ABEI Journal

The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies

Volume 26, Number 1
June 2024, General Issue

ISSN 1518-0581 | eISSN 2592-8127

ISSN1518-0581
e-ISSN 2595-8127

ABEI Journal

The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies

Editors
Mariana Bolfarine
Laura P.Z. Izarra

ABEI Journal, Volume 26, Number 1, June 2024.

Universidade de São Paulo
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ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies is indexed by Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (CSA), Maryland, USA and Modern Language Association (MLA). It is published twice a year, in June and December, by Associação Brasileira de Estudos Irlandeses. This issue is co-edited with the support of the Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas, Universidade de São Paulo. Subscriptions, submitted articles, books for review and editorial correspondence should be sent to the Editors.

Submitted articles should normally not exceed 6,000 words and should conform to the method of documentation of the MLA Style Sheet. They should be sent electronically with an abstract at the beginning and biodata at its end in Word for Windows, until April and September of each year.

Since 2018 it is a free-access electronic publication at http://www.revistas.fflch.usp.br/abei/
To access previous numbers www.abei.org.br

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ISSN1518-0581
e-ISSN 2595-8127

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Serviço de Biblioteca e Documentação da FFLCH/USP

ABEI Journal: The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies
– n. 1 (1999) São Paulo: FFLCH/USP, 1999-2017 anual; 2018 semestral

ISSN 1518-0581 / E-ISSN 2595-8127

1. Literatura Irlandesa 2. Tradução 3. Irlanda (Aspectos culturais) I. Programa de Estudos Linguísticos e Literários em Inglês. II. Associação Brasileira de Estudos Irlandeses. III. ABEI.

CDD 820

Cover: "Shades of Evening (1904), by Mildred Anne Butler (1858-1941). Public domain. https://artvee.com/dl/shades-of-evening/

Support:

Government of Ireland
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Projeto de Diagramação
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Diagramação
Victor Augusto da Cruz Pacheco

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Reviews

ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 11-12.

Introduction

It is with great joy that we present the General Issue 26.1 of the *ABEI Journal*. The contributions attest the way in which Irish studies have been growing across the globe. What calls attention both in the "Articles" and in the "Reviews" section is the way Irish Studies gains layers of complexity as consecrated works are rendered in context, both within the realm of Irish scholarship and beyond, as well as in comparison, with works of literature from outside Ireland.

The "Articles" section includes submissions that tackle a variety of topics. Alvany Noronha Guanaes' "Traces of Hunger in Colum McCann's *Dancer*", focuses on the life of the Russian dancer Rudolf Nureyev, chiefly in the "parallelism between the scarcity and the excesses", exposing contrasts between the East and the West. This is followed by Ana Carolina Carvalho Monaco da Silva's "My dear Stevie, from Nonno: Translations and illustrations of a Joycean verbal text for young readers", which renders the illustrations and translations of *The Cat and the Devil*, based on a letter James Joyce wrote to his grandson, Stephen James Joyce. In "(Im)possible Facilitating Environments: The Spaces of Family in Sally Rooney's *Normal People*", Barbara Moreira Bom Angelo explores the novel's family relationships using D. W. Winnicott's concept of the "good enough" facilitating environment. Next, Elisa Lima Abrantes' "Revisionist Reading of the American West in *Days Without End* by Sebastian Barry", investigates issues of identity which deconstruct masculinity, individualism, and the romanticization of immigration in the westward expansion in America. In "For the Blood is the Life": Vampirism and Alterity in Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, Felipe Chernicharo focusses on aspects of alterity (sexual, cultural and recial) by means of the vampire story. Gisele Giandoni Wolkoff"s "In-Between Traditions: the poetry of Adília Lopes and Rita Ann Higgins", by presents a comparative rendering of the work by the Portuguese Poet Adília Lopes and by the Irish poet Rita Anne Higgins. Marina Naves S. M. Queiroz's "Séan O'Casey: a minor literature? *The Plough and the Stars*' pub scene through Deleuze and Guattari's perspective", considers "three key characteristics of minor literature: the deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to politics, and the collective assemblage of enunciation".

The Cinema section presents the article "Intertextualities between Frank Berry's films, *I Used to Live Here (2014) and Michael Inside (2017)*", by Cecília Adolpho Martins,

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.p11-12

explores the way in which the director makes use of intertextual elements in both films, such as bullying, loneliness, social exclusion and suicide by way of borrowing filmic elements from the previous movie.

The Voices from Latin America section presents three articles. "'There was no God for her or the other poor people': hunger in Liam O'Flaherty and Graciliano Ramos", by Camila Franco Batista, which highlights the vulnerability of the poor to repressive forces from dominant classes and the role of resistance as a crucial weapon. Mario Murgia's "The Harp and the Eagle: Teaching Irish Poetry in Mexico" reflects upon "critical and pedagogical approaches" with which the School of Philosophy and Literature (FFyL) at the National Autonomous University of Mexico "have tackled the teaching of (Anglo) Irish poetry over at least one decade". Jeremías Daniel Rodríguez analyses three important newspapers belonging to Entre Ríos and Santa Fe in "The independence of Ireland in the provincial press: Laurence Ginnell and the Irish diplomatic mission in Argentina (1921)", reflecting upon the actions of the Irish diplomatic personnel in Argentina.

Finally, the "Reviews" section comprises *Narratives of the Unspoken in Contemporary Irish Fiction: Silences that Speak* (2023) by Caneda- Maria Teresa Cabrera and José Carregal-Romero (editors), reviewed by Esther Gazzola Borges, as well as Noélia Borges' review of Lance Pettitt's *The Last Bohemian: Brian Desmond Hurst, Irish and British Cinema* (2023).

The Editors

"Os retirantes" (1944), de Candido Portinari.

Articles

ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 15-24.

Traces of Hunger in Colum McCann's Dancer

Vestígios da fome em Dancer *de Colum McCann*

Alvany Guanaes

Abstract: *Irish Writer Colum McCann introduces Rudi, the protagonist in Dancer – a fictionalized account inspired by ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev's biography. Impersonating what McCann coined as the 'century's greatest exile' (Cusatis 125), Rudi invites us to revisit Nureyev's saga, starting from Rudi's childhood during World War II in Russia to his stardom after he defected to the West. McCann organizes Rudi's life in a pendular parallelism between the scarcity and the excesses lived by the protagonist in economic, emotional, social, and cultural contexts and between the East and the West. Besides the theme of exile, hunger is another aspect of Dancer that is related to the Irish experience. Considering these transnational themes, the present work approaches foodways and hunger in this novel as a "system of communication" (Barthes, 1997) to analyse the sensuous, life-hungry protagonist in the West, including the indulgent lifestyle that accompanied it. Various gastronomic items, events, and behaviours will be approached connotatively to contemplate symbolic eating and converse with physical and metaphorical hunger. Throughout this work, the psychological and bodily instances of the character will dialogue with the political panorama that paved the way for his choices.*

Keywords: *Colum McCann; Dancer; Hunger; Foodways; Nureyev.*

Resumo: *O escritor irlandês Colum McCann apresenta Rudi, o protagonista em Dancer – uma narrativa ficcional inspirada na biografia do bailarino Rudolf Nureyev. Encarnando o que McCann chamou de "o maior exílio do século" (Cusatis, 2011, p. 125), Rudi nos convida a revisitar a saga de Nureyev, começando pela infância de Rudi durante a Segunda Guerra Mundial na Rússia até seu estrelato após ter desertado para o Ocidente. McCann organiza a vida de Rudi entre a escassez e os excessos vividos pelo protagonista em contextos*

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.v26i1p15-24
Received: 19/04/2024 Accepted: 24/06/2024

econômicos, emocionais, sociais e culturais e entre o Oriente e o Ocidente. Além do tema do exílio, a fome é outro aspecto de Dancer que está relacionado à experiência irlandesa. Considerando esses temas transnacionais, o presente trabalho aborda as maneiras de comer e a fome neste romance como um "sistema de comunicação" (Roland Barthes, 1997) para analisar o protagonista sensível e faminto pela vida no Ocidente, incluindo o estilo de vida indulgente que o acompanhou. Diversos itens gastronômicos, eventos e comportamentos serão abordados conotativamente para contemplar a alimentação simbólica e conversar com a fome física e metafórica. Ao longo deste trabalho, as instâncias psicológicas e físicas do personagem dialogam com o panorama político que pavimentou o caminho para suas escolhas.

Palavras-chave: *Colum McCann; Dancer; Fome; Maneiras de comer; Nureyev.*

Introduction

Irish writer Colum McCann was inspired to write about the ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev through an anecdote told by an Irish acquaintance who recounted that back in the 1970s, his father, who often came home violent, surprised his family one night by returning sober with a television. As the family struggled with the reception, the first image they saw was of Rudolf Nureyev dancing. This mesmerizing vision left such an impact that even thirty years later, in Brooklyn, he remained captivated by Nureyev. McCann wondered what allowed a Russian dancer to penetrate the consciousness of a working-class Dublin boy. He stated, "I felt driven to write a novel that might try to cross all sorts of international boundaries and intersect, perhaps, with forgotten lives" (Cusatis 125).

McCann was then 'attracted to the century's greatest exile' (*ibidem*), referring to Nureyev's diasporic life after he defected to France in 1961. *Dancer* (2003) may be conceived as a fictionalized biography once McCann adds creatively to documented accounts concerning Nureyev's life and facts that lay the ground for understanding historical passages in the book.

Rudolf Nureyev's birth was "symbolic of his future statelessness and nomadic existence" (Kavanagh 2) as he was born on a moving train in 1938 while the Nureyevs were on their way to stay with his father at the Red Army's Far Eastern Division. Deriving from Nureyev's life, *Dancer* opens with facts surrounding the protagonist's childhood during the

end of WWII and moves further until he defects to the West and, finally, when he pays a short visit to the extinct Soviet Union to see his sick mother.

Speaking of this Tatar artist means discussing the muscular grace of dancing as much as recklessness, exile, and hunger. In this work, organic and symbolic hunger overlap, engulfing a metaphorical state of need and want for something other than food that pertains to the same discourse of organic need. Drawing on a foodways framework that explores hunger and foodways, their polysemy will help investigate what they reveal about the protagonist and his context.

Food consumption informs much about people as it is a product of and is affected by cultural, economic, and political issues (Ashley et al. ii, 2004; Sceats, 2000; Corvo, 2015). Roland Barthes articulated the symbolic unfolding of foodways and their communicative power, explaining that food is a cultural item that establishes a communication system about the societies where it is found (Barthes 24). Food is "... charged with signifying the situation in which it is used" (29). So, it is both nutrition and protocol. The ubiquity of food and hunger constitutes a valid lens from which to look into foodways critically; to underscore similarities and differences between people and peoples and inform of contexts in which they occur.

The novel's food-related quotations are divided into themes regarding food and famine in the following sections: "Sugar", "Hunger", "Voracity," and "Remains." The latter includes passages that intersect topics discussed in the previous divisions, and final considerations.

Sugar

Rudi's first public Tatar folk dance performance occurred when he was about six, sometime around 1944, at the soldiers' hospital. He immediately caused a roar of interest among the patients, who propped themselves up in their beds to watch the vibrating squatting and feet stomping. Veterans whistled, cheered, shouted, applauded, and one even came to emotional tears as he felt taken away from the context of death and sickness for a while. Someone rewarded Rudi with a sugar cube, a horse's treat. The firmness of the horse-like steps of Bashkirian folk dance and the hair on the child's face ran counter to the soldiers' trials described in the novel's first chapter. The reader learns about horses that accompanied the battalions, starved, and so many died along the way, and that soldiers "ate the horsemeat with great sadness" (13). The dance provides a stark contrast that highlights Rudi's performance. The reader understands that Rudi made a significant contribution to the nation, not as a

fighter, but as an enchanter. It was the end of World War II, a period of limitations when the Soviet State took hold of provision distribution. In *Hunger and War: Food Provisioning in the Soviet Union during World War II*, the authors explain that provisioning hierarchies existed. It followed a principle of labor, "... which aimed to reward those who expended more calories at work with more food" (Filtzer; Goldman 56). People were organized into four different groups to receive ration cards: "workers, white-collar employees, dependents, and children under twelve" (*ibidem*). The distribution system followed lots of intricate norms once each food group was allotted in ranks. Although sugar was a more equally distributed element, it was not as abundant, as nothing was.

During the war, hunger and starvation-related mortality were spread nationwide; distributing nutritious resources saved the population and, consequently, national perpetuation. At that moment of Rudi's life, offering any ingestible, despite the rank it occupied, meant a special gift not only due to its scarcity but also because it meant giving up a privilege not easily acquired. In subsequent presentations, Rudi took home leftovers and increased portions of cubes. Barthes (23) declared that sugar is 'more than foodstuff.' It is an attitude in moments of enjoyment, energy, or relaxation. Gustavo Barcellos in *O Banquete de Psiquê* (2017), a study of foodways through psychology, explains that sugar and everything that tastes sweet brings up the archetypical child as it has to do with desserts and treats and their elaborated colourful appearance, the coronation of a meal, a playful sight. Sweet nourishment can potentially elevate the soul, affirms Barcellos, providing a joyful experience with promises of transcendence. It is a way of combating undesirable bitterness in the palate as well as in the soul. It echoes in the language: Lovers call each other "sugar"; It is possible to make a rough situation acceptable by sugar-coating it; A spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down; A sweet person is a loving person; "home sweet home" is a synonym for happiness.

No other children who danced in the hospital wards got any reward, so Rudi's gifts encapsulated treat and power, a solid remain of an immaterial artistic reality, an announcement of his future grandeur. In this scenario, sugar was a praise for the young boy who counterattacked the bitter panorama of injuries and broken hearts.

Rudi came home one evening flaunting his possessions. His mother stated that the cubes would dissolve, to which he remarked – "No, they won't," (30) – a symbolic statement about the materiality and solidness of his future artistic career.

Hunger

Rudi dreams of opening a packed lunch box at school, but his meal typically consists of the remains of a potato carried in his pocket. As his father, the military Hamet Nureyev, is away due to war missions, and his salary goes to the efforts for the national cause, the family tries to survive on very little by selling all their belongings. His mother, Farida, supports her husband's actions, explaining to Rudi that "... sacrifices must be made" (24) and that "... hunger will make him [Rudi] strong" (*ibidem*). Nonetheless, the six-year-old boy has a different idea: "... to him; hunger is the high feeling of emptiness when the trains emerge from the forest and the sound bounces across the ice of Belaya" (i*bidem*). Three different meanings of hunger unfold in those speeches: physical – for the lack of nourishment; cultural – for the sacrifice to be made and emotional – as the boy misses his father and waits for the train that will bring him back home, fearing he would be broken "just like the ones they were lifting from beneath the steam and the bugles" (*idem* 12).

No wonder "bugles" are brought into play as it is an instrument, like a trumpet, used in the army to announce that activities are about to begin, including mealtime. The bugles herald the provider's absence, pointing to the intersection between physical and emotional needs. Rudi deeply incorporated a state of lack, translating it into an irretrievable desire that constituted him personally and professionally. For example, at 22, he had achieved some notoriety in the dance circles and was given an apartment, a good salary, and food privileges. Yulia, his first teacher's daughter, attended a performance in Leningrad when "Rudi's name fluttered in the air" (158). She describes the event: "When Rudi entered, exploding from the wings to a round of applause, he tore the role open, not so much by how he danced, but by the manner in which he presented himself, a sort of hunger turned human" (159). At that moment, the Dancer epitomized multiple connotations of hunger that prefigures his lonely future. The "feeling of emptiness" did make him stronger as it opened up a rogue chain of desire for more: he "exploded," "tore," and stupefied people. The astonished audience's face overlooked the still defective way he danced at the occasion to the greedy dancing impersonation.

Voracity

On the first night, his father, Hamet, is at home, and all four Nureyevs sleep on the same bed. Rudi prefers to sleep next to his mom, who smells of "... kefir and sweet potatoes" (33). That

night, the boy wakes up at the throbbing movement of the bed and Hamet's whispers. Such a passage opens a connection between food (Kefir and potatoes) and sex, which will dialogue with Rudi's eroticism in subsequent chapters. Years later, during a vacation in Paris, Rudi went to a famous club and performed fellation on "... six Frenchmen in a row, stopping for a glass of vodka between each" (225). As he learned Victor, his friend, and alter-ego in the novel, had already bettered him by two, he "... dragged the first three men he could find, lined them against the wall ... and went at them in the same way he danced, all elegance and ferocity" (*ibidem*). He refers to them as "Such fine French cuisine! So deliciously tender!" (*ibidem*).

In order to understand what is communicated by French Food, Russian national drink, and Rudi's 'artistic' sexual performance, it is necessary to elaborate upon the semantics of hunger. First, there is a meal metaphor for men, implying the "consuming" of the other through sex, which is hunger applied to sexuality. Nonetheless, such appetite is a simulacrum as it is dislocated to voracity that, according to Kaplan (2012 57), is an obsession with consuming rather than enjoying a meal, which refers to increasing the number of partners to beat a friend in sexual performance. The concurrence between sexual desire and appetite for a typical Russian alcoholic beverage sets the body as a connecting medium interweaving nation and art, which is all about an unsatisfying craving for both. Second, the body parts involved in the sexual congress described in the scene are the mouth and the digestive tract, the same ones employed for eating and digesting a food item. It is like he was in the oral stage, "...conceived as the first stage of libidinal development when nutrition is inseparable from the love relationship with the mother" (Sceats 38), in this case, the motherland. A fantasy is at play: Rudi is incorporating his partners, the Frenchmen, as enemy soldiers, all lined up while he performs to them. All in all, that is what it is: a fantastic impossibility of having both East and West, and for this, it is a source of suffering for the motherland that failed to protect him.

