem, p. 77)

Entretanto, há também outro tipo de rimas que Lagos utiliza: rimas internas, que podem ser vistas em “numa raiz se assenta, à luz do sol amena,/secando suas botas e a lamacenta pena” (Ibidem, p. 76) e cujo correspondente, em inglês, é

“on knotted willow-roots he sat in sunny weather;/drying his yellow boots and his draggled feather” (Ibidem, p. 134).

Outra correspondência que Kyrmse realizou entre o “original” e sua versão em português são as aliterações e assonâncias, as quais são observadas na aliteração do fonema [p] e assonância do [a] “Veste a bota, o paletó, põe chapéu e pena;/abre bem a janela na alvorada amena” (Ibidem, p. 78) representando a aliteração do fonema [b] e a assonância do fonema [w] em “He clapped on his battered hat, boots, and coat and feather;/opened the window wide to the sunny weather” (Ibidem, p. 137).

Um prejuízo consequente da escolha pela forma poética é a necessidade de algumas alterações do conteúdo, como a alteração do tempo verbal entre passado e presente durante o decorrer do poema – enquanto que, no “original”, a história se passa apenas no passado – como pode ser observado nos seguintes versos: “Passou a chuva. O céu é claro na tarde de verão,/Tom Bombadil vai rindo e à casa chega então,/destranca a porta e abre bem aberta a janela” (Ibidem, p. 77).

Outra modificação do conteúdo é a mudança do sujeito em certas partes do poema, como em “Estou aqui atrás da porta. Acabou a sua paz!/Sou Criatura Tumbal que habita na neblina/dentro do anel de pedras no topo da colina./Estou em liberdade. Vou levá-lo sepultado” (Ibidem, p. 78). Em inglês – “I’m here behind the door. Now at last I’ve caught you!/You’d forgotten Barrow-wight dwelling in the old mound/up there on hill-top with the ring of stones round./

He’s got loose again. Under earth he’ll take you” (Ibidem, p. 136) – o sujeito em primeira pessoa é substituído pela terceira pessoa do singular, o que é mantido em Lagos, mas não em Kyrmse.

Além dos comentários feitos acima, ainda é possível realizar uma comparação entre as traduções que Lagos e Kyrmse fizeram da fala de Tom: “Come, derry-dol, merry-dol, my darling!” (Ibidem, p. 137). Ao traduzir por “Vamos, coragem, oi, alegria, oi, minha querida!” (Ibidem, p. 11), Lagos preferiu uma maior aproximação semântica com o “original”, fazendo as associações “merry”/“alegria” e “darling”/“querida”. Kyrmse, por outro lado, escolheu uma maior semelhança fonética e morfológica com o verso em inglês, traduzindo por “Vem alazão, balalão, docinho!” (Ibidem, p. 78). Nesta frase, há uma aproximação entre os sufixos repetidos –ão e –dol em contraste com os sufixos –inho e –ing, os quais, por sua vez, são similares foneticamente.


## Considerações Finais

Retomando a ideia de que uma tradução não será fiel ao texto fonte e sim aos objetivos e concepções de poesia e tradução do próprio tradutor, é possível afirmar que tanto Lagos quanto Kyrmse foram, em geral, fieis em suas traduções, uma vez que os propósitos designados por cada um, com algumas exceções isoladas, foram cumpridos: a tradução de Lagos foi fiel semanticamente “ao significado do original” (Ibidem, p. 4), resgatando representações e associações cruciais para a construção



do imaginário do poema. Já o formato poético da tradução de Kyrmse, através da conservação de rimas, aliterações, assonâncias e ritmo do “original”, manteve-se “adequado poeticamente aos variados esquemas adotados por Tolkien” (Ibidem, p. 4).

As duas traduções, portanto, acabam complementando-se: uma expressa mais detalhadamente o conteúdo semântico do poema de Tolkien enquanto a outra preserva o formato poético e, consequentemente, os elementos que deixam a poe-

sia de Tolkien única e admirável. Ao conceber uma edição com duas traduções diferentes que, ao seu próprio modo, podem ser consideradas fieis, acreditamos que a editora Martins Fontes pretendeu proporcionar ao leitor duas possibilidades de leitura de acordo com a preferência de cada um, seja ela por uma tradução que se aproxime semanticamente do que se acredita que o autor do texto fonte quis dizer, ou por uma que reproduza a estrutura poética melodiosa e complexa própria de Tolkien. 