In 1987, Rudi got permission to go to Russia to visit his sick mother. Tamara, his sister, gives her best to make the preparations. She walked the department stores to get the scant appliances. "There were rumours of a shipment of toaster ovens, but none came" (287) – alluding to the constant hearsay about Rudi's life before and after his defection. Tamara thinks of darning the tablecloth; she gets desperate as there is no sugar to be found and asks, "What can we use to sweeten the cakes?" whereas the underlying question is, 'How can the whole situation be better'? Moreover, she dreams of a miracle of truckloads of sugar arriving

just in time along with "herring, sturgeon, and we will celebrate under a large tent, drinking champagne to the music of an orchestra" (288).

Nonetheless, her fantasies are about not having a dying mother, and that her brother had stayed, that she could have a better life, 'a life away from this life' (29), as her mother hoped many years back. As her husband finds half-kilo sugar in the market, she thinks "all is not lost" (289), meaning she hopes something good will come from Rudi's visit. Driving along the streets of UFA, Rudi did not recognize many places at first, and although he whispered to Tamara, "I am home" (291), it meant hope more than a genuine feeling. To illustrate, he got some sunflower seeds as he had not eaten them in years. He "ate two, spat out the shells, and threw the rest away" (294), devising that he was detached from the sunflower oil the soldiers used to lube their artillery and from the babushkas huddling over baskets of the seeds at the train station. He was closer to "the heads in the crowd" (195) on Fifth Avenue, which "turned like a field of sunflowers" to see him. For him, everything looked smaller at home. As he entered his semi-conscious mother's room, he kept whispering, "Mother. It's me. Rudik", but his mother did not open her eyes. She wants Tamara to tell the mother it was him as if saying he was a foreigner now who could not be recognized as the Rudi that had left. Although Tamara pleaded with him to enjoy the banquet she had so effortlessly prepared, he decided not to move until the mother recognized him despite Tamara's insistent entreaties. Rudi justified that he was not hungry and decided to eat when ready. However, he never did, as his mother did not interact with him. Farida epitomizes the motherland with which Rudi felt he did not identify. He was a stranger in a strange land. His inappetence alludes symbolically to his inability to incorporate the nation into his life. It was a traumatic experience expressed later; after some drinks of Vodka, he dared to admit to an old friend, "You know, my own mother didn't recognize me" (304).

Remains

During young Rudi's first performance in Moscow, he stays in a hotel, and Farida travels four days to meet him there. It is a magnificent building decorated with red drapes and a chandelier with "giant portraits of the Heroes of the Soviet Union" (105), which intimidate her. Premier Khrushchev had just given a speech as part of the events taking place at the hotel, which included a feast whose remnants were on display:

> Farida shuffles alongside the table: a splotch of beluga caviar on a starched white cloth; a plate with a touch of duck pâté rimed to it; the smell of sturgeon, herring, beef, truffles, wild mushrooms, cheeses; Krendeli biscuits in their broken figures of eight; a single Black Sea oyster on a glistening tray. She lifts a slice of salted meat to her mouth, decides against it, moves on, noticing empty silver ice-buckets for Champagne, crumbs on the floor, cigar ashes on the windowsill, cigarette butts, lemon wedges in empty glasses, bent and broken toothpicks, a display of red chrysanthemums in the center of the room.
> ...
> She goes to the window, looks down at her boots, worn and salt-stained (105-106)

It is worth concentrating on some of the food items listed above because of what its subtextual meaning reveals. Beluga Caviar is an expensive delicacy consisting of the roe of the beluga sturgeon found mainly in the Caspian Sea (Nowel 36), thus a Russian ingestible. Other Russian items include herring, commonly served salted, and a single oyster from the Black Sea between Russia and the rest of Europe. There is a symbolic overlapping between the oyster and the Soviet Union in its isolation from Europe and another between Rudi as the shining tray, meaning he was already a star but still unknown by the rest of the world. The "splotch" on the whiteness reminds of blood or corpses crushed on the snowy battlefields as a symbolic stain on the nation's glories. Such analogies can be augmented by referencing other countries in the same passage. Champagne, truffles, duck pâté, and cheeses so allusive of France, with which bloody battles were fought. It is important to note that the biscuits are "broken," which dialogues with little Rudi's fears that his father would come home "broken" as the other soldiers. The toothpicks, similar in appearance and commonly organized side by side, evoke the image of a battalion and, as happened to the humans they metaphorize, are "bent and broken." Cigarette butts, ashes, and crumbs, alongside the stiffness of the tablecloth and the flowers, provide imagery that alternates between a battlefield and a cemetery because the fields have been soldiers' graves. McCann employed the word "remnants" which means 'leftovers' of the food and the debris of a repast of human flesh. It is something to be thrown away, not feasted upon anymore. Farida, shuffling along as if attending a funeral, perceives some rottenness in the salted meat she refuses to eat, which signals the corpses of soldiers as "dead meat." It implies that she does not acquiesce to the antagonism between the protective

motherland and the metaphorical cannibalism she is witnessing. She refuses to acknowledge the paradoxes and remains a loyal citizen who believes in the honesty of her nation despite the display of total disregard for both soldiers and citizens.

Conclusion

Dancer is about a man whose home lies on the stages around the world, carrying the burdens and the glory of his diasporic existence. He was in emotional exile before defection as he rejected his history of "stale bread, soaked in vodka and tears" (159) referring to the Soviet shortcomings. His life then was all about the future. He hoped he could shine in places that could offer him the grandeur he expected. When he returned home as an older man, Russia had become the past he did not want to reenact. His present was his artistic achievement – it was about the freedom he so effortfully tried to conquer. Still, at the same time, he felt an impostor among the present "fifteen types of champagne" (*ibidem*) and "more caviar than ever seen before" (*ibidem*), the Western plenty did not fulfil his sense of belonging, as there he felt like a persona before being a person.

Whereas the precariousness of the Soviet Union made him physically and emotionally hungry, the Western superabundance was a constant reminder of the distance from his roots. His voracity indicates the constant void fought by his body's assertiveness. Rudi was cannibalized by the manipulative state power and public demand, but his dance epitomized a counter-discourse, a survival strategy that sends a redeeming message.

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ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 25-34.

"My dear Stevie, from Nonno": Translations and Illustrations of a Joycean Verbal Text for Young Readers

"Meu querido Stevie, do Nonno": Traduções e ilustrações de um texto verbal joyceano para jovens leitores

Ana Carolina Carvalho Monaco da Silva

Abstract: *James Joyce (1882-1941) was one of the most revolutionary and influential modernist writers, both inside and outside anglophone literature. Notably, the author did not write for children, but a letter sent to his grandson, Stephen James Joyce (1932-2020), published for the first time in 1957, was entitled* The Cat and the Devil *and released as a children's book. The translations of this letter into more than twenty languages over the last 60 years, bring about themes and elements of Joycean writing, while revealing themselves as products of their own time and society. From this perspective, this article seeks to analyse the illustrations and translations of* The Cat and the Devil *from the perspective of intersemiotic reading by young readers. The results point to the translations of the work as transitions between semiotic systems, in creative and interpretative acts of appropriation and redemption by both the translator and the illustrator. The semiotic/semantic potential present in the multimodality of the picture book was evidenced in terms of the possibilities for exploring and engaging young readers, expanding the single addressee of the original letter and transforming it into a significant work of children's literature.*

Keywords: *James Joyce;* The Cat and the Devil*; Translation; Illustration; Intersemiotic Reading.*

Resumo: *James Joyce (1882-1941) foi um dos mais revolucionários e influentes escritores modernistas, dentro e fora da literatura anglófona. Notoriamente, o autor não escreveu para crianças, mas uma carta enviada a seu neto, Stephen James Joyce (1932-2020), e publicada pela primeira vez em 1957, foi intitulada* The Cat and the Devil *e lançada como livro infantojuvenil. As traduções desta carta, realizadas em mais de vinte idiomas ao longo dos últimos 60 anos, trazem*

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.v26i1p25-34
Received: 30/04/2024 Accepted: 07/07/2024

temas e elementos da escrita joyciana para adultos, ao mesmo tempo que se revelam como produtos de seu próprio tempo e da sociedade em que se inserem. Partindo desta perspectiva, este trabalho buscou analisar o percurso de ilustrações e traduções da obra The Cat and the Devil/O Gato e o Diabo*, sob o viés da leitura intersemiótica de jovens leitores. Os apontam para as traduções da obra como transições entre sistemas semióticos em atos criativos e interpretativos de apropriação e resgate tanto do tradutor quanto do ilustrador. Evidenciou-se o potencial semiótico/semântico presente na multimodalidade do livro ilustrado quanto às possibilidades de exploração e engajamento dos jovens leitores, extrapolando o destinatário único da carta original transformando-a em uma significativa obra da literatura infantojuvenil.*

Palavras-chave: *James Joyce;* The Cat and the Devil*; Tradução; Ilustração; Leitura intersemiótica.*

James Augustine Aloysius Joyce (1882-1941) was one of the most acclaimed and influential writers of modernist literature. Joyce was born in Dublin, Ireland, on 2 February, 1882. His first short stories were published in 1904. Some of most remarkable works are the short story collection *Dubliners* (1914), the play *Exiles* (1918), the poetry collections *Chamber Music* (1907) and *Pomes Penyeach* (1927), and the novels *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), *Ulysses* (1922) and *Finnegans Wake* (1939).

Living most of his life as an expatriate, Joyce returned to Ireland only a few times, and his last visit was in 1912. A few years later, established as a well-known author, Joyce dealt with personal and health problems. In addition to issues of plagiarism and censorship to *Ulysses*, his father, John Stanislaus Joyce (1849-1931), died in December 1931, followed by the declining mental health of his daughter Lucia Joyce (1907-1982). The loss was alleviated by the birth of his grandson Stephen James Joyce (1932-2020), son of Giorgio Joyce (1905-1976), in February 1932. James Joyce died on 13 January 1941, at the age of 58, in Zurich, where he was buried. No official representative of the Irish state attended his funeral.

Notably, James Joyce did not write for children. However, the author was very fond of the conversations and stories he told his only grandson, Stephen James Joyce. Helen Kastor Fleischman (1894-1963), Stephen's mother, reported in her memoirs that:

> As Stevie grew older I loved to watch him crawling onto his grandfather's knee and asking him grave little questions. His serious childish face was charming to see as he listened to the slow and painstaking answers that [his grandfather] gave him in his slow careful Dublin drawl. [Joyce] was infinitely patient with him and was always willing to stop and talk to him or to answer as he grew older his incessant 'whys.' The answers needless to say were always wonderful ones. (Max, 2006)

On 10 August 1936, during a vacation trip to Villers-sur-Mer, France, Joyce wrote a letter to four-year-old Stephen, telling him one of the stories he cherished so much - about the cat of Beaugency. Although Janet E. Lewis (1992) claims that there is no concrete evidence that Joyce visited Beaugency on this occasion – except for a photo of his wife Nora Barnacle (1884-1951) with friends –, Amanda Sigler (2008) validates the facts and confirms that, based on a letter sent to his son Giorgio from a hotel in Beaugency, Joyce was in the French town days before writing the letter that would become a picture book named *The Cat and the Devil*. As Sigler (2008) points out, the letter also indicates that Joyce wrote the story based on personal associations rather than distant sources. Considering the proximity of the dates, the story should have been fresh in Joyce's mind when it was written, which suggests that the narrative incorporated, in addition to the folklore tradition, his recent travel experiences.

Years later, when James Joyce's correspondence were compiled and studies on them were made, the story told and sent to Stephen gained prominence. It was published in its original format for the first time in 1957, in the book *Letters of James Joyce*, edited by Stuart Gilbert. Given the semiotic potential of the text, the letter was given a title, *The Cat and the Devil*, and was first published as a picture book for children in 1964 in the United States, followed by an edition in England the following year. Besides the addition of illustrations and pagination, the structure of the epistolary genre was maintained, along with its original textual elements: date, greeting, text addressed to the recipient, salutation and signature.

At a first glance, it is possible to see that the narratives produced by Joyce for an adult audience have much in common with the text of *The Cat and the Devil*: the use of "a mixture of languages (the narrator of the story speaks English; the Devil speaks French, with a Dublin accent), invented words and historical and biographical allusions, as well as returning to the Irish question through, for example, the naive figure of the Devil"[1] (Amarante 17). Alessandra Rech adds that the story of the cat of Beaugency elicits recurring themes in Joyce's work, "such as the figure of the expatriate, who in this case is the Devil himself, as well as political criticism"[2]

(155). Black (2013) points out that, like Dublin, Beaugency is situated on a vast, wide river, it is proud of its stone bridge and has witnessed many conflicts with English invaders. The author suggests that, during his visit to the city, Joyce read up on its history.

The Cat and the Devil is relevant in comparison with works of literature aimed at young adults because it has intertextual relationships with myths, legends and ballads. Joyce transformed a popular ballad into a literary fairy tale, with a subversive ending for young readers – from tragic to comic, full of new meanings, allusions, quotations, themes and stylizations – considering that fairy tales can be characterized as text for children, and context for adults.

In Joyce's story, the legend of Beaugency describes the construction of the bridge over the River Loire. It features a mayor called Monsieur Alfred Byrne (following the name of the Lord Mayor of Dublin at that time). The French title "monsieur" indicates that such a typical Irish name must be misplaced; moreover, the mayor – in lower case – is ridiculed for his strange habits and his taste for pomp. Even the cat shows no interest in his figure.

Similarly to his parallel character, the devil is domesticated: unlike his historical and peculiar otherness, in this tale he is anthropomorphized. He reads the newspaper and uses a telescope; he becomes identifiable with the present and, consequently, with the reader. The people of Beaugency align themselves with the Irish, in a critique of their cowardice and cunning in sacrificing someone to cheat a sympathetic devil (Barai, 2018). The letter itself is a bridge to foreignness, the same way the cat can be considered a bridge to other cultures (Barai, 2014), as a common and popular element frequently found in tales and traditions.

It could be inferred that Joyce wrote to a double addressee, an external one - his grandson Stephen - and an internal one – an adult –, due to the presence of a number of intertextual elements that are readily understood by more experienced readers from the perspective of literary reception, such as stereotypes, humor, irony and criticism. While directly addressing his grandson, the recipient of the letter, Joyce translates the inner monologue of a literary character – the devil talking to the cat in French.

The author's positive relationship with cats is evident in his correspondence with his grandson Stephen. Among the records of letters and postcards sent by Joyce, there is an illustrated postcard with an image of Puss in Boots, sent on Stephen's birthday in 1934. The letter to his grandson opens with "My dear Stevie, I sent you a little cat filled with sweets a few days ago but perhaps you do not know the story about the cat of Beaugency" (Joyce, 2021 2), again demonstrating affection for the animal through a gift and a motif for the story told.

Siegler (2008) adds that Joyce continued to think about cats even after finishing the story and sending it to his grandson. About a month later, in September 1936, when Joyce was in Copenhagen, he wrote another letter to Stephen telling him that, unfortunately, he could not send his grandson a cat as there were no such felines in that city – a letter that gave rise to Joyce's second children's book, *The Cats of Copenhagen*, published for the first time in 2012 in its original language (English), in a limited edition of 200 copies by Ithys Press, with illustrations by Casey Sorrow and typography by Michael Caine. The first translation into Brazilian Portuguese was published in 2013 by Editora Iluminuras, translated by Dirce Waltrick do Amarante and illustrated by Michaella Pivetti.

Filled with many references, associations and metaphors, the connection between the cat and the devil strangely awakens a pattern of closeness between father and son, or grandfather and grandson. Joyce demonstrates a peculiar and expressive trait, using literary and linguistic devices to contemplate the social and political ideology he believes in, as well as mirroring his own experiences. The letter he wrote to his grandson Stephen, although personal, bears these traits and has become another example of literature that favours different points of view and multiple interpretations as each meaning is revealed.

When converted from letter into picture book, the text suffers few modifications. Basically, the paragraphing is modified in the picture book editions, since the epistle is broken up into separate pages. Joyce did not translate the French text, which is the devil's speech in French "with a strong Dublin accent". In the original publication of the letter, from 1957, the word "devil" begins with a capital letter at its first mention, and is then spelled in lowercase. The illustrated books in English, on the other hand, bring "devil" in upper or lower case at the editor's discretion. "Lord Mayor", conversely, is always spelled in lower case in the original. The publications also keep the letter signed by "Nonno", in Italian.

The process of intersemiotic translation becomes evident in the picture book editions. Illustrations play an important role in children's reading. Images, both in their pedagogical and ludic components (and especially in the former), allow children to acquire new concepts. Even if reading is difficult and laborious, images help readers understand and stimulate their imagination; they arouse the child's interest in the content. Obviously, the text must maintain coherence between visual and non-visual elements. Peter Hunt states that "words can augment, contradict, expand, echo or interpret images – and vice versa"[3] (165). The semiotic/semantic

potential present in the multimodality of a picture book fosters the possibilities of reading exploration – and this is not exclusive to children and adolescents.