## Referências Bibliográficas

**ARROJO, R.** *Oficina de Tradução: a teoria na prática*. 5. ed. São Paulo: Ática, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_. “A Desconstrução do Logocentrismo e a Origem do Significado”. In: ARROJO, R. (Org.). *O Signo Desconstruído: implicações para a tradução, a leitura e o ensino*. Campinas: Pontes, 1992. p. 35-39.

\_\_\_\_\_. “A que são fiéis tradutores e críticos de tradução?”. In: ARROJO, R. *Tradução, desconstrução e Psicanálise*. Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1993, p. 15-26.

**AUBERT, F. H.** “Introdução”. In: *(In) fidelidades da tradução: servidões e autonomia do tradutor*. Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 1993. p.7-14.

**TOLKIEN, J. R. R.** *As Aventuras de Tom Bombadil*. Tradução de William Lagos e Ronald Kyrmse. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Guide to the Names in The Lord of the Rings”. In: LOBDELL, J. (Ed.). *A Tolkien Compass*. Illinois: Open Court, 1975. p. 153-201.

# Creative works

## This won't change your life

PAULA ARGOLO DE SOUZA SANTOS<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English  
undergraduate  
student at  
University of São  
Paulo. E-mail:  
paulaargoloss@  
gmail.com

**M**y head is full with doubts on how I should start this story, or even whether I should tell it to you. The fact is that I was so taken aback by what had happened that I suppose telling you is a way of keeping it alive. So please, do not forget it!

Well, to start with I feel like I should warn you that what you are about to hear has completely changed the way I see people. Let's say that I used to focus more on the darkness rather than on the stars. And believe me, I'm dying to go straight to business, to the gist of the story itself but I was never very keen on those people who spoil the whole goddamn surprise like when you go to the movies and someone tells you what will happen in the end. That really gets my goat. I mean, why can't you keep your mouth shut, for god's sake?!?

Anyway, some time ago I moved to L.A to work as an assistant director in one of these television studios. It wasn't initially what I had planned for my career, but the salary was good and I desperately needed to pay my bills. I was part of a crew in charge of a show called "Every Cloud has its Silver Lining" which was basically about finding actors who were never given a real shot to do something good. I mean something really good, not those Mickey Mouse costumes kind of jobs, but something that would make their parents proud.

So what we would do was, we'd go to drama schools and do a bunch of auditions till we got five actors who were willing to take part in the show. I always thought it was very sad the fact that only five of them were chosen, I mean, I wish I was the one making everybody's dreams come true, but I was only an assistant so you can imagine how hard it would be to change things. I didn't have the power to do that, neither the balls. Once we had chosen the five lucky ones, we would sort of make a reality show that would focus on the rehearsing and shooting period of the short movies they would be in.

The scripts were written by this guy called Ethan, and I swear to you he was so talented that I just wanted to applaud him whenever he walked in the room. And the fact that I myself wanted to be a writer someday just made me admire him even more. I find it absolutely incredible the fact that a piece of writing can allow someone to live as somebody else for a while, and it really doesn't matter if it will be better or worse than their real life, it is just good to lose yourself sometimes, you know? And you could see that those actors were really enjoying loosing themselves in the lives Ethan had created for them. I think I even might have envied them a bit. It's a shame I have never had the so-called talent to be an actress. I've always been a good liar, though.

Every single day we would be either shooting in the backstage or the rehearsals so I had never really had the opportunity to talk to Ethan, cos I had to be working with Mr. Boring director instead. But there was this one day when Ethan was there watching the actors and I suddenly got so nervous when I realized he was there that I figured I'd better get myself a tea or something to chill out a bit.

So I decided to go to this diner during the five minute break. And you're not gonna believe this, but I swear the minute I shut the studio's door I heard someone asking me "Hey, are you going to get some coffee? Wait for me!" I was in such a hurry that I didn't even turn to see who that was so I just yelled "Yeap" and continued to walk. Turns out Ethan was the one who had said that, no kidding. So we went to this little coffee shop just across the street and in the meantime I was just trying so hard to act normal. I even thought about talking about the weather like normal people do. Fortunately, he was the one to talk first, asking my name and all that sort of formalities stuff. It was kind of weird cos his voice didn't really match his body, it was like The Hulk with a little kid's voice. I even started to think that I could act indeed, cos I managed quite well not to burst out laughing and going like "Dude, that's a strange voice!"