An attentive reading of the illustrators' choices by the adult reader brings new elements to be discovered. The first picture book edition was published by Dodd, Mead & Company in New York (USA) and illustrated by Richard Erdoes, an American photographer, author and illustrator. His illustrations follow a neo-medieval style, more faithful to the Beaugency legend, depicting a partially humanized devil, with horns, pointed ears, one human foot and another animal foot, more neutral colours and a countenance that certainly populated the imagination of that figure at the time. In contrast, Beaugency's illustrations were more colourful, and the children depicted would refer to a classic work for children in the 1960s: *Madeline*, by Ludwig Bemelmans.

In the following year, 1965, the first British edition was published in London by Faber & Faber, with illustrations by award-winning British artist Gerald Rose. Mixing colour and black-and-white images with an increased level of detail, the great innovation of this edition was a more humanized devil – still with horns, tail and trident – portraying James Joyce himself. Presented in a mirror, there is an emphasis on representation and recognition, evoking that the devil is the author himself. The visual allusions make the text ambivalent, serving children and adults simultaneously in two literary systems.

Since its first publication, *The Cat and the Devil* has been translated into more than 20 languages. In 1966, the first translated edition of the picture book was published in France, by Jacques Borel, with illustrations by Jean-Jacques Corre. The art is illustrated in black and white, with double-page spread text and a devil who is deliberately the physical representation of the author James Joyce. Critics generally define Corre's illustrations and layout as difficult to read but visually beautiful, in a modernist style associated with medieval and cartoonish illustrations. Considering that the original text is partly written in French, we may think about the processes of domestication and foreignization. In the editions translated into French, the text originally in French remains in French, with an explanatory note – clearly a missed opportunity to recreate the sense of otherness and foreignization established by Joyce in his letter.

Twenty years after Borel's translation, Stephen James Joyce published a "new translation" into French with his wife, Solange Joyce. Stephen Joyce's edition claims to be completely different from the previous one, but in general it follows Jacques Borel's choices at

several key points in the text. It can therefore be inferred that Stephen and Solange's displeasure may not be seen as a question of the lexicon, but probably due to Corre's illustrations. Hence, in addition to a new translation, the 1985 edition in French features Roger Blachon's illustrations, first published in 1978. Stephen James Joyce himself, who for many years, until the end of his life in 2020, was responsible for his grandfather's estate – a staunch protector of Joyce's legacy, known for his inflexibility in allowing scholars to use his grandfather's works –, wrote an afterword in 1990 (used in some editions as a preface) in the form of a letter, in which he addresses the young reader and puts the author and work into context.

The implicit information present in each illustration and the brevity of the letter lead it to an illustrated record in a very natural way (Sezzi, 2017), hence the images that accompany the text can increase but also complicate the possibilities of interpretation (Siegler, 2008). The translation of picture books into other languages can suffer from damaging disparities between text and image, especially when specific cultural elements are removed (Barai, 2018).

It is also worth remembering that translations and illustrations of *The Cat and the Devil* have been published from the 1960s to the present day, and each of them follows very specific children's visual symbolism, according to the society in which they are inserted, which changes according to time and place (Sezzi, 2017). As there is a considerable number of illustrators who have dedicated themselves to transposing Joyce's letter into images, we have chosen to comment on two illustration projects that stand out: that of aforementioned Frenchman Roger Blachon, and that of Brazilian Marcelo Lelis.

Roger Blachon's illustrations, which appeared in 1978 in the second French edition of *Le Chat et le Diable*, became so popular that they were used in translations in several other languages – including the original edition in English of 1981, published by Schocken Books. Blachon establishes distance and difference in an association between Ireland and France, bringing up the theme of Catholicism, consistently present in Joyce's work. Returning to medieval aesthetics, the mayor resembles the pope and the villagers are dressed in medieval style. A childish devil wearing red and a white cat complete the story's main characters.

With James Joyce's work entering the public domain in 2012, there have been a large number of new publications over the last ten years. *The Cat and the Devil* has gained a few new editions in Brazil, one of them by Cosac Naify, translated by Lygia Bojunga and illustrated by Marcelo Lelis, an award-winning artist from Minas Gerais. Lelis's watercolor art features a humanized devil, taking up the canon established in the illustrations of the story with traces

of Joyce's appearance. The close-up framing is observed, bringing the reader's perspective closer, in contrast to panoramic views, but always from an angle in which the reader is close, almost inside the scene, with the point of view of the narrator's eyes. Lelis's illustrations gained prominence and were used again in 2021 in a new Brazilian edition, by Abacatte Editorial with a new translation by Leo Cunha, and in an original edition in English published in Ireland by Little Island Books.

Faced with so many peculiar elements, the translators of the story into their respective languages also encounter challenges in the process of creating the text, balancing the translation and adaptation of the story. Amarante states that "translating and adapting, in the context of children and adolescents, are terms that go hand in hand, since they transform the text into what we understand, or can understand"[4](23). Research on *The Cat and the Devil* translations points out that the mayor's name and his domesticated characteristics have been retained, even though foreign names are not common in children's books. The city of Beaugency and the implicit criticism of Dublin also remain in the translations (Barai, p. 2014). Another element that remains is the letter opening elements, with the date, place and addressee. The presence of so many original items suggests the authority exercised by Joyce over his writings to this day.

Barai (2014, p. 185) presents the French translator's challenge in rendering the text into one of the languages of origin in the story, especially in matters of domestication and foreignization of the content: "Borel's translation makes strange what would naturally be domestic, were it a French story: Borel italicizes the French dialogue that Joyce has in the original text, and he adds a footnote". Blachon's illustrations, the author points out, also encourage the young reader to learn about a foreign culture, moving towards a more international perspective – which is also an aspect of modernism (Barai, 2014).

As Klamt concludes, "*The Cat and the Devil* is a letter that, as it leaves the envelope, unfolds, unfolds and unfolds"[5] (225).

Notes

1 "mescla de línguas (o narrador da história fala inglês; já o diabo fala francês, com sotaque dublinense), de palavras inventadas e de alusões históricas e biográficas, além de retomar a questão irlandesa por meio, por exemplo, da figura ingênua do diabo" (Amarante 17, my translation).

2 "como a figura do expatriado, que nesse caso é o próprio Diabo, bem como a crítica política" (Rech 155, my translation).

[3] "as palavras podem aumentar, contradizer, expandir, ecoar ou interpretar as imagens – e vice-versa" (Hunt 165, my translation).

[4] "traduzir e adaptar, no contexto infanto-juvenil, são termos que caminham lado a lado, uma vez que transformam o texto naquilo que compreendemos, ou que podemos compreender" (Amarante 23, my translation).

[5] "*O Gato e o Diabo* é uma carta que ao sair do envelope se desdobra, desdobra e desdobra" (Klamt, 2016, p. 225, my translation).

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(Im)possible Facilitating Environments: The Spaces of Family in Sally Rooney's Normal People

Ambientes facilitadores (im)possíveis: Os espaços da família em Normal People*, de Sally Rooney*

Bárbara Bom Angelo

Abstract: *Based on the concept of the "good enough" facilitating environment developed by pediatrician and psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott, this article aims at analyzing the family relationships depicted in the novel* Normal People *by Sally Rooney. By means of the contrast of experiences, Rooney develops two distinct family environments – for Connell Waldron, the space is nurturing; while for Marianne Sheridan, it is marked by violence. Through the dialogues between the protagonists and the information provided by the third-person narrator, which alternates between the points of view of both characters, it is possible to infer how these spaces impacted, positively or negatively, the coming-of-age process of the protagonists, especially in terms of their self-perception and in the choices they make over the four years covered in the novel.*

Keywords: *Sally Rooney;* Normal People*; D. W. Winnicott; Facilitating Environment; Family.*

Resumo: *Com base no conceito de ambiente facilitador "suficientemente bom" desenvolvido pelo pediatra e psicanalista D. W. Winnicott, este artigo tem como objetivo analisar as relações familiares retratadas no romance* Normal People *de Sally Rooney. Através do contraste de experiências, Rooney desenvolve dois ambientes familiares distintos – para Connell Waldron, o espaço é acolhedor; enquanto para Marianne Sheridan é marcado pela violência. Por meio dos diálogos entre os protagonistas e das informações fornecidas pelo narrador em terceira pessoa, que alterna entre os pontos de vista de ambos os personagens, é*

Received: 20/03/2024 Accepted: 04/07/2024

possível inferir como esses espaços impactam, positiva ou negativamente, no processo de amadurecimento dos protagonistas, especialmente na autopercepção e nas escolhas que fazem ao longo dos quatro anos abordados pelo romance.

Palavras-chave: *Sally Rooney;* Normal People*; D. W. Winnicott; Ambiente facilitador, Família.*

The spatial dynamics at work in Sally Rooney's second novel, *Normal People* (2018), offer a compelling lens to explore the nuances of identity formation and transition to adulthood. In the novel, there is a significant dialectic between the pairs school-university and rural town–country's capital. However, a seminal space precedes these: the foundational environment of home, the space of the family. In *The Poetics of Space* (2014), Gaston Bachelard develops the idea that the house is our corner of the world, "our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word" (26). Thus, the lessons, pains, and traumas experienced in this initial habitat serve as the foundation for the structure upon which identity will be built.

Pediatrician and psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott asserts that humans are born with "inherited tendencies that fiercely drive the individual on in a growth process" (Winnicott 1968 314), such as the integration of the personality, which is a complex process involving the development of a sense of self and reality, crucial to the establishment of a cohesive personal identity. However, for this evolution to happen, Winnicott emphasizes the importance, in the early stages of life, of the presence of a "good enough" mother, who provides a reliable and a "good enough" environment that facilitates the child's ability to internalize stability and coherence. Under these conditions, "the baby is able to make a developmental continuity of growth which is the beginning of health" (315). These concepts from Winnicott – especially the facilitating environment – can serve as a key framework for analyzing how the families depicted in *Normal People* provide support or hinder the protagonists' coming-of-age process.

In the novel, Rooney explores the relationship between Connell Waldron and Marianne Sheridan through contrasts in the power dynamics each occupies in the spaces of their social interactions from 2011 to 2015, a period that marks the end of adolescence and the beginning of adulthood. The story begins in the small (and fictional) town of Carricklea, in Sligo, where Connell is popular in school, while Marianne is perceived as peculiar, distancing herself from her peers. Outside the school environment, Connell faces

a disadvantage on the power scale: his mother works as a cleaner in Marianne's mansion. Another significant role reversal occurs when, as young adults, they move to Dublin to attend college. In the urban center, Marianne excels in the interactions demanded by the academic life at the country's leading university. On the other hand, Connell begins to doubt his own worth since the codes of acceptance in Dublin, the capital city, include elements that were not considered relevant in his hometown, as seen in the passage below:

> Back home, Connell's shyness never seemed like much of an obstacle to his social life, because everyone knew who he was already, and there was never any need to introduce himself or create impressions about his personality. If anything, his personality seemed like something external to himself, managed by the opinions of others, rather than anything he individually did or produced. Now he has a sense of invisibility, nothingness, with no reputation to recommend him to anyone. Though his physical appearance has not changed, he feels objectively worse-looking than he used to be. He has become self-conscious about his clothes. All the guys in his class wear the same waxed hunting jackets and plum-coloured chinos, not that Connell has a problem with people dressing how they want, but he would feel like a complete prick wearing that stuff. At the same time, it forces him to acknowledge that his own clothes are cheap and unfashionable. His only shoes are an ancient pair of Adidas trainers, which he wears everywhere, even to the gym. (70)

Marianne's experience contrasts sharply with his. She comes from an unwelcoming family environment and, as a result, does not feel the emotional impact of being away from her brother and mother; quite the opposite.

Even though we do not have access to the protagonists' early days of life, the narrator dedicates significant parts of the novel to the family dynamics of both characters, always centred on the maternal figure. Through a third-person narrator, alternating between the perspectives of Marianne and Connell, the reader learns how the relationship between mothers and children are crystallized, how the facilitating environment is formed during these years of coexistence, and whether it acquires characteristics of health or illness. As mentioned earlier, Rooney extensively employs the contrast technique to situate the environments in which the two were raised, such as the physical description of their homes (mansion vs. terraced house) as highlighting markers that position the characters in distinct social classes. This dichotomy is further underscored in the labor relations between the two families, which unfold explicitly

within the domestic sphere. The novel begins with Connell collecting his mother after her shift as a cleaner in Marianne's mansion:

> Marianne answers the door when Connell rings the bell. She's still wearing her school uniform, but she's taken off the sweater, so it's just the blouse and skirt, and she has no shoes on, only tights.
> Oh, hey, he says.
> Come on in.
> She turns and walks down the hall. He follows her, closing the door behind him. Down a few steps in the kitchen, his mother Lorraine is peeling off a pair of rubber gloves.
> ... Lorraine folds the rubber gloves up neatly and replaces them below the sink. Then she starts unclipping her hair. To Connell this seems like something she could accomplish in the car. (1)

In this passage, there is a parallelism between what Marianne and Lorraine are wearing. Following Connell's perspective in this first chapter, the narrator tells the reader that Marianne is at ease, already halfway out of her uniform and barefoot. In Lorraine's case, the notable item is the rubber gloves worn for cleaning. Encountering both of them in the kitchen in an unequal power position embarrasses Connell. He wishes his mother would not fix her hair there but rather in the car, away from Marianne's eyes, away from this discomfort.

The subordinate position of Connell's mother affects the relationship with Marianne. At school, they pretend not to know each other, "people know that Marianne lives in the white mansion with the driveway and that Connell's mother is a cleaner, but no one knows of the special relationship between these facts" (2). Adding to this social difference between them is the fact that Marianne is considered "an object of disgust" (3) by their schoolmates, which shows the first reversal of power in the novel. These two factors lead Connell to keep the romantic relationship that he and Marianne begin a few days after their encounter in the kitchen a secret. Revealing these elements that both connect and separate them could destabilize the social status that he carefully constructed over the years to compensate for his "bad" family background, known to everyone in town:

> She's from a good family and Connell is from a bad one, that much she does know. The Waldrons are notorious in Carricklea. One of Lorraine's brothers was in prison once, Marianne doesn't know for what, and another one got into a motorcycle crash off the roundabout a few years ago and

> almost died. And of course, Lorraine got pregnant at seventeen and left school to have the baby. (32)

To turn this situation around, Connell adopts a behavior at school in consonance with the norms, with no room for objections: he is a good friend, a good student, a good athlete. It is a performance, for others as well as for himself. The conditions listed in the passage above, combined with the fact that Connell does not know who his father is, could easily be used as an argument for a dysfunctional family environment. However, that is not the case in *Normal People*. The Waldron home is described as a pleasant, safe space with open dialogue and respect. These characteristics become evident when Connell compares his experience with the accounts of his friends:

> When they fight with their fathers, the fights always seem to mean one thing on the surface but conceal another secret meaning beneath. When Connell fights with Lorraine, it's usually about something like leaving a wet towel on the couch, and that's it, it's really about the towel, or at most it's about whether Connell is fundamentally careless in his tendencies, because he wants Lorraine to see him as a responsible person despite his habit of leaving towels everywhere ... (46)

Lorraine is a central figure in Connell's life, a cultural and political reference, the person he does not want to disappoint. She serves as a moral compass, cautioning him against unjust or inappropriate behavior, especially when he hurts Marianne out of fear of being rejected by his friends. An example of one of these reprimands occurs when Connell, who has been involved with Marianne for months, invites another girl to the graduation party:

> And you don't think maybe you should have asked her? she says. Seeing as how you fuck her every day after school.
> That is vile language to use.
> Lorraine's nostrils flare white when she inhales. How would you like me to put it? she says. I suppose I should say you've been using her for sex, is that more accurate?
> Would you relax for a second? No one is using anyone.
> How did you get her to keep quiet about it? Did you tell her something bad would happen if she told on you?
> Jesus, he says. Obviously not. It was agreed, okay? You're getting it way out of proportion now.
> Lorraine nods to herself, staring out the windshield. Nervously he waits for her to say something.

> People in school don't like her, do they? says Lorraine. So I suppose you were afraid of what they would say about you, if they found out.
> He doesn't respond.
> Well, I'll tell what I have to say about you, Lorraine says. I think you're a disgrace. I'm ashamed of you. (55-56)

Connell struggles with his mother's statement, but the conversation is a catalyst moment for him to confront his behaviour and realise the consequences of his decision. After the party, Marianne stops attending school and ceases all communication with him. Connell then feels "a debilitating shame about the kind of person he'd turned out to be" (74). They will meet again only in Dublin, where it will be Connell's turn to feel inadequate among his study peers. Marianne, on the other hand, will be surrounded by friends, with a vibrant social life.

Faced with the feeling of non-belonging, it is to Lorraine that Connell turns for support. In the first scene in the capital city, we see him arriving at a university party. He did not want to be there, but he was encouraged to attend by his mother:

> Connell knew going to a party on his own would be a bad idea, but on the phone Lorraine said it would be a good idea. I won't know anyone, he told her. And she said patiently: You won't get to know anyone if you don't go out and meet people. (66)

Although Lorraine always supports Connell when needed, she consistently encourages her son to have other experiences, as a way to introduce the principle of reality, one of the family functions mentioned by Winnicott (2021), which is the practice of gradually showing the limitations and hardships imposed by the world (49).

Throughout the novel, Connell faces challenges inherent to the coming-of-age process. For instance, while experiencing satisfaction with the evolution of his writing skills, Connell must also contend with symptoms of depression triggered by a school classmate's suicide, as well as the constant pain of physical and intellectual distance from those with whom he shared his youth. These obstacles are overcome, or at least alleviated, with the support of his mother – with his constant returns to his childhood home, highlighting the positive role of the family environment formed over the years by Lorraine.

While Connell is supported by a good enough facilitating environment, Marianne grows up surrounded by episodes of violence. In a conversation with Connell, she reveals that her father used to beat her mother up and that "sometimes" (43) she was also a target. Her father dies when Marianne is thirteen, and her brother, Alan, takes over the role of the aggressor. The narrator fills in the silences and gradually provides the reader with information about the extent of these violent acts. At the beginning of the novel, Alan appears impatient, and envious; he judges Marianne's clothes, and monitors whom she goes out with. However, as the narrative progresses, we see their interaction shift towards physical attacks, culminating in a violent episode where Alan breaks his sister's nose.

The way Marianne's mother, Denise, handles what happens between the siblings is the key element to understanding the nature of this familial environment. Denise rarely reprimands Alan and often suggests that Marianne's personality triggers such behaviors:

> Denise decided a long time ago that it is acceptable for men to use aggression towards Marianne as a way of expressing themselves. As a child Marianne resisted, but now she simply detaches, as if it isn't of any interest to her, which in a way it isn't. Denise considers this a symptom of her daughter's frigid and unlovable personality. She believes Marianne lacks 'warmth', by which she means the ability to beg for love from people who hate her. (65)

Marianne frequently feels that life is "happening somewhere very far away, happening without her, and she didn't know if she would ever find out where it was and become part of it" (11). Therefore, the idea of leaving her family and hometown behind becomes attractive as the space of her house turns into a place she must escape from. Marianne sees the move to Dublin and enrolling in college as a chance for a "new existence" (34).

After creating a new life for herself, Marianne avoids returning to Carricklea. When Marianne's visits to her family become necessary, Connell notes that her encounters with her family often end in arguments, and she always returns from her hometown "distracted and sullen" (104). During one such visit, the situation is described as tense, and Alan is anxious and aggressive due to her presence. He becomes irritated with questions about his sister's academic success and takes advantage of a moment alone in the kitchen to belittle her. The interaction ends with Alan spitting on Marianne.

In the next paragraph, on Christmas Day, Denise Sheridan hands her an envelope with 500 euros as a gift, without any card or message. Marianne realizes it is the same envelope

her mother uses to pay Lorraine for cleaning. The narrator does not attribute adjectives to this gesture but rather creates space for us to equate Marianne's position with someone with whom Denise has only a work-related and transactional relationship.

Then, the mother questions Marianne about her plans for the post-college future, expressing concern about the shock the real world may cause her. When Marianne explains that no environment will be more aggressive than her relationship with her brother, who spat on her, Denise once again downplays the severity of the assaults and blames Marianne for Alan's reactions:

> I'm worried the real world will come as a bit of a shock to you, said Denise.
> In what way? I don't know if you realise that university is a very protective environment. It's not like a workplace.
> Well, I doubt anyone in the workplace will spit at me over a disagreement, said Marianne. It would be pretty frowned upon, as I understand.
> Denise gave a tight-lipped smile. If you can't handle a little sibling rivalry, I don't know how you're going to manage adult life, darling, she said.
> Let's see how it goes.
> At this, Denise struck the kitchen table with her open palm. Marianne flinched, but didn't look up, didn't let go of the envelope.
> You think you're special, do you? said Denise.
> Marianne let her eyes close. No, she said. I don't. (143)

The dynamics within the household lead Marianne to perceive herself as unworthy of love and understanding. When Connell says he loves Marianne, her first reflection is that "she has never believed herself fit to be loved by any person" (44). This feeling is frequently addressed in the novel, with her often having relationships that lead to violent episodes. Confiding to Connell, Marianne sums up her anguish as follows: "I don't know why I can't be like normal people. ... I don't know why I can't make people love me. I think there was something wrong with me when I was born" (Rooney 181). The researcher Marcela Santos Brigida states, "Marianne replicates in her relationships a deep need to feel loved"[1] (2022, my translation). The character believes that something might have gone wrong with her at birth, justifying her supposed inability to love. However, throughout the novel, we observe that the crucial factor influencing her emotional relationships is, in fact, the environment she experienced during childhood and adolescence. With an environment far from facilitating, the tendencies for emotional maturity, as argued by Winnicott, found no means to establish themselves.

It is also important to note how the narrator depicts the Sheridan family, which has a traditional format (father, mother, and children) and better financial conditions, as the space of illness. Researcher María Amor Barros-Del Río points to a demystification of the nuclear catholic Irish family since the novel:

> Quite evidently, *Normal People* debunks the ideological construction of the nuclear Catholic Irish family demonstrating that Connell's single-parent and loving family performs better than Marianne's insensitive mother and abusive brother. The effects of different family forms and experiences are clearly visible in the protagonists' divergent ties with their hometown and their sense of belonging. (180)

This phenomenon, of the affluent family that is not a nurturing space, is also explored by Winnicott. He asserts that families from lower socioeconomic classes "may be a safer and 'good' facilitating environment than a family with a beautiful house sheltered from common ills"[2] (2021 173, my translation). It is from this beautiful, yet unhealthy, space that Marianne must part ways to move towards emotional emancipation.

The severance of ties with the family occurs when in pursuit of Marianne, Alan forcefully pushes the door of her bedroom, striking her nose (241). Even in the face of such aggression, which lands the character in the hospital, Denise takes no action. Subsequently, Marianne moves in with Connell in Dublin, finds a job, and lives without assistance from her mother, who did not even attempt to contact her daughter after the incident. Only Alan sends messages, stating in one of them that Denise considers her daughter a disgrace (258).

Before the novel's closure, Marianne returns once more to Carricklea, this time to a different destination, to a new space that will serve as home: the Waldron household. She is welcomed by Connell's family during Christmas celebrations, enjoying pleasant moments with Lorraine, whom she identifies as "a really good parent" (42). On New Year's Eve, Marianne sees her mother at the supermarket. Denise walks past her without uttering a word. In the car, accompanied by Lorraine and Connell, Marianne asks what the people in town think of her mother:

> What do people in town think of her? Marianne said.
> Who, your mother? said Lorraine.
> I mean, how do people see her?
> With a sympathetic expression Lorraine said gently: I suppose she'd be

> considered a bit odd.
> It was the first time Marianne had heard that, or even thought about it. (260)

The perception of others helps Marianne to change how she perceives Denise and the experiences she endured in the home environment for many years. The term "odd" is a rather mild word to describe the dynamics unfolding in the white mansion of the Sheridans. As a consequence of abandoning this place, Marianne makes room for a new conception of home, with Connell as the central figure. The conclusion of the novel, however, leads the two protagonists to separate and live on different continents; though bittersweet, the handling of such a fate carries a tone of optimism:

> He probably won't come back, she thinks. Or he will, differently. What they have now they can never have back again. But for her the pain of loneliness will be nothing to the pain that she used to feel, of being unworthy. He brought her goodness like a gift and now it belongs to her. Meanwhile his life opens out before him in all directions at once. They've done a lot of good for each other. Really, she thinks, really. People can really change one another. (265-266)

For someone like Marianne, who was led for so many years to believe she was unworthy of love or affection, realizing that another person saw traces of kindness in her is like receiving a gift. This offering alleviates the anguish of separation, making loneliness seem less painful when contrasted with the treatment she received from her parents and brother during their years of living together. Even if Marianne never sees Connell again nor can she rely on his support, she understands that he propelled her toward building a kinder relationship with herself. The passage indicates that the bond they formed in those intense four years leaned more towards independence than dependence, proving to be a true facilitating environment for the early stages of adulthood. This is the final message conveyed by the novel: the inescapable impact others have on the formation of our identity – for better or for worse. The harsh reality is that the family, which should serve a healthy role in initiation into the world, is the space from which we will have to escape.

Notes

[1] "Marianne replica em seus relacionamentos uma necessidade profunda de se sentir amada ..."

[2] "...podem ser um ambiente facilitador mais seguro e 'bom' do que uma família com uma casa bonita e que esteja resguardada dos males comuns."

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A Revisionist Reading of the American West in Days Without End *by Sebastian Barry*

Uma leitura revisionista do oeste americano em Days Without End *de Sebastian Barry*

Elisa Abrantes

Abstract: *This article aims at discussing the literary representation of an Irish immigrant in the American West in the nineteenth century, emphasizing the transnational, hybrid, and overlapping dimensions of cultures in that region, and investigating identity issues that are addressed in the novel, which deconstructs the traditional perspectives of masculinity, individualism, and romanticization of the expansion of the American Frontier in the period. Thomas McNulty, protagonist of the novel* Days Without End *(2016), by the contemporary Irish writer Sebastian Barry, leaves the city of Sligo in Ireland to escape the Great Famine that victimized his family, and arrives in the United States in 1850, a period of expansionist violence and development of the American West as a space of conquest and opportunity for some and tragedy for others. Like hundreds of thousands of Irish people in the nineteenth century, Thomas served in the U.S. Army and became involved in the fighting against Native Americans and also in the American Civil War. Being a victim himself of starvation and of British colonization in his native country, his involvement in the American wars also makes him an aggressor, although we can draw connections between the plight of Irish immigrants in the region and the Native Americans.*

Keywords: *Irish Fiction; Irish in the USA;* Days Without End.

Resumo: *Este artigo tem por objetivo discutir a representação literária de um imigrante irlandês no Velho Oeste americano no século XIX, enfatizando a dimensão transnacional, híbrida e de sobreposição de culturas naquela região, e investigando questões identitárias que são tratadas no romance, que desconstroi as perspectivas tradicionais de masculinidade, individualismo e romantização*

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.v26i1p47-59
Received: 30/04/2024 Accepted: 24/06/2024

da expansão das fronteiras estadunidenses no período. Thomas McNulty, protagonista do romance Days Without End *(2016), do autor contemporâneo irlandês Sebastian Barry, deixa a cidade de Sligo na Irlanda para escapar da Grande Fome que vitimou a sua família, e chega aos Estados Unidos em 1850, um período de violência expansionista e desenvolvimento do oeste americano como espaço de conquista e oportunidade para alguns, e tragédia para outros. Como centenas de milhares de irlandeses no século XIX, Thomas serviu no exército dos EUA e se envolveu na luta contra os nativos americanos e na Guerra Civil americana. Sendo ele próprio uma vítima da fome e da colonização britânica em seu país natal, o seu envolvimento nas guerras americanas torna-o também agressor, ainda que possamos estabelecer conexões entre a situação dos imigrantes irlandeses na região e os indígenas nativos.*

Palavras-chave: *Ficção irlandesa; Irlandeses nos EUA;* Days Without End.

Introduction

After the independence of the thirteen colonies of the United States in the 18th century (1776), the process of territorial expansion of the nation towards the West began. First, the plains of the central region were occupied, and in the course of the 19th century, the West Coast, bordered by the Pacific Ocean, was reached. The ideology behind this process of conquering the West was that of clearing the region in order to explore it, bringing what was considered progress and civilisation. The encounter between the white settlers and the native indigenous peoples in the US generated conflicts, which were resolved through armed violence. This colonising expansion made the frontier between the conquered territories and those that were still outside the jurisdiction of the government moveable, and, eventually, the Frontier was considered officially extinct in 1890. At that time, the American National Census stated that the western region of the country had so many pockets of colonised areas that it could no longer be said that a frontier line existed. The advance of the frontier line that had characterised changes in population distribution over the previous hundred years was complete.

The physical frontier line was extinguished, but the myth of the Frontier remained. This is a foundation myth in the history of the United States, which was consolidated as a result of the conceptions of writers, politicians and historians, such as, for example, the Frontier Thesis proposed by historian Frederick Jackson Turner. In his essay, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893), Turner explains that American progress was based on

the expansion of frontiers moving westwards. According to him, back in those days the history of the United States had largely been the history of the colonisation of the West.

The American West represented "wilderness", a free area, a wild space that had not yet been colonised. For centuries the frontier line advanced westwards, until the process of territorial expansion was considered complete. Turner claimed that the frontier defined the history of the country and its development when it sought out lands with the potential to be colonised, urbanised, or in other words, conquered and modernised by the white Americans by exploiting the lands to the point of exhaustion in order to meet economic needs.

In his essay, Turner defended the idea that in contact with the wilderness, the pioneers had to face the conditions of primitive life, abandoning the habits and customs of European civilisation and relying on themselves because they were far from government control, although they sought help from the Union government to solve problems beyond their reach. The permanent contact with simple life in the wilderness marked the American character and strengthened the central government to reinforce national ties. The frontier experience was therefore fundamental to the Americanisation process. And this experience occurred successively over three centuries, as the frontier line advanced westwards. Because of these conditions, Turner associated the frontier experience with individualism, democracy and nationalism.

Another important influence in understanding the "Frontier myth" was the perspective of the writer and politician Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), who would go on to become President of the United States from 1901 to 1909. In his view, the experience that transformed him into a progressive politician with democratic conceptions was the time he spent on his ranch in Dakota, in the centre-west of the country. In the four volumes he wrote about the West, *Winning the West* (1889-1896), Roosevelt valorised the mythological figures that portrayed the superiority of the Americans in the conquest and formation of the United States of America, such as the lone hunter and the cowboy.

As mentioned, Turner and Roosevelt, among others, associated living conditions on the frontier with democracy and individualism, and the pioneer, farmer or cowboy as symbols of American nationality – white, masculine and solitary men, representatives of a race superior to the "savages" (indigenous peoples) who inhabited the uncolonised lands. The construction of a modern, industrialised country justified the death of the "inferior races" that inhabited that space. The West was then idealised as the land of freedom, and also served as the basis for

the capitalist ideology embodied in the doctrine of "Manifest Destiny" or, in other words, the belief in the divine mission of the Americans, as the people chosen by God to bring civilisation and progress to the peoples of the continent.

Although the term "Manifest Destiny" was coined in 1845 by American journalist John O'Sullivan to defend the westward expansion and annexation of Texas by the United States in the war against Mexico, this idea of the country's providential destiny has its roots in earlier centuries. It dates back to the era of British colonisation of the New World, since the arrival of the pioneering English colonists in the 17th century, with the Puritans who arrived on ships like the *Mayflower* (1620) and the *Arabella Ship* (1630).

It should be emphasised that Puritanism provided elements for the identity of the colonies: a new man could emerge in the promised land, bringing his values to the New World and leaving behind the corruption of the European Old World. According to Cherry (1998), the settlers saw their settlements as a civilisation project operated by God for the redemption of humanity (25).

Narratives about the Frontier have been present since the 16th and 17th centuries, describing conflicts between Europeans and natives, crossed the 18th and 19th centuries, and were disseminated worldwide in the 20th century through literature and cinema, mainly focusing on the period from 1860 to 1890 in the West. The setting encompasses the Mississippi coastline from the period leading up to the American Civil War until the mid-1890s. The American Wild West, as represented in traditional westerns, is part of a worldwide historical memory, which through adventures of independence and courage, confronting nature and fighting the natives, understood as "savages" propagates the ideology of Anglo-Saxon superiority in North America.

Post-modern and post-colonial studies have brought fictional narratives, not only of the conquest of the West, but also of life in the West, from different perspectives, with room for questioning the founding myths of the United States, analyses of the transformations and adaptations of American culture and the multicultural and globalised relations that were established on the Frontier.

In this regard, professor emeritus of American Studies at the University of Nebraska, Dr Neil Campbell (2008), applies the concept of rhizome to reflect upon the American West. According to him,

> to rethink the West rhizomatically, beyond its function of unifying the national territory ... is to see it as unfinished, multiple and open; and to recognise that underneath the official histories there are others, ... with other kinds of encounter and invention', which trace divergent and tangled lines of composition that constantly interconnect and divide. (9)

In botany, the rhizome defines the system of horizontal stems that grow in a differentiated, horizontal manner, without a defined orientation, like grass, for example, which spreads out over the land on which it is planted. This form of plant organisation presupposes multiplicity; there is no centre, hierarchies, order or depth. In the humanities, philosophers Gilles Deleuze (2000) and Felix Guattari developed the concept of the rhizome to think about philosophy, and to this end created an epistemological model that is characterised by "the abstract line, the line of escape or deterritorialisation" (14) and which is suitable for studying the multiplicity and heterogeneity of the contemporary world. Transporting this understanding to the region of the American frontier as a rhizome, non-linear, and its multiplicity of unofficial histories, which are aligned with the fictional writing of contemporary Irish author Sebastian Barry, we intend to point out some identity issues present in the representation of the American West in his novel *Days Without End* (2016). This study examines the way in which the author deconstructs the traditional perspectives of masculinity, individualism and nationalism resulting from the frontier experience, and emphasizes the transnational, hybrid and overlapping dimension of cultures in the West, questioning the ideologies of "Manifest Destiny" and the "American Dream" in American culture. The literary and cultural representation present in Barry's novel works not only to deconstruct traditional narratives, but also to reconstruct narratives erased from the traditional literary and cinematic historiography of fiction recognised as "westerns", which tell the story of the American Wild West.