Well, the thing is that I only had the chance to say my name then, cos right before we got to the coffee shop, all of a sudden this beggar sprung up. I'm not gonna lie to you, I was a bit scared, I mean you could tell he wouldn't hurt a fly, but I guess I was just blind with my prejudice. He asked Ethan if he had some change, I think he must have realized I was a bit scared.

"Do you want me to buy you a sandwich?" – said Ethan.

"Ok, then." - replied the beggar.

"So, hmmm... join us, we're just going to that coffee shop over there."

"Hmm... I think I better not, I mean the owner already knows me and he wouldn't like me to come in."

"Ok, so just wait right here, ok? We'll be right back."

As soon as we entered the coffee shop, all I wanted to do was give Ethan a hug. He ordered two coffees and a ham sandwich. When we got out of the shop, the beggar was waiting on the sidewalk.

"Here you go, buddy."

"God bless you." – said the beggar like he had never seen a sandwich before.

"Listen, what's your name?"

"My name is Jim, sir."

"Oh, please don't call me sir, I'm too young for that... What can you do, Jim?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, have you ever had a job? Or were you just born a beggar?"

"No" – said the beggar in a quite angry tone. "I've had jobs before, I used to work in this farm in Texas but my boss was no good to me, he was kind of bossy... I mean I know that a boss must be bossy but I think he took that too seriously, man!"

"I see..." - said Ethan while he was looking around, thinking whether he should say what he was about to say.

"So listen up Jim, do you see that building over there?"

"Yeap."

"So, there is where me and my friend here work (Yeap, that's right, he called me his F-R-I-E-N-D) so... why don't you drop by there, let's say 10 o'clock tomorrow and we see what we can do for you. How does that sound?"

"That sounds great!" - said the beggar while he went to hug Ethan. I think that was one of the most beautiful scenes I've ever seen in my entire life. Wish I could have written something as beautiful as that.

After that, Ethan and I went back to the studio and it was funny cos Ethan smelled so bad that nobody wanted to be near him anymore. I took advantage of the situation and started to tell everyone that he had crapped his pants because he was so nervous when he met the assistant director. Everybody laughed at that, but I really wish they had believed it. Anyway, once my job was done I walked back to my hotel room which was just a couple of blocks from the studio.

On my way back, I tried to see if that beggar was still around but I assumed he might have gone to bed earlier that day. After I got to my room, I had a really hard time trying to sleep, cos I couldn't get Ethan out of my mind. I woke up in the couch the next day with a guy selling carpets on TV. I ran to the bathroom, took a shower and walked back to the studio.

It was still 9 o'clock so I wasn't expecting to run into the beggar then, but when I got there, there he was with a bicycle and Ethan right next to him.

"Hey! Morning, guys."

"Hey, look what I've just got from Mr. Ethan right there."

"Wow, that's pretty nice!"

"Yeah, do you wanna take a ride with me? C'mon, don't worry, I have a license!"

"Ok."

So I jumped on the bike and the beggar started to run in circles like a drunk man.

"Do you want me to turn the air-conditioning on? Or perhaps the radio?" - said the beggar while he started to whisper a song.

As soon as we stopped, I looked into Jim's eyes and they were just brighter than the sun. A smile suddenly sprung up in my face and that was the very moment when I decided I didn't want to be a writer anymore. I wanted to do what Ethan had done for Jim. I wanted to really change people's stories. I wondered how long that would take if I decided to write a book instead of teaching people like Jim how to read. **Y**

## Return the Ring

MÁRCIO CARDOSO DE SEN<sup>1</sup>

RODRIGO GIANNINI ARTIOLI

1 English  
undergraduate  
students at  
University of São  
Paulo. E-mails:  
marciosena@usp.  
br and rgartioli@  
gmail.com

We are closing. One last drink while we talk, mate? First of all, I am flattered that you asked my opinion on such a personal issue. Second, I must warn you that the best I can do for you is to tell about a time when I was on a similar deadlock. I was a little older and a little more irresolute than you are, although I was about to marry Sheila. Who's Sheila? She was somebody that I liked and who liked me, or at least liked the idea of marrying me. She liked it so much that she was practically the one who proposed. "The day you want to marry me, you just need to buy the ring" was the kind of thing she said. The insistence of the overweight girl – who, I can't deny, was very affectionate – and the lack of other perspectives of my town finally took me to the city to buy a ring. Well, what literally took me to the city was my bicycle.