The representation of the West in *Days Without End*

The protagonist of the aforementioned novel, then Irishman Thomas McNulty, is a fictionalised version of one of Barry's relatives. The author was inspired by a comment made by his grandfather, who told him about a distant relative who had fought in the wars against the Indians in the United States in the 19th century. Nothing else was known about his life story, and Barry constructed one for him through his writing, as part of a very personal project, already described in several interviews, that is to give visibility to those who have been erased

from Irish history, both at home and abroad, using examples from his own family. In 2017, in an interview with Terry Gross on the *Fresh Air* programme, the author explains:

> ... you wonder then about the sadness and the sorrow - historical sorrow of an Irish person, himself essentially a native person, an aboriginal person, by a great trauma having to go to America, joining an Army that was engaged in the destruction, erasure and removal of a people, the Native American people, not unlike himself. That was one of the things. So, my task was to follow, and in this instance, follow a person like that to America. (Gross, 2017)

In the novel, Thomas McNulty leaves Ireland after losing his family in the Great Famine (1845-1849), a tragedy that victimised more than a million and a half people in the country and led a similar number to emigrate. After a brief stay in Canada, he arrived in Missouri in 1850 at the age of 15, where he met a teenager, John Cole, born in New England, who, like him, was struggling to survive, having left his homeland after his father's land was exhausted. The two boys became lifelong friends and then lovers, even marrying after the American Civil War. McNulty, now 70, recounts their adventures in the Old West; the jobs they did, the wars they fought, the towns they lived in.

During their first two years in Daggsville, a mining town in Missouri, the "dancing years", as McNulty calls this period, they worked in a cabaret. The two boys, still young and immature, danced in women's clothes to entertain the miners of the Old West in Mr. Titus Noone's saloon, a place frequented only by men, since there were no women in the town.

Those performances brought a bit of illusion and imagination to those rough men, who dressed up and perfumed themselves to dance with Joanna and Thomasina, the boys' stage names, who, as McNulty makes clear, represented the girls from the miners' memories. The narrator describes the miners as "gentlemen of the frontier" when they were at the cabaret with the dancers. Men who "like rough food, rough whiskey, rough nights ... There were never such raping men as miners ... They all came into Noone's saloon and there was a change, a mighty change. Because we were pretty girls and we were the darlings of their souls" (Barry, 2016 10).

As demonstrated in the example, Barry's novel distances itself not only from the conventional westerns and their stereotypes of masculinity in the Old West, by describing the respect, kindness and affection of the miners in dealing with the dancers, but also from

narratives that focus on European immigrants in the nineteenth century, who were fleeing poverty for the New World, the land of opportunity. There, they could quickly be enriched by exploring the American West. The immigrant Thomas McNulty, on the contrary, is a poor, homosexual Irishman with no financial ambitions, who, together with his partner John Cole, accepts any kind of work just to survive. Whether dancing for miners in Daggsville in women's costumes for 50 cents each, joining the US army exterminating Indians in wars against natives, or fighting in the American Civil War. Survival was the only objective for these boys, even though their wages were very low: "The only pay worse than the worst pay in America was army pay. ... But you were glad to get work because if you didn't work for the few dollars in America you hungered, I had learned that lesson. Well, I was sick of hungering" (2).

Not only is Barry's protagonist devoid of financial ambitions, but also the opportunities for immigrants at that time were scarce, especially for the Irish, who suffered prejudice. McNulty soon realises what historian Noel Ignatiev (1995) says, that the white skin made the Irish eligible for the privileged white class, but not immediately admitted to it; they had to earn it" (59). The fact that the immigrants "deserve the privilege" meant adopting the values of American culture, such as oppression and violence against non-white peoples.

The character expresses this condition when, at the age of 40, he considers that his old identity as a soldier no longer existed, and thinks about his humble origins in Ireland, and how he became an American, facing obstacles and difficulties in the process (p.244). Being part of the US army made him commit atrocities, take part in the genocide against the Native Americans and, as a reward, be considered an American. But this identity doesn't sit comfortably with him. He says: "Am I American? I don't know. Me and Winona take our place with the other mudsills in the fifth-class section" (235).

The Irish migrated to different parts of the United States, but in the novel, Barry portrays the role of the Irish in the exploration and expansion of the country's Western Frontier. Barry's fiction challenges the idealisation of the American national character by examining the Frontier from a transnational perspective. The protagonist Thomas McNulty is Irish, and the American John Cole has among his ancestors an Indian great-grandmother whom he never met because the people to whom she belonged, the Native Americans, were forced to leave the East of the country and live in Indian reservations. (p. 3). When they join the army as mercenaries, Cole and McNulty, temporary soldiers, follow the route from Oregon to California, and on their way west they meet not only Americans, but people of

other nationalities, such as Scandinavians and also squalid Native Americans, "some of them travelling to get their government annuities" (15). McNulty goes on to observe: "Now a hundred thousand Irish roam this land and Chinese fleeing from their cruel emperors and Dutch and Germans and boys born east" (215).

To deconstruct idealisations of identity, Barry uses irony, among other narrative strategies. In an interview with Richard Lea from *Guardian Books* (2017), Barry says that the novel is ironic in that it shows the involvement of the Irish in wars against the natives, and comments on the role of McNulty, "who dispossesses people who are like his own people" (Lea). Barry's fiction interrogates, questions and does not keep away from human ambiguities and/or affiliations that are established between people and causes at specific historical moments, for the convenience of the occasion. In his novels, the author seeks to deconstruct binarisms such as right and wrong or good and evil; he seeks to give visibility to those people erased from the official narratives of history and also to show human contradictions in the face of the historical forces to which people are subjected.

In *Days Without End*, for example, Barry describes the Irish participation in massacres against Native Americans in a cruel and violent way, but he also shows the psychological impact that this form of violence had on them, represented in the novel by the character-narrator Thomas McNulty. He declares that he was surprised at his own reactions: "I was astonished not to be fired on, astonished at the speed and the horror of the task, and the exhilaration of it; my heart now not racing but burning in my chest like a huge coal" (31) and continues: "I was affrighted and strangely affronted, but mostly at myself, because I knew that I had taken strange pleasure from the attack" (32). It is relevant to highlight that the attack cowardly victimised only indigenous women and children.

The narrator comments on the fact that becoming killers changed them: "We didn't know where we were. We didn't for those moments know our names. We were different then, we were other people. We were killers, like no other killers that had ever been" (32). At the end of this chapter, inspired by the historic episode of the Sand Creek Massacre, on 29 November 1864, when 675 soldiers destroyed a Cheyenne encampment in Colorado Territory, McNulty says: "There didn't seem to be anything alive, including ourselves. We were dislocated, we were not there; now we were ghosts" (33).

The novel also shows another side, the affinity between the Irish and the Native Americans, both peoples who suffered from colonial exploitation, which considered them

inferior. McNulty, for example, adopts Winona, an indigenous child from the Sioux tribe; an Irish soldier, Caleb Booth, marries and has a child with a Native American woman, and McNulty comments about this event: "I guess love laughs at History a little" (77). This is one of the moments, among others, in which the protagonist expresses his empathy for the Native Americans.

As well as taking part in the genocide of the Indians and the conquest of the West, around 200,000 Irishmen fought in the American Civil War (1861-1865). Most of them, around 150,000, fought for the Union army, like McNulty and Cole, and the rest defended the Confederate states. This situation can be explained because on arriving in the United States, depending on the port of arrival, whether in a Union or a Confederate state, the Irish enlisted to gain citizenship, and therefore fought to defend one side or the other of a war that was not theirs. Barry describes how the Irish fought each other: "The Irish Rebs are shouting too, shouting filthy things in Gaelic. Then we reach each other and it is all wrestling, punching and stabbing" (147). Thus, the novel shows that the land of opportunity was not what the Irish immigrants found after crossing the Atlantic in search of a better life. The fratricidal struggle proves that ethnic ties were sacrificed in favour of the fight for survival.

The novel also deconstructs the stereotype of masculinity associated with the pioneer and the western cowboy. From the beginning of the novel, as already mentioned, Barry describes Mr Noone's cabaret, where McNulty and Cole staged as dancers in women's costumes and make-up, and the miners, archetypes of masculinity represented in western films, are transformed when they arrive at the cabaret, turning themselves into true gentlemen, romantic and joyful anxious to dance with "girls" that were, in fact, men dressed as women. The owner of the cabaret says: "They need only the illusion, only the illusion of the gentler sex. You're it, if you take this employment" (8). Thomas Mcnulty, for his part, feels happy when he dresses up as Thomasina: "Funny how as soon as we have into those dresses, everything changed. I never felt so contented in my life. All miseries and worries fled away. I was a new man now, a new girl" (10).

Throughout the novel, McNulty dresses as a woman again on other occasions, and gradually identifies more and more with the feminine gender. Regarding his relationship with Winona, he says: "I call her my daughter though I do know she isn't. ... A daughter not a daughter but who I mother best I can. Ain't that the task in this wilderness of furious death? I guess so. Got to be" (236). And in another passage:

> We like mother and child right enough and that's how it plays. I give thanks for that. Maybe in my deepest soul I believe my own fakery. I suppose I do. I feel a woman more than I ever felt a man, though I were a fighting man most of my days. Got to be thinking them Indians in dresses shown my path. Could gird in men's britches and go to war. Just a thing that's in you and you can't gainsay. Maybe I took the fortune of my sister when all those times ago I saw her dead. (233-234)

He tries to understand his identification with the female gender, and comments that the indigenous men in dresses showed him the way forward (p.233). McNulty is referring here to the *winkte*, or two-spirit gender, which in Sioux culture refers to men who dress like women and take on feminine tasks, because the spirits of both men and women dwell in their bodies. It is a non-binary gender category linked to spirituality. McNulty goes on to say that he could wear men's trousers and go to war, but there was something about him that he couldn't deny. He thought that perhaps the soul of his sister, who starved to death, had "crept into him and made a nest" (p.234). He reflects about it saying: "I am easy as a woman, taut as a man. ... I lie down with the soul of woman and wake with the same. ... Maybe I was born a man and growing into a woman. Maybe that boy that John Cole met was but a girl already" (234).

Cross-dressing of both men and women was not an uncommon practice in the Old West, as historian Peter Boag points out in his book Re-Dressing America's Frontier Past (2011): "Cross-dressers were ubiquitous, part of everyday life on the frontier and in the American West" (11). Therefore, what Barry portrays in *Days Without End*, both the stage shows at Noone's cabaret and the romantic relationship between McNulty and Cole, should not be considered as exceptions in the expansion of the West, but rather as narratives that have been erased from official history. McNulty expresses how he felt the day they left deserted Daggsville, where no one was waiting to say goodbye: "We knew we was just fragments of legend and had never really existed in that town" (13).

Along with factual History, fiction also constructs narratives of nationhood and, in this sense, Westerns have contributed greatly to the erasure mentioned here. In addition to the idealisation of virile, rough and fearless white masculinity, we should remember the image of the lone rider conceived by Theodore Roosevelt. This figure was very popular and symbolised the individualism that shaped American society. However, in real life, survival in the hostile

environment of the frontier made it difficult for lone explorers; they depended on an alliance for protection and co-operation.

In the first chapter of the novel, McNulty says: "it seemed natural and easy to join together in the enterprise of continuing survival" (4) as he tells the two years they danced in Mr. Noone's cabaret. The second chapter begins as follows: "All this to say, we joined up together" (15). These ties grew stronger over the years, and McNulty demonstrates his love for his partner in many passages of the novel, as for example: "John Cole was my love, all my love" (25). For the Irishman, Cole was responsible for making him feel human again, after the trauma of losing his family to famine and being forced to emigrate to North America. During his brief stay in Canada before arriving in the United States, McNulty describes the rejection he suffered:

> No one wanted us. Canada was afeared of us. We were a plague. We were only rats of people. Hunger takes away what you are. Everything we were was just nothing then. Talk, music, Sligo, stories, future, past, it was all turned to something very like the shit of animals. When I met John Cole that's who I was, a human louse, even evil people shunned me and the good had no use for me. That's where I started. Gives an idea of the victory meeting John Cole was. First time I felt like a human person again. (25)

McNulty and Cole, after fighting side-by-side during the American the Civil War, got married at the end of the conflict. In McNulty's words:

> There was a half-blind preacher in a temple called Bartran House and I don my best dress and me and John go there and we tie the knot. Rev. Hindle he says the lovely words and John Cole kiss the bride and then it's done and who to know. Maybe you could read it in their holy book, John Cole and Thomasina McNulty wed this day of our Lord Dec.7th 1866. (173)

After the wedding, they settled down, with the Indian Winona as their daughter, as a family, on the tobacco farm of their friend Lige Magan, in Paris, a small town in Tennessee. A rural community is formed, in which in addition to the unconventional family formed by McNulty, Cole and Winona, Magan is joined by two free slaves, Rosalee and her brother Tennyson, who used to work for Magan's father and were made free by him. In this community, all the members find co-operation and affection, which also deconstructs the representation of the

pioneer or cowboy as lonely and self-men, and it also contrasts with the excess of individualism of American society. According to Campbell (2018), McNulty constructs a kind of "alternative community, or *muintir* in Gaelic, created not under the American values of individual rights, private property and moral duties, but something closer to a traditional Irish system where land and labour were communal" (p.246).

McNulty's narrative portrays the maturity of the character, not only in relation to his own identity, but also in his reflections about the fact of bringing a Native American into his life. He realises that he stole a child, took her away from her home and her tribe, gave her a new name, Winona, and took control of her life and her story. He states: "We took her like she were our natural daughter. But she ain't. What is she now?' (p.214). McNulty realises that by adopting the girl in that way, he has reproduced the process of colonisation, erasing the culture to which she belonged and even her indigenous name, annihilating her sense of belonging to her tribe, teaching her the English language, and making her express herself only in this language, which used to be foreign to her.

Conclusion

To conclude, we can say that *Days Without End* deconstructs the thesis of the Frontier and also other American foundation myths, such as the American dream and the Manifest Destiny. The idea that the Frontier shaped people's character and American national identity does not suit Thomas McNulty, who has doubts about whether or not he is American and who understands his gender as fluid and complex. As an immigrant, he does not progress financially in the land of opportunities.

What Barry proposes, with the erasure of founding myths and the recovery of invisible stories, is that official narratives are just that, narratives, chosen from among many other possible ones. The author also emphasises that identities are not established *a priori*, but are constructed by people's experiences, practices and imagination, by weaving together multiple notions of gender, relationships, affiliation, home and community.

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"For the Blood is the Life": Vampirism and Alterity in Le Fanu's Carmilla

"Pois o sangue é a vida": Vampirismo e alteridade em Carmilla *de Le Fanu*

Filipe Chernicharo Trindade*

Abstract: *The following paper is concerned with the Irish author Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's novella* Carmilla *(1872), focusing on its aspects of alterity by means of a vampire story. The general aim of this article is to investigate Carmilla's vampiric character as an allegorical manifestation of alterity (sexual, cultural and racial), through the exploration of the vampire legend as it unfolded in Europe and traversed into literature. The influence of Le Fanu's own roots as an Irishman and the place of his work within the larger mosaic of the Irish Gothic tradition are also greatly relevant to this discussion, since the "alterity reading" of the novella is inextricable from the different meanings of the vampiric motif within the earlier Gothic tradition as well as its relation with femininity and queer desire. The contributions of such scholars as Fred Botting (2005), Victor Sage (2004) and Sue-Ellen Case (1997), amongst others, are cited throughout.*

Key-words: *Gothic Literature; Irish Fiction;* Carmilla.

Resumo: *O presente trabalho discute a novela* Carmilla *(1872), de autoria do escritor anglo-irlandês Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu. Pretende-se focar em seus aspectos de alteridade, articulados por meio da "história de vampiro". Os objetivos gerais deste trabalho são os de provar que o caráter vampírico de Carmilla é uma manifestação alegórica de alteridade (sexual, cultural e racial), através da exploração da lenda do vampiro conforme esta desdobrou-se pela Europa e atravessou o folclore, ganhando espaço na literatura. A influências das raízes de Le Fanu enquanto um homem irlandês, bem como a posição de sua obra dentro do mosaico maior da tradição gótica irlandesa são, também, imprescindíveis para esta discussão, e contribuem para a articulação deste artigo. Uma leitura cuidadosa da crítica de tais autores*

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.v26i1p61-79
Received: 29/04/2024 Accessed: 24/06/2024

e autoras como Fred Botting (2005), James Twitchell (1981), Victor Sage (2004) e Sue-Ellen Case (1997), entre outros (as), é cotejada com passagens da novela, a fim de alcançar os objetivos previamente citados.

Palavras-chave: *Literatura gótica; Literatura irlandesa;* Carmilla.

Introduction

This paper discusses Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, a novella first published in 1872. The book is a part of what has been called the Gothic tradition, and belongs specifically to the niche of the vampire story. As such, it imports some of the tropes previously associated with the vampiric motif, as well as other aesthetic influences from the Romantic literature of the early nineteenth-century. Additionally, the potential of the Gothic story for fictively portraying a range of psychological, sexual and cultural issues is a vastly important aspect of the vampire tale, which can be glimpsed in this particular work of fiction. In general terms, this paper aims at exploring the eponymous Carmilla's vampiric character as a metaphor for alterity, investigating the ways in which the distinctively feminine power of this vampire is refreshingly utilized by Le Fanu.