While I was going everything seemed to conspire to please Sheila and I was promptly sticking to marital thoughts. But things weren't so clear after I've bought the ring, a little golden thing with two semi-precious gems. I felt it weighing down in my pocket, while the responsibilities that marriage could bring over me weighed down in my head. I almost reckon it was all that weight and not something that I hadn't seen on the road that punctured my bicycle and left me on foot.

Maybe I still was closer to the city – I can't remember – and then I should have returned to try to fix the tyre, but the way back was a steep slope and the town, though still not visible at the end of the hillside, seemed to drag me down. After thinking for a while, I went down the vicinal road. And while I descended, I could see this beautiful car, a brand-new thing for that time and a collector's item for today's standards.

"Flat tyre, pal?" asked the driver when he stopped by my side. "I could give you a ride, but I'm heading to the city."

The logical option would be to keep walking to town, but the convertible that stopped there was a charming proposal. I hesitated anyhow.

"What about the bicycle?"

"It looks like it's not working that great for you."

I yielded and got in the car. I'm not sure what made me feel comfortable so fast in the presence of the strange, who was called Hector, but the fact is that the chat flowed freely. Maybe it was the ease of the car, its leather seats, the breeze in the face. Or maybe Hector was a really charismatic guy. After he told me about the parties he attended, the schemes he did to earn his money and (without any shame) of the little time he spent in prison and I told him about my job then as a waiter, that I was a goal-keeper on weekends and how I never did anything riskier than shoplifting, I finally mentioned the ring.

"I guess you're gonna do more time than I did." He put his hand in my shoulder. "Come and drink with me. If you're still up to this nonsense later, it will count as your bachelor party."

The pub was not my kind of place. Not that it was too much of a fancy pub, but it surely was an alternative place. After some shots Hector started his lecture against marriage.

"Have you ever thought that when you get married you close the doors for anything new in your life? Do you have any idea of what I was doing at your age? I was trying a new thing each day. I had no boss to tell me when I should arrive at work, nor a wife to tell me when I should check-in at home. Sometimes it was hard, sure: waking up in the gutter or in the precinct. But I know it was the best way." He held my arms. "Absolute freedom! That's the only thing we may call life!"

"It doesn't look like it's fun all the time..." I said coyly.

"It is fun most of the time. And it is always right."


And he didn't stop. He carried on depicting bohemian scenes as enthusiastically as Sheila depicted how our wedding would be. He seemed to know much about these things. I shyly resisted. I thought that a humdrum life was at least a stable one. The lifestyle Hector defended was too risky; it relied too much on luck.

"Luck? This life brings you luck!" He shoved his hand in his pocket, pulled something and slammed it on the table. When he opened his hand his car key was by the side of my beer.

"Take the car and go to that jewellery. Return the ring. The convertible, you can keep as your lucky charm. You know papers will not be a problem."

I was petrified and this I can remember perfectly: Hector's face didn't allow any doubt of his seriousness. I stared at the keys, pulled the ring box and looked for what seemed a long time. Both had the same weight and the same size at that moment. I grabbed them and put each one in a different pocket while I stood up without a word. Hector nodded smiling, as if my gesture spoke on behalf of me: I do.

"Come back here later, so we can drink the money of this ring." I could still listen to Hector yelling while I opened the pub door.

Ah! As I tell you it feels like it happened yesterday, but some years went by since this weird incident and since I moved here from my little town. What? You think I'm telling you to fool around as if you had nothing to lose? If you think so, you haven't paid any attention-- Jean, darling! I'm glad you are here. Come here and show your hand to my mate. A pretty jewel, isn't it? Well, if my Jean comes to pick me up that means the pub is officially closed. C'mon, mate. And when we leave, take a good look at the car that brought her here. 

# Identidade

AMANDA J. FARIAS<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aluna de  
graduação  
em Inglês na  
Universidade  
de São Paulo.  
E-mail: amanda.  
farias01@gmail.  
com

QQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQ?  
QQQQQQQQQQQ?  
QQQQQQQQ?  
QQQQQ??  
QQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQQ???

Pensei em correr dos meus sonhos, por fraqueza.

Pensei em desistir do que sou, por dinheiro.

Pensei em morrer por quem sempre quis, por medo.

Pensei em não lutar, por vontade de morrer!

Mas não o fiz, por não ter coragem suficiente de ceder a esse ser cedente de mim, cedente de mim!

Não sei, disse a moça apressada com o café que segurava nas mãos. Não sei o porquê das coisas e nem o porquê da minha própria existência.