Initially, a succinct exploration of the historical roots of the Gothic tradition or mode in the mid-1700s, as well as its place within nineteenth-century literature and the attendant Romantic tradition, is presented as a means to contextualize Le Fanu's novella and the themes it embodies. This section greatly owes to the British theorist Fred Botting, whose work *Gothic* (2005) is consistently utilized as a primary source; the second section tackles the distinctively Irish manifestation of the Gothic, given its role in the understanding of *Carmilla* as a powerful allegory for cultural/racial *Otherness*. Furthermore, its author, Le Fanu (1814-1873), was a writer of Anglo-Irish roots and, therefore, a member of a long tradition of Gothic writers who availed themselves of the metaphorical potency of the Gothic to articulate themes of invasion, alterity and cultural atavism, and the literary critics Jarlath Killeen (2014) and Renée Fox (2013) are referenced throughout this section. The third section discusses the folkloric origins of the vampire myth and its subsequent introduction into nineteenth-century literature. Special emphasis is placed in Le Fanu's incorporation of mythic tropes into the fabric of his story, chiefly the ritualized staking of the vampire, whose cultural symbolism of regained order

and expulsion of the detested *Other* is deemed relevant. This section greatly owes to James B. Twitchell's observations in his *The Living Dead* (1981). The fourth and final section in this paper explores "the alterity reading" of *Carmilla*, juxtaposing it with yet another, earlier short work of vampiric fiction, the obscure *The Black Vampyre* (1819), by Uriah Derick D'Arcy. Such comparison is done in order to emphasize the allegorical potential of the vampire character in both texts as embodiments of racial and cultural *Otherness*, as well as a societal threat to the *status quo* which must be obliterated by patriarchal authorities. Carmilla's endurance as a character and her uniqueness within the vampire tradition are further highlighted. The Final Considerations consist of a brief reflection on the aspects explored throughout the research, as well as an exposition of some of the conclusions obtained and an invite to possible future studies of the novella.

The Gothic: a stain

Fred Botting's resonant description of the "stain" of British literature, from his seminal study *Gothic* (2005), underlines the miscellaneous nature of what might be called the Gothic tradition, imbued as it has been – from its roots – with inspirations from various segments of the cultural and literary landscapes which had preceded it:

> What might, loosely, be called the Gothic tradition ... possesses ... a broad, if strange, continuity in the way it draws inspiration, plots and techniques from medieval romances and poetry, from ballads and folklore, from Renaissance writing, especially Shakespearean drama and Spenserian poetry, as well as from various seventeenth and eighteenth-century prose forms. Articulating different, popular and often marginalized forms of writing in periods and genres privileged as Romanticism, Realism and Modernism, Gothic writing emerges as the thread that defines British literature. ... Gothic can perhaps be called the only true literary tradition. Or its stain. (Botting, 2005 10)

Indeed, yet another critic, Robert Miles, has dubbed it "the strain of the novel", which is telling, since when Gothic emerged in the mid-eighteenth century, the novel form itself was in its embryonic stage. The articulation of what would, later in the century, develop into Romanticism, as with William Blake's and Thomas Chatterton's poetry and their influence over later English Romantics, is also relevant from a historical perspective, since the employment of such artifices as the extreme emotion evoked by the sublime and of

medievalistic or supernatural themes, for instance, invites an understanding of the Gothic as a mode of the Romantic. Furthermore, Miles asserts that – since its emergence – the Gothic has hardly changed (*apud* Gillespie and Morin, 2014 3). He refers to its most essential tropes, from its earliest occurrences during the latter half of the 1700s:

> A 'gothic' text combines, among other things, supernatural figures and events with medieval Catholic Continental settings, an interest in the Burkean sublime, and a beleaguered heroine seeking release from the imprisonment – physical and otherwise – of a depraved and tyrannical male member. (3)

Such "medieval Catholic Continental settings" are often Central or Eastern European, as well as Iberian Spain or Catholic France, removed as they are from insular, Anglican England. Their inclusion within the Gothic tradition suggests a revisited past of Catholic-fed superstition and mysticism. As to the Burkean sublime, it can best be defined as "whatever is fitted to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror" (Burke, 1968 40) – emotions which were supposed to be invoked by the somber and mysterious atmosphere of Gothic medievalism and isolated locations.

The Gothic tradition, however, is considerably more complex a subject than the sum of its parts and neither has it failed to evolve over time. Though it has retained some of its essential tropes throughout the centuries, it has consistently held a fresh take on the circumstances under which it has been repeatedly rethought and reshaped, as Botting states: "Gothic figures have continued to shadow the progress of modernity with counter-narratives displaying the underside of enlightenment and humanist values" (Botting 1).Gothic origins lie in an attempt to countervail the prevailing discourses during a key period in European modern history: the eighteenth-century, marked as it was by the Enlightenment, whose empiricism seemed to foreground "a world which ... ha[d] become increasingly secular" (2005 1), as well as by Neoclassicism, whose "aesthetic rules insisted on clarity and symmetry, on variety encompassed by unity of purpose and design." (2). Europe had never been less spiritual, and neoclassical views demanded "simplicity, realism or probability" (2) from its writers. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the polysemous word Gothic – at the time employed by conservatives, radicals and scholars alike – emerged from a deep yearning for imagination, emotion and freedom, with assumed historical roots in a medieval past. Early

Gothic writers, therefore, sought to produce narratives mainly as a counter discourse of sorts against the prevailing changes in society and politics brought about by the French Revolution, as well as by the scientific advancements which so drastically altered everyday life and signaled the decline of superstition and wonder (Bomarito, 2006 1).

The Gothic, thus, sought to forsake the restrictions of its tumultuous and uncertain contemporaneity, by evoking a conceived past, as well as cultural sources which were deemed not Greco-Roman in origin; historically, *gothic* was thought to relate to the Germanic nations, which, it was widely believed, had brought down the Roman Empire – by the eighteenth-century long associated with the restrictiveness of the Catholic Church – and to have upheld the values "of freedom and democracy [which were] claimed as an ancient heritage" (Botting, 2005 3).

Thus, the pioneer Gothic writers – amongst whom Horace Walpole (1717-1797), whose novel *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) "is generally acclaimed as the original work of Gothic literature" (Botting, 2005 1) and Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823) – turned to archaic sources of literature for inspiration, imbuing their plots with imagery of decaying castles whose gloomy ruins harked back to the medieval times so prominent in Gothic imagery, commonly believed to have been dominated by barbarity, superstition and fear. The preferred literary form was the romance, which was thought to comprise folkloric lore and, above all, to *not* be classical in origin (2005 24).

By means of the old romantic tropes of supernatural intervention and extravagance, the emergent eighteenth-century Gothic tradition was able to embody very contemporary anxieties of a fragmented time. It managed to sustain "a nostalgic relish for a lost era of romance and adventure, for a world that, if barbaric, was, from the perspective of the late eighteenth century, also ordered" (Botting, 2005 4), while simultaneously catering to the demands of its increasingly middle-class readership (4). It was also dominated, as Botting further observes (5), by the imagery of old aristocracy returning to haunt troubled heroines, with touches of incestuous connotation and ecclesiastical scandal. As the eighteenth-century drew to an end, however, a major shift took place within the genre, as the succeeding century hailed an age of even greater uncertainty and change; the clichéd and formulaic villains of eighteenth-century Gothic had no longer the scope to instill fear in the minds of the reader. The early nineteenth-century saw the decline of the wistful Radcliffian terror whose sublime manifestation was associated "with subjective elevation, with the pleasures of imaginatively transcending

or overcoming fear and thereby renewing and heightening a sense of self and social value. Threatened with dissolution, the self, like the social limits which define it, reconstitutes its identity against the otherness and loss presented in the moment of terror (Botting, 2005 6). Rather, it was horror – the recoiling movement of the self when confronted by the dissolution represented by the other (6) – which became the prevalent mode of the Gothic in the 1800s, since it best captured the nineteenth-century's growing concern with how individuals related to the society which had produced them. Gothic figures, thus, embodied no longer fanciful *Others* to be reassuringly cast out and punished, reinstating social order, but instead sought to portray anxieties brought about by the newly-explored fields of human psychology and sexuality, as well as the significant scientific advancements which took place during the Victorian era. As Robert F. Geary observes, the rise of a materialistic view of the world, which displaced Christian dogma, hailed an interpretation of the supernatural not as the product of "dangerous superstition", but as "a refuge ... from the dominant materialistic scientificism" (Geary 22).

Indeed, the late nineteenth-century saw no shortage of fictional works whose plots resorted to the supernatural or the speculative as a means of externalizing distinctly Victorian anxieties and fears. Like *Carmilla* (1872), Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) is marked by sexual undertones via the vampiric motif; Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) similarly hints at the perceived depravity of homosexuality; Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) is also a first-person tale of a young woman beleaguered by sexually charged ghostly forces and G.H. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* (1898) utilizes science fiction as a canvas into which to project themes of imperialism and technological dominance. In short, the Burkean sublime – which had for so long guided the Gothic *locus* – was surpassed by the uncanny: "Terror became secondary to horror, the sublime ceded to the uncanny, the latter an effect of uncertainty, of the irruption of fantasies, suppressed wishes and emotional and sexual conflicts" (Botting, 2005 7). This in no small amount owed to the emergence, in the early 1800s, of Romanticism, "... the greatest single shift in the consciousness of the West that has occurred" (Berlin 1); in fact, Gothic came to represent "the darker side to Romantic ideals of individuality, imaginative consciousness and creation" (Botting, 2005 7).

The extravagance and horridness of the Gothic were translated, by such expressive representatives of the movement in England as Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), Lord Byron (1788-1824) and John Keats (1795-1821), into the language of melancholic search for identity

and internal conflict so familiar to early nineteenth-century Romanticism (Bomarito, 2006 2). Gothic also became an attendant form to the alterity which nineteenth-century rising *bourgeois* values had created: any individual deemed deviant from the strict norms set by the ascending *bourgeoisie* was bound to become an object of deep societal scrutiny (Botting, 2005, 8). In this sense, one of the possible readings for J. S. Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872) is informed by the aesthetic and socio-political changes attendant to the period of its publication in the late nineteenth-century; specifically, regarding the sapphic overtones it explicitly evokes by means of its use of vampirism, itself a significant trope within nineteenth-century Gothic. First, however, it is productive to briefly examine how its themes of alterity fit in with the Irish Gothic tradition which birthed it

The Irish Gothic: threatened enclave

Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu (1814-1873) belonged to an Anglo-Irish family whose contribution to the Irish intellectual world is noteworthy: his great-grandfather, Thomas Sheridan (1719-1788), was an educator, essayist and actor, as well as a close friend of fellow Irish writer Jonathan Swift (1667-1745); Alicia Le Fanu (1791-1867), his father's cousin, was a Gothic author in her own right during the early 1800s. (Gillespie and Morin 5). Le Fanu himself has been dubbed "the Irish Edgar Allan Poe" (Twitchell 129), due to his contributions to the development of the Gothic in Ireland; his works often explore the supernatural and the occult. In 1861, he bought the prestigious *Dublin University Magazine* (Gillespie & Morin 130), to which he had, in 1838, contributed its first ghost story: *The Ghost and the Bone-Setter*. As its editor, in the 1860s, he published the novel *The House by the Churchyard* (1863), which combined elements of the mysterious and the historical, and would go on to influence James Joyce's seminal *Finnegans Wake*.[1] *Uncle Silas* followed in 1864 and, in 1872, *Carmilla* first appeared in the serialized journal *The Dark Blue*, only to be re-published as a part of a short story collection entitled *In a Glass Darkly* (Costello-Sullivan xvii).

As a pioneer of Irish supernatural fiction in the nineteenth-century, Le Fanu's contribution to the Gothic genre represents an expression of his investment in "Protestant Magic", which included – amongst other tropes – a strong influence of the folkloric and the esoteric (Killeen 34). Seen by this light, Le Fanu's late work *Carmilla* unveils itself as more than just a vampire tale – although on those terms alone it provokes immense scholar interest,

as shall be further discussed – and invites a reading of itself as "a political and/or cultural metaphor" (Costello-Sullivan xviii). Indeed, that seems to be the very crux of the vampire story in general, as this parasitic creature shifts from folklore to literature in the nineteenth-century. In Le Fanu's specific context as an Anglican Irish author in the 1800s, however, the narrative's general theme of an invading, pervasive force threatening the stability of a tightly-knit community speaks strongly to what Mary Douglas has called the "enclave" mentality, as alluded to in Jarlath Killeen's study *The Emergence of Irish Gothic Fiction* (2014). The term pertains to a

> shared cultural space in which ideas about time and space, ethics, physical nature, metaphysical reality and human relationships are held in common so as to allow the individuals who occupy that space to negotiate their relationship to reality and to others outside the enclave as successfully as possible. (38)

Such is the case of the Anglican Irish community, which had been settled in Ireland since the seventeenth-century, in the wake of the religious and political strifes which had swept through England during the tempestuous reigns of the Stuart kings James I (1566-1625) and Charles I (1600-1649), as well as the subsequent Cromwell years. The community's fragmented experience as English inhabitants of a country whose "native", Catholic population they had been consistently taught – through colonial discourse – to despise as "degenerate savages" (Killeen 37) provoked a shared sense of angst which provided a nexus for the articulation of the Gothic tradition later to emerge.

As Killeen points out, the existential crisis faced by the Anglican inhabitants of Ireland – trapped as they were between their English colonial heritage and the tension represented by their very presence among the "native", Catholic fellow inhabitants of the island – provided the perfect opportunity for the development of Douglas' proposed enclave mentality (2014, p. 38). Seeking the preservation of its own enclosed network of individuals, the enclave's main concern is "the mapping of its own limits and the policing and maintenance of its boundaries, keeping its members inside and blocking the entrance of detested outsiders" (38).

As far as the Anglo-Irish community was concerned, those outsiders were most assuredly the Catholic, "original" inhabitants of Ireland: as John Fox – in his *Acts and Monuments* (1563) – had set the blueprint for the demonization of Catholics back in England, so did Sir John Temple's *The Irish Rebellion* (1646) sought to do the same in seventeenth-century Ireland.

Presented as the agents of Satan himself, Irish Catholics were thought of as "contagious pollutants of the blood" and were, therefore, the prototype for the invading monster later to infest the Irish Gothic tradition (Killeen 41-42).

Thus, the vampiric motif in *Carmilla* emerges as a powerful symbol of invasion and otherness, with Carmilla's depravity threatening the "virtuous and righteous Anglican insiders" (2014, 42), represented by Laura's unnamed father and Laura herself: an English household overpowered by a Continental danger. Laura's father maintains English as a recurrent language in his Austrian household – amongst a "Babel of languages" – out of patriotic feelings (Le Fanu 6). Tea "make[s] its appearance regularly" in that household, fulfilling its place as the "national beverage" (20) and underlining the general Englishness of Laura's roots on her father's side. Renée Fox, in her essay *Carmilla and the Politics of Indistinguishability*, makes a convincing point about the confluences between Laura's and Carmilla's lesbianism and the racial/cultural alterity reading of *Carmilla*. She notes that, though miscegenation and the circulation of blood are primary concerns regarding vampiric activity in literature (116), such a dissolution of boundaries had already taken place between prim and proper Laura and wild and seductive Carmilla, way before the latter crashed into the former's life to gorge on her blood. On her mother's side, it is revealed in chapter V, Laura descends from that "bad family", the Karnsteins, making her a descendant of the Countess Mircalla/Carmilla herself.

As Fox puts it, the English girl and the monstrous undead already share the same blood, which suggests a "mixed line of kinship". *Carmilla* is less about the supplantation of one race by another and more about the ultimate indistinguishability between racial or class lines (Fox 117). Moreover, Killeen asserts that "the Gothic ambivalence ... compellingly represented the hesitancy of Irish Anglicans between an 'English' realist embracing of the technological ... and an 'Irish' Catholic superstitiousness, anachrony and atavism", for, if there is a tendency in Irish Gothic novels to conclude with "the expulsion of the primitive and horrific past, that expulsion is never really complete", since Anglican Irish Gothic authors – just like the characters they depict – "were not fully convinced of the desirability of the rational" (Killeen 46). Hence *Carmilla's* haunting ending, in which the atavistic vampire, in spite of the patriarchal efforts that sought to bring about her destruction, has not been wholly vanquished. The now-dead Laura, who, by the end of her tale, as Fox puts it, has become indistinguishable from her victimizer – after all the image of Carmilla that returns to Laura's mind "with ambiguous alternations" (Le Fanu 96) often starts her off her reverie, effectively

pulling her back into her Self by means of the invocation of the Other – fancies she hears "the light steps of Carmilla at the drawing-room door" (p. 96): a *denouement* which seems to suggest that "Laura is dead because Carmilla has finally come to claim her" (Killeen 47).

The undead: vampirism and folklore

James B. Twitchell, in his meticulous *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (1981), asserts, regarding the folkloric roots of the vampire: "Before the nineteenth century the vampire seems to have only folkloric existence – an existence as historically old as it was culturally varied. For the vampire is truly ancient. Long before Christianity his presence was imagined among the peoples of coastal Egypt, in the Himalayan recesses of north India, and on the steppes of Russia. The proliferation of names gives some indication of mythic currency: called "Vurdalak" in Russia, "Vampyr" or "Oupir" in East Europe, "Ch'ing Shih" in China, "Lamia" in ancient Greece, the vampire was part of almost every Eurasian culture. ... Devendra P. Varma has traced him into the Himalayas, where, Varma contends, the proto-vampire first proliferated through a host of different guises: the "Kali" or blood-drinking mother goddess; the "Yama" or the Tibetan lord of Death; the Mongolian God of Time afloat on an ocean of blood. From these highlands the vampire descended into the low countries, carried in the myths of the Huns and the Magyars into Eastern Europe, then into Greece, and finally into the Arabian and African cultures. All these strains contributed to the legend, with each new civilization and each new generation refashioning and recreating the vampire until he emerges as the Western monster we recognize today: a demonic spirit in a human body who nocturnally attacks the living, a destroyer of others, a preserver of himself" (1981, p. 7). The vampiric figure, thus, has been a multi-cultural superstitious motif whose prototype dates all the way back to ancient times. It has served as a bridge between the East and the West and has been re-signified through the folkloric manifestations of Eurasian peoples.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Eastern and Central portions of Europe, as Twitchell further expounds, had served as the stage for a great wave of vampire mania in the 1730s (Twitchell 7). The Carpathians, as Botting notes, "formed a crossroads where traditions met" (95) and, thus, represented the blurring of lines between East and West. Indeed, during the seventeenth-century, when the Catholic Church sought to reestablish its hegemony over Europe and expand to the East, it faced great resistance by the previously established religions in the Balkan region, where the vampire legend proliferated. The Church capitalized on the

myth, "assert[ing] that all who were buried in unconsecrated ground would be denied eternal rest, instead becoming vampires" (Twitchell 14). In fact, as Twitchell further observes, "the place where Christian and Eastern churches met in southeastern Europe remains to this day one of the most fertile grounds for the vampire myth" (15). The historical Dracula lived in the Balkan region, entrenched between "the Moslem and Christian empires" (15), the East out of which he would set to vanquish the West in Bram Stoker's reimagining of the character in his 1897 novel.

In England, however, the actual word "vampire" did not enter the vocabulary until the eighteenth-century, probably brought over from Central and Eastern Europe (7). In English lore, the vampire was thought to be an *energumen* or the devil's avatar: a person, who had once been alive, but whose soul had been damned either by the attack of another vampire or by some grave sin against God and whose undead existence was now solely under the devil's control (8). Le Fanu must have been aware, in the early 1870s, when he first published *Carmilla,* of these long-established tropes associated with the folkloric conception of the vampire, for the titular character's vampiric nature most often shows itself in her doubleness, as though a devious force lurked just beneath the languid and placid surface of her character. For instance, Carmilla's fit of anger during the funeral scene, in chapter IV, underlines not only her fiendish nature, but also her decidedly unorthodox views on religion: "Besides, how can you tell that your religion and mine are the same; your forms wound me", she declares in the same chapter (Le Fanu 31). In yet another occasion, on discussing superstition with Laura's myopic father, she, "in a witty reversal, turns out to be the true rationalist" (Sage 195): "Creator! *Nature*!" ... All things proceed from Nature – don't they? All things in heaven, in the earth, and under the earth, act and live as Nature ordains? I think so", Carmilla impatiently argues (p. 36), subverting the Scriptures (Rev. 5:3).

Laura further notes that she had never seen Carnilla "upon her knees" and that she always failed to attend the evening prayers, preferring to remain in the drawing-room (Le Fanu 45). As Victor Sage observes, Carmilla is "showing her hand as the hard-edged and aggressive Atheist she is, and totally impatient with male 'authority'" (195). In yet another passage, as the Styrian peasants sing hymns for the soul of a deceased young woman – whom, later the reader discovers to have been killed by none other than Carmilla herself – the vampire's barely suppressed diabolical nature disturbingly shows itself. Laura recounts that

> [h]er face underwent a change that alarmed and even terrified me for a moment. It darkened, and became horribly livid; her teeth and hands were clenched, and she frowned and compressed her lips, while she stared down upon the ground at her feet, and trembled all over with a continued shudder as irrepressible as ague. All her energies seemed strained to suppress a fit, with which she was then breathlessly tugging; and at length a low convulsive cry of suffering broke from her, and gradually the hysteria subsided. "There! That comes of strangling people with hymns!" she said at last. (Le Fanu 32)

Later, in chapter V, after Carmilla had morbidly intimated Laura to die for her, once more her barely suppressed demonic nature reveals itself by means of her "eyes from which all fire, all meaning had flown" and a face "colourless and apathetic" (41). It is in fact as if the "devil's spirit" had trapped the soul of the once-human Mircalla, as English lore expounds on the vampire, leaving her under an accursed existence; she confides in Laura:

> People say I am languid; I am incapable of exertion; I can scarcely walk as far as a child of three years old; and every now and then the little strength I have falters, and I become as you have just seen me. But after all I am very easily set up again; in a moment I am perfectly myself. See how I have recovered. (41)

Prevalent in Le Fanu's conceptualization of the legend is also the influence of the French Benedictine monk Augustin Calmet (1672-1757), who "was possibly the greatest Catholic Biblical scholar in the eighteenth century" and whose "work, really an anthology of folk horror stories, was quickly translated into English" (Twitchell 33). In fact, he had played a significant part in the "vampire mania" of the early 1700s, previously alluded to in this paper, with his *Traït sur les Apparitions des Esprits, et sur les Vampires* ... (1746), rendered into English by the Rev. Henry Christmas as *The Phantom World*. A treatise on apparitions and various other occult themes, *The Phantom Word* quite cohesively touches on the *revenant* tradition of Hungary and Moravia (now a part of the Czech Republic), presenting a comprehensible account of folklore, assisted by actual testimonies of the vampiric phenomenon as well as official sources. Most tellingly, the last chapters of the novella – not coincidentally, as Renée Fox suggests, the ones in which Laura's domain over the narrative cedes to patriarchal legitimacy, as Carmilla's final demise approaches – build on the tradition as it was presented by Calmet. In chapter XIII, the eponymous Woodman, in answering General Spielsdorf's inquiry on how the accursed Karnstein village came to be abandoned, declares that "it was troubled by revenants...; several

were tracked to their graves, there detected by the usual tests, and extinguished in the usual way, by decapitation, by the stake, and by burning; but not until many of the villagers were killed" (Le Fanu 82). The readiness of his superstitious version of history testifies to Botting's assertion that the novella "makes no attempt to rationalize superstition within the bounds of everyday realism or nineteenth-century science. The Gothic features of the narrative temporally and geographically distance the story from the present" (Botting, 2005 94). It makes all sense, thus, for Le Fanu's gloomy and picturesque Styria to serve as the setting for the presence of *revenants*, especially since it is close to both the now defunct Moravia and Hungary, in Central Europe, which invites further connection to Calmet's writings.

The Woodman's mention of the *revenants* (or vampires) being detected in their graves by "the usual tests" also alludes to Calmet's *Phantom World*, as does the "extinction in the usual way": decapitation, staking and burning (see the second section, *Dissertation on the Ghosts who Return to Earth,* chap. VII, specifically p. 262). Later, in chapter XV of *Carmilla,* Laura – borrowing from a copy of the report of the Imperial Commission – summarizes the final ordeal and execution of her tormentor in much the same lines as Calmet writes of the proceedings for disposal of a vampire in the previously cited chapter of his treatise:

> The grave of the Countess Mircalla was opened; and the General and my father recognised each his perfidious and beautiful guest, in the face now disclosed to view. The features, though a hundred and fifty years had passed since her funeral, were tinted with the warmth of life. Her eyes were open; no cadaverous smell exhaled from the coffin. The two medical men [...] attested the marvelous fact, that there was a faint but appreciable respiration, and a corresponding action of the heart. The limbs were perfectly flexible, the flesh elastic; and the leaden coffin floated with blood, in which to a depth of seven inches, the body lay immersed. Here then, were all the admitted signs and proofs of vampirism. The body, therefore, in accordance with the ancient practice, was raised, and a sharp stake driven through the heart of the vampire, who uttered a piercing shriek at the moment, in all respects such as might escape from a living person in the last agony. Then the head was struck off, and a torrent of blood flowed from the severed neck. The body and head were next placed on a pile of wood, and reduced to ashes, which were thrown upon the river and borne away, and that territory has never since been plagued by the visits of a vampire. (91-92)

As Fred Botting further writes on the ritualized slaying of the vampire, it restores "the boundaries between life and death, body and soul, earth and heaven, reconstitut[ing] properly patriarchal order and fix[ing] cultural and symbolic meanings" (98).

The self and the other: vampirism and alterity

The vampire myth, even before it was properly incorporated into literature in the early nineteenth-century, had been associated with alterity, specifically when it came to the Church's attempts to capitalize on the legend to promote the persecution of othered individuals. As Twitchell expounds, besides those individuals who challenged the Church's mandates – the most heretic of whom was the suicide – all those who embodied any breach of the Procrustean norm by presenting "any social peculiarity" were deemed potential candidates for vampiric possession (Twitchell 9).

In that sense, Hyung-Jung Lee's article, *"One For Ever": The Threat of the Abject in Le Fanu's "Carmilla",* offers a provoking insight into the vampiric figure as the abjected other, a concept first introduced by Bulgarian-French philosopher Julia Kristeva (1941-); Lee states that "the dead body, as the ... ultimate reminder of the ego's eventual extinction", elicits "the most visceral reactions" and simultaneously fascinates and repels the human gaze. Thus, the undead vampire illustrates "intense struggles over the limits and conceptions of self", as an embodiment of both sameness and "what appears most other". The vampire, because of its characteristically composite nature, inspires "both allure and revulsion, desire and horror" (60). Hence Laura's initial reaction towards Carmilla when the two meet face-to-face, years after the surreal, dream-like first encounter at the time of Laura's childhood: "Now the truth is, I felt rather unaccountably towards the beautiful stranger. I did feel, as she said, "drawn towards her," but there was also something of repulsion. In this ambiguous feeling, however, the sense of attraction immensely prevailed. She interested and won me" (Le Fanu 25). Laura's almost immediate, subconscious recognition of Carmilla as an ambiguous, ambivalent being denounces the latter's composite nature of both horridness and beauty, repulsion and attraction, death and vitality.

The vampire Carmilla "infuses the text ... with the possibility of the unity of extremes by simultaneously incarnating radically opposite terms" (Lee 60); nor does Carmilla stand alone in that regard. Incorporated into Romantic literature from the early 1800s, the alterity

represented by the vampire came to integrate the broader scope of Victorian social anxieties, since this Gothic monster had the potential to allegorically represent many "invaders of middle-class security": foreigners, racial "others" and prostitutes with the attendant rise of venereal and blood diseases. As the middle-class increasingly secluded itself into the sacramental home, nineteenth-century Gothic literature sought to fictively illustrate the need of that same class to face the horrors created by the power structures of imperialism, colonialism and slavocracy with their oppressed masses of enslaved peoples, explored women and impoverished laborers (Bomarito, 2006 xvii).

In Le Fanu's rendition of the tale, the vampire Carmilla represents the foreign individual who threatens the way of life of a homogenous community, as previously discussed in this paper. For instance, the English-raised Laura, musing on the mysterious origins of her new companion, underlines her outlandishness: "She sometimes alluded for a moment to her own home, or mentioned an adventure or situation, or an early recollection, which indicated a people of strange manners, and described customs of which we knew nothing. I gathered from these chance hints that her native country was much more remote than I had at first fancied" (31). Likewise, the grief-stricken General Spielsdorf, on recounting Carmilla's – or rather Millarca, as she allowed herself to be known to the General – stay on his household, observes that "she was repeatedly seen from the windows of the schloss, in the first faint grey of the morning, walking through the trees, in an easterly direction, and looking like a person in a trance" (79). The vampire Millarca/Carmilla stumbles back to its grave in the east, symbolically returning from the Occident to the Orient from whence it came.

Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and, later, Stoker's *Dracula* do not stand without precedent in their employment of vampirism as an allegory for cultural and sexual otherness. Relevant for the present discussion is the earlier and often-overlooked *The Black Vampyre,* a novella first published in 1819 by C. Wiley and Company, NY, as advertised by the 23 June edition of the *New-York Evening Post* (Bray 1), only months following the publication of Polidori's *The Vampyre*, in April of the same year. *The Black Vampyre* may be understood as an "American response" (Faherty and White 2) to what, initially, was thought to be Lord Byron's latest prose work. The authorship has been a somewhat murky subject, but in its first appearance, the text was officially attributed to one Uriah Derick D'Arcy. A true testimony to the flexibility afforded the vampiric motif within nineteenth-century Gothic literature, *The Black Vampyre* presents slavery as central to its plot, by having its main character – the African or the Moorish

Prince — as a formerly enslaved Black man who seeks revenge upon his old white master, Mr. Personne, through means of vampirism mashed with traditionally Atlantic, African-rooted spiritual practices. As Faherty and White observe, colonial writers in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries employed the term *obeah* (or *obi*) as "an umbrella term for a broad range of practices, in which empowered Africans negotiated with supernatural powers" (p. 4). These rituals were thought to serve a variety of purposes, amongst which "to foment rebellion among enslaved Africans" (4). *The Black Vampyre* enmeshes this *obeah* tradition with the vampiric trope imported from Europe.

The setting of the story, the island of St Domingo – a colonial name, by 1819 still applied by US-newspapers to refer to the independent nation of Haiti (3) – emphasizes the "intertwined histories of the United States and Haiti" (Bray 4) and is significant, since the Haitian Revolution had been "the [southern] hemisphere's first successful colonial revolution against slavery", culminating in that country's independence in 1804 (3).

It is precisely the African Prince's unique position as both an enslaved African man and a living-dead which allows him to incite vampires and slaves alike in his heated speech at the end of the tale: during a secretive meeting held in an underground chamber – strongly associated with the Obeah gatherings –, the Black Vampyre passionately calls on the "irresistible genius of UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION" (D'Arcy, 1819 36) to free Haiti from bondage and incite rebellion among its enslaved Black population. Just as Le Fanu's introduction of vampirism in *Carmilla* represents the "conflation of the feminine and the Racial Other" (Brock, 2009 131) invading the tightly-knit community of Laura's English world, so does D'Arcy's Moorish Prince represent a Continental attempt to articulate transatlantic anxieties about slavery and the African Other in the early nineteenth-century. Similarly, as Carmilla is submitted to the phallic law of staking at the end of Le Fanu's novella – rearranging proper patriarchal order –, so are The African Prince and his vampiric co-conspirators vanquished by colonial law when a host of soldiers invade the meeting and proceed to stake the Prince and "the whole infernal fraternity" (D'Arcy, 1819 38). The human slaves, "seeing how the business was likely to terminate", sneak off (37), their revolutionary spirit once more crushed.

By the end of D'arcy's tale, the Personnes – the white, slave-owning family who had been turned into *revenants* by the Black Vampyre – are transformed back into their human selves by means of a magical phial; their long-lost son – who had been kidnapped by the Black Vampyre as an infant – gets the baptism he was never able to receive as a baby, re-entering the Christian West by forsaking his non-white name of Zembo which is "... a name often

applied by Europeans to persons of mixed race" (23). Hence, in both *The Black Vampyre* and *Carmilla*, the disruptive threat of the vampire is apparently vanquished by the paternalistic convergence of patriarchal and colonial powers, though Carmilla`s enduring influence over the narrator Laura puts in check the reality of her demise, resulting in an ambiguous and haunting ending.

Final thoughts

In the extent of this paper, the employment, by J. S. Le Fanu, of the vampiric motif in his *Carmilla* (1872), from its folkloric roots to the allegorical potential of the vampire story, was explored and dissected. This has been achieved through an understanding of Le Fanu's novella within both the larger Gothic mode or tradition and the specific manifestation of the genre in its Anglo-Irish manifestation, since the author's cultural roots point to the importance of that reading; the comparison with Uriah Derrick D'arcy's own novella, *The Black Vampyre* (1819), was further meant to explore the vampire as a means through which to articulate pressing societal issues in the nineteenth-century (namely, racial and sexual *Otherness*), as well as to highlight a work of vampiric fiction which, like *Carmilla*, is relatively lesser known. The relevance of such themes and discussions to the contemporary world underline the recurring relevance of the Gothic mode and the vampire story, as can be glimpsed by the persistence of these conventions in popular culture, encompassing TV, literature and cinema, to this day.

Notes

* Recipient of the ESP Grant.

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ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 81-91.

In-Between Traditions: The Poetry of Adília Lopes and Rita Ann Higgins

Entre tradições: A poesia de Adília Lopes e Rita Ann Higgins

Gisele Wolkoff

Abstract: *How much can poetry survive multiculturalism? A comparative approach between the Irish poet Rita Ann Higgins and the Portuguese poet Adília Lopes can provide us with some clues. Yet, questions regarding aesthetics and the contemporary discussions on identity, feminisms and belonging are still left open. Unless we aim at reading comparatively snapshots of two of the most humorous poets of our times.*

Keywords: *Contemporary Poetry; Comparativisms; Rita Ann Higgins; Adília Lopes; Feminisms.*

Resumo: *Quanto pode a poesia sobreviver ao multiculturalismo? Uma abordagem comparativa entre a poeta irlandesa Rita Ann Higgins e a poeta portuguesa Adília Lopes pode nos indicar alguma pista. Ainda assim, questões em torno da estética e da discussão contemporânea sobre identidade, feminismos e pertencimento permanecem em aberto. A menos que objetivemos ler comparativamente instantâneos de duas das poetas mais humorísticas de nossos tempos.*

Palavras-chave: *Poesia contemporânea; Comparativismos; Rita Ann Higgins; Adília Lopes; Feminismos.*

This article aims at providing readers with a comparative approach between two geographies – Ireland and Portugal – in contemporaneity by means of looking at works by Adília Lopes and Rita Ann Higgins. We start from the common ground which is women writing poetry

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.p81-91
Received: 29/04/2024 Accepted: 24/06/2024

today. In this sense, it is relevant to point out the matter of authorship in both writers, as they assert themselves autobiographically and beyond their autobiographies in the after Roland Barthes' "death of the author" era and its aftermath in the realm of feminisms, feminist discussions. Above all, the sphere of writing and writing oneself – which in the Portuguese language seems clearer, as we say "that who writes" and "that who writes herself" ("aquele que escreve" e "aquele que se escreve") standing "aquele" normatively for "he" and "she". In Portuguese, we can choose to use the terms normatively "aquele que" referring to both "he" and "she" indistinctly or tilt to the more than normative form, imposing the affirmative choice of "aquela que", which seems less transgressive than the norm for a paper on two poets who break all norms, who go beyond social patterns and signal to new modes of existence through writing.