Aquele bocejo a incomodava de tal maneira, que mal conseguia se manter fixa às linhas que escrevia, nem nas direções que seus pensamentos percorriam. Era como estar no topo de uma colina e a qualquer momento estar prestes a cair. Mas entre o bocejar daquele homem e o palpitar acelerado daquele velho, uma realidade se mostrara diferente.

Talvez não tivera mais a noção de quanto tempo passara ou de quanto tempo aquela tortura demorara. É como se o balanço e o som desajeitado do trem me desse algum tipo de motivação para fazer algo que mal tinha coragem de pensar. É como se o meu ser tivesse coragem de pular daquela colina, só para sentir a brisa gelada do seu sorriso.

O simples fato de estar rodeada por coisas que nunca entenderia ou que nunca veria novamente fazia-a sentir medo de como as teclas do teclado soavam...

E era naquele momento que entendia como aquela angústia que tomava conta da minha alma aumentava e diminuía quando ouvia aquele bocejo, ou quando sentia a presença daquela figura fraternal. Por que aquele homem insistia em bocejar? Por que ele insistia em bocejar naquele trem vazio, naquele silêncio? Será que era algum tipo de afronta? Conseguia sentir o sangue que se derramava daquele bocejo. Era como se, de alguma maneira, aquela inquietação perturbasse o badalar do meu palpitar. Era um bocejo instigante. É como se ele soubesse desconstruir todos os meus conceitos e ideologias, ainda flamejantes assando dentro de um enorme forno... É como se... ou melhor... É como se não conseguisse olhar para o próximo e não ter certeza para onde o mundo caminha, nem a direção que os nossos sentimentos devem tomar.


É como se aquele pequeno indivíduo, perdido no meio de um coletivo, gemesse num ato desconcertante de um bocejo, pedindo forças para que as coisas fossem diferentes. Ou que as coisas apenas continuassem da mesma maneira, mas que ele não conseguisse sentir!?

É como se não pudéssemos traçar caminhos ou pegadas.

Passamos horas mergulhados em um mundo que clama uma identidade! O qual precisa que nos reafirmemos com estereótipos, imagens e figuras que nem ao menos sabemos o que são. Num mundo que nos tritura e nos faz diferentes do que éramos a cada single minute.

E é como se a presença dele... Daquele velho de cabelos brancos... me fizesse sentir diferente! Fiquei parada ali, mais de dois dias, digo, duas horas, ou na verdade duas frações de segundos. Mas de que me importa o tempo, se mal sabemos categorizá-lo? Fiquei ali parada, por mais de duas horas, sentindo apenas o respirar de seus pulmões e seus cabelos brancos. Minhas mãos não conseguiam parar de doer e as minhas batidas hearterais começaram a ficar mais rápidas. De algum modo, aquela figura causava-me sentimentos que não conseguia explicar em palavras escritas. Nossa respiração se igualou... E ao crepitar de cada respiro, o bocejo parecia mais estridente... Quase como numa orquestra, mas diferente... O maestro se escondia dentro dos meus próprios pensamentos e minhas mãos paralisadas deixaram a caneta escorregar no papel, Mergulhadas em algum tipo de superfície que eu nunca havia experimentado antes... O nosso coração continuou a palpitar e... De certo modo, a presença daquele ser me provocara uma diferença substancial no modo de sentir o mundo... pelo menos naquelas horas... Seja por um par de sapatos velhos ou pelos seus olhos que me miravam de uma maneira assustadora...

Além de suas botas sujas e olhos assustadores, senti que a presença dele me causara algum tipo de falta de ar, atrofiamento e espanto! Desci na estação final e ele apenas me mirou, com os olhos baixos e com um sorriso pálido; mudou de assento. Talvez nunca tenha entendido tantas coisas, mas aquilo passara dos meus limites de racionalidade. É como se, de alguma forma, aquela figura nunca houvesse saído daquele trem...

Desembarquei, continuei a tomar meu café, cheguei ao meu destino e iniciei a minha aula. Talvez estivesse louca ou apenas cansada pelo dia pesado que teria! Nada que uma boa dose de cafeína não resolvesse o meu dia! 



# Agradecimentos

We would like to thank the copy editors, the authors, designers Maria and Renata, professors Deusa and Maria Silvia, and our family and friends for the support, dedication, and guidance. We dedicate this edition to all of you!

The editors