Both in the history of Portuguese and Irish poetry, patriarchal voices have occupied the centre of publications and recognition. In the case of Portugal, the blustering appearance of the three Marias (Maria Isabel Barreno, Maria Teresa Horta e Maria Velho da Costa) and their *New Portuguese Letters* (*Novas Cartas Portuguesas*, in the original, 1972) has opened space for new grounds not only in politics, but also and mostly in poetics. In the case of Ireland, the coming out of works by Eavan Boland, whose first anthology, *68 Poems*, dates back to 1968, signals to innovations in diverse ways in the poetic context of the country. One of the many innovations that characterizes the impact of Boland's work in Irish writing has to do with the opportunities with which she has collaborated in creating new social spaces for women and their writing. We can refer to "the new generation of women poets" after Eavan Boland, who has travelled around Ireland offering creative writing workshops and incentivating women into breaking the norm of having male voices in the canon. The other innovative feature of her works has to do with the thematic recurrences seen in her poetry and never seen before in Irish canonical poetry, namely, domestic voice, inner lyricism going public, the environment of women inside houses, and running errands in prosaic ways. From the talks she had long held with poets such as Patrick Kavannagh, still as an early, very young poet to the fact that she had studied with the poet Derek Mahon, and shared questions regarding the canon and the matter of Irishness, Boland has wiggled her way into public sphere among male poets and has paved the way for new, women poets. One of such poets is Rita Ann Higgins whose working-class origins may have hindered her participation five times previously to her joining Aosdána as a member. The Irish Association of Artists, Aosdána, was created in 1981 by a

group of Irish writers supported by the Arts Council of Ireland, and being part of it means finally writing with recognition. Ann Higgins admits that her lifestyle changed considerably since she became an Aosdáne member, because it has meant acceptance.

Author of many poetic anthologies, as well as plays, Ann Higgins' *Goddess on the Mervue Bus* (1986) followed by *Goddess and Witch* (1990) and *Philomena's Revenge* (1992) bring up references and dialogues with popular culture, but also with the canon, as the title may have been a reference to Matthew Arnold's renowned poem "Philomena" which retells the story of the Greek Philomela, Procne's sister and has been retold by some contemporary Irish women poets such as Ann Higgins and Eavan Boland. In this respect, Adília Lopes writes:

> A minha Musa antes de ser
> A minha Musa avisou-me
> cantaste sem saber
> Que cantar custa uma língua
> agora vou-te cortar a língua
> para aprenderes a cantar
> a minha Musa é cruel
> mas eu não conheço outra[1]

In bringing references, intertexts and dialogues with traditional and popular culture, the aforementioned books find convergences with the works by Adília Lopes, in their similar aesthetics which can be taken as a writing-oneself technique, if we consider the whole discussion around the death of the author and feminisms. In fact, the focus of this paper is on the comparison between Anne Higgins' anthologies *Goddess and Witch* and *Philomena's Revenge* and Adilia Lopes' *Obra*, published initially in 2000, which includes 15 previous publications. In spite of the fact that Higgins' later works in the twenty first century highlight the growing importance of voices that prosper along decades after the Troubles and the Celtic Tiger – as well stated by Fintan O'Toole in his article "Now the bubble has burst, we're left with our real treasures" in the *Irish Times* (Sept, 2011): "Higgins is, quite consciously, an artistic outsider." While talking about Higgins' collection of poems *Ireland is Changing Mother,* O'Toole says that

> ... the poems might seem like self-serving gestures: look at me, I'm not part of the establishment. But Higgins's voice, forged over 25 years since the publication of *Goddess on the Mervue Bus*, in 1986, has a unique fusion of wry, deadpan humour on the one side and absolute sincerity on the other.

> She doesn't congratulate herself for her sympathy with those who are (in this case literally) outside the world of art. She simply sees and writes. Her humour and playfulness keep sentimentality and self-righteousness resolutely at bay.

Some examples of such aesthetics are to be found in the poem "Way to Go":

> Decent people
> drift off in their sleep
> quietly and without fuss.
>
> Others, less considerate
> choose middle of the night
> Or lunchtimes,
> (anything for notice).
>
> The adventures
> break their necks
> on the Alps.
>
> They could try
> falling down
> the stairs at home
> and get the same result,
> a great saving on plane tickets,
> Hotel accommodation, etc.
> ...
> As for me, proper coward,
> give me the priest prayers
> and all buckshee indulgences.
>
> If at all possible
> let the priest be handsome
> with warm hands
> and entertaining breath.
> (Higgins 26- 27)

Higgins is never afraid of talking about sexuality, about erotic matters, as much as talking about religion, which is the main theme in her volume *Hurting God* (2010). The tone of her poetics ranges between humour and drama, which so much resembles that found in Adilia Lopes' aesthetics, appear in the brevity of poems such as "Waiting":

The postman
grew tired,
the distance
stamped on his face,
the walk
was too much
for him

your letters
stopped coming.

Or in "Between Them"
You only see
Good-looking couples
out driving
on a Sunday afternoon.

His hair is blonde,
her eyes are blue
Between them
they have no broken veins
stretch marks
Guinness guts
fat necks
barrel chests
or swollen ankles.

Between them
They never curse.
...

between them
you could fit:
two McInerney Homes
three Berlin Walls
Martha Glynn's fantasies
four empty factories (I.D.A.)
seventeen rocket couriers (slightly overweight)
forty-eight good quality reconditioned colour T.V.s
incalculable curriculum Vs
cat fights
frog fights

bull fights
dog fights
broken heats
...
poster poems
dirty water
and murder mysteries.

(Higgins 42-43)

As in A. Lopes' lines, the references to everyday elements and scenes transform the poems into deep quotidian reflections on living experiences and existences, just as we read in Higgins's poem "I Want to Make Love to Kim Basinger", in which the speaker breaks the tiresome conventionality of conversations at hairdressers, ballrooms and dances, which also, once again, alludes to Adília Lopes:

I'm terrified
of hairdressers
who always say
Are you going
to the dance
tonight love?

I always say yes
even though
I'm never going
to the dance
tonight love.

They say the dance
I say the dance
we all say the dance
we say, the dance.

They think
I should be going
to the dance
and what they think goes

I always
have my hair done

so I can look good
in the bath
in case
Kim Basinger
calls round.
...
(Higgins 80-81)

Cinematography, music and the psychological, subjective effects of social conventions are present in both authors. Higgins ressignifies Kim Basinger in her erotic imagery in the above mentioned poem "I Want to Make Love to Kim Basinger", whereas Adília Lopes prefers dancing barefoot, like Ava Gardner, who interprets Maria Vargas in the film "The barefoot contessa" in the 1950's in the poem "Let's Dance":

Put on your red shoes and dance the blues
cantava David Bowie em 1983.
Não é preciso os red shoes. Gosto mais de dan
sar descalça como Ava Gardner.
12/8/2014[2]
(Lopes 36)

From Gertrude Stein's to Fernando Pessoa's writings, along with some of her contemporary fellows' such as Maria Teresa Horta's, not to mention foreign classics of bygone times and pop culture, many are the plural intertexts that compose Adilia Lopes' poetry as to indicate her lyric-I's multiple identities and represent the many voices that are the writer's and the woman poet. How do such voices help form a unique identity and style peculiar to both A.Lopes and R.A.Higgins, as to characterize them as two of the most humorous (if not the most) contemporary, respectively, Portuguese and Irish poets today? In trying to answer this question, we have identified points of convergence between Lopes's poetic writings and the lyricism found in the contemporary Irish poet Rita Ann Higgins. Thus, we have expanded the idea of the intertext into dialogues between the works of these two authors as to understand the counter-Penelope, the spider that speaks her voice style.

It is in the relationship between texts that are multiple and that converge with dialogues from varied social layers, that these poets' voices claim for the space of womanhood in societies

in which women are historically invisible. While identifying elements that compose their own poetics, we have concluded that the convergences are far deeper than the (apparently) simplistic intertexts mentioned in their works, or even within the dialogues that they establish either with the literary tradition, or with canonical authors, so as to create a sense of belonging and an intense sense humour in the revelation of social disparities and fallacious adequacies, as seen in one of the most socially striking poems by Higgins titled "Some People", in which the anaphoras "to be" and "to be out of", followed by a detailed descriptive enumeration of conditions, is only separated by the lastline, that is opposed to all the previous ones:

> Some people know what it is like,
> to be called a cunt in front of their children
> to be short for the rent
> to be short for the light
> to be short for school books
> to wait in Community Welfare waiting rooms full of smoke
> ...
> to be out of work
> to be out of money
> to be out of fashion
> to be out of friends
> ...
> to be second hand
> to be second class
> to be no class
> to be looked down on
> to be walked on
> to be pissed on
> to be shat on
>
> and other people don't.
> (Higgins 112, 113)

The intersections found in the works of both authors point to the ascending, affirmative women's voices in contemporary poetry, by means of that which is quotidian in the lyrical discourse. They write poems that are conversational and theatrical. Yet, they are deep and philosophical. The domestic atmosphere in verses which started with Boland and the three Marias finds new space on the page, under the pen of writers who have to deal with setbacks such as coming from a working-class origin, being a woman, writing in a much less

acknowledged or acclaimed by the great public genre (poetry) and following authors who have already thrived in establishing new voices in contemporaneity. It is relevant to mention that both authors also share the concern with writing as a (non) career. Higgins's poem "Poetry Doesn't Pay" once again makes use of humour in order to conclude that:

> ...
> If you don't have fourteen pounds
> and ten pence, you have nothing
> but the light of the penurious moon."
>
> After reflecting upon the ambiguous lines probably heard from many people around the poet and which in this poem are part of the its first stanza:
> "Your poems, you know,
> you´ve really got something there,
> I mean really."
> (20, 21)

In "Dinheiro e Literatura" ("Money and Literature"), Lopes transfers the same matters – literature, money making or, no-money-making and the low status of writers – to stories about relatives:

> A viúva do escritor
> pedia esmola
> à minha avó
> a título de viúva
> do escritor
>
> Não percebe nada
> de literatura
> a personagem principal
> é a tia Emiliana
> porque é quem tem o dinheiro
>
> O livro inédito
> do tio escritor
> havia de fazer
> a fortuna
> das herdeiras
> mas o editor pagou pouco
> ou a prima Berta mentiu.[3]
> (Lopes 343, 344)

Furthermore, the prior, social circumstances in which the two writers produce and that have been mentioned above (basically, being women and writing poetry) interfere in the creation of their aesthetics, as they respond to their contexts with choices that reveal their voices that dare speaking above their own status, thus, creating new identities in contemporaneity. Moreover, Sandra Nitrini (2000 131) states that "as influências tornam o poema possível e são transcendidas por ele [influences make the poem possible and are by it transcended]", which hints at the cases studied here. Pop culture, life and personal experiences influence both poets on their themes, as well as on their dialogues with tradition and with the societies in which they live. Yet, they are both waving at alternative replies as regards the literary genre (poetry) and to the lyrical voices with which they sing and danSe, as we can see in their poems here commented.

At last, we can conclude that literary comparativisms such as the one we propose here between two geographies may lead us to a better understanding of the two poets" aesthetics in terms of the construction of poetic and national identities by means of the reading the same themes, style and humour in the writers' works, but also within their representation in the plural contemporaneity of subjects in which writing is salvation:

> Para não
> me perder
> escrevi
> ...
> A escrever
> escrevo-me[4]
> (Lopes 358)

Notes

1 In our translation into English: Before becoming my Muse/my Muse warned me/ You sang without knowing/ That singing costs a tongue/ now I will cut your tongue/ so you learn to sing/ my Muse is cruel/ but I know no other.
2 Put on your red shoes and dance the blues/ David Bowie was singing in 1983./ You don't need the red shoes./ I prefer dan/sing barefoot like Ava Gardner.
3 The writer's widow/ asked for alms/ from my grandmother/ as the widow/ of the writer//She knows nothing/ about literature/ the main character/ is aunt Emiliana/ because she is the one with the Money//The unpublished book/ by the writer uncle/ was supposed to make/ the fortune/ of the heirs/ but the publisher paid little/ or cousin Berta has lied.
4 Not to/ lose myself/I'd written/(...)/ While writing/ I write myself

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ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 93-103.

Séan O'Casey: A Minor Literature? The Plough and the Stars' *Pub Scene Through Deleuze and Guattari's Perspective*

Séan O'Casey: Uma literatura menor? A cena do pub *de* Plough and the Star*s pela perspectiva Deleuze-Guattariana*

Marina Queiroz

Abstract: *This work aims to discuss the pub scene in Séan O'Casey's The Plough and the Stars from the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of minor literature. Considering the colonial-rebellious context in which the play was written, it is imperative to analyze the ambiance of the Easter Rising and its impact on the characters within the pub setting. This analysis requires consideration of the three key characteristics of minor literature: the deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to politics, and the collective assemblage of enunciation. By understanding these features and their presence in The Plough and the Stars, more specifically in the selected scene, it is possible to assert whether or not they play an essential part in shaping the meaning of O'Casey's literary work. Finally, by examining these three points, it is possible to discuss the Irish pub as a new territory for those who have been deterritorialized —a space that is both distorted and democratic where the ordinary characters can discuss ideas and participate in social life.*

Keywords: The Plough and the Stars*; Minor Literature; Séan O'Casey; Deleuze and Guattari.*

Resumo: *Esse trabalho busca discutir a cena do pub na peça* The Plough and the Stars *de Séan O'Casey tendo como ponto de partida a perspectiva de Deleuze e Guattari acerca das literaturas ditas menores. Considerando o contexto colonial e revoltoso em que foi escrita, não poderíamos analisar e compreender a ambientação*

Received: 09/04/2024 Accepted: 24/06/2024

que foi a Revolta da Páscoa e os seus efeitos nas personagens, bem como a maneira como estas operam no cenário do pub, sem ter em mente as três características da literatura menor: a desterritorialização da linguagem, a conexão do individual com o político e o caráter coletivo do enunciado. Entendendo essas marcas e como elas estão intimamente presentes na obra dramatúrgica, mais especificamente na cena escolhida para o estudo, é possível inferir se elas atuam de maneira essencial ou não na construção de sentido no trabalho literário de O'Casey. Por fim, passando por esses três pontos, pode-se falar sobre a possibilidade do pub irlandês ser como um novo território para os desterritorializados – de maneira distorcida, mas democrática, sendo um espaço onde as personas da peça, pessoas do dia a dia, podem discutir ideias e participar da sociedade.

Palavras-chave: The Plough and the Stars*; Literatura menor; Séan O'Casey; Deleuze and Guattari.*

To contemplate minor literature is to examine literature with a last name, in contrast to the great universal texts conceived by human genius and individual experience. Whether taking the example of Kafka and his affiliation to Jewish writing in Austria, or Chimamanda Adichie and the "Nigeria" last name – or Séan O'Casey and the Irish experience caught between colonialism and nascent republicanism, it is possible to notice that all minor literatures are what "a minority constructs in a major language" (Deleuze and Guattari 16).

From the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari, three main characteristics emerge in minor literature: the deterritorialization of the language, an all-political instance, and an all-collective point of view. Examining the second act of *The Plough and the Stars*, the final play in Séan O'Casey's *Dublin Trilogy*, proves particularly fruitful in highlighting these features, as they are evident in one of the play's most iconic moments. These three operative tools serve as a solid foundation for the construction of meaning in the pub scene in the *The Plough and the Stars.* In a claustrophobic and contrasting way, all these aspects of minor literature converge into a more significant collective territory through the mediation of political language.

Before delving into a deeper discussion, it is crucial to provide context for the Easter Rising. Serving as a significant catalyst for Ireland's independence conflicts, which would span several decades, the uprising was planned by different rebel groups and unfolded on the streets of Dublin in 1916. Primarily a nationalist struggle, as Edward Said notes, "the resistance to imperialism was conducted in the name of nationalism" (Said 74). However, there were also

socialist ideals at stake, particularly within the Irish Citizen Army. This group dreamed of setting Ireland free not only from the rule of the British Empire but also from the chains that imprisoned the working class.

Led by figures such as Patrick Pearse, James Connolly, and Thomas MacDonagh, the rebels marched and conquered strategic sites in the capital. They failed at the time, but their actions had far-reaching consequences, altering Ireland's political, social, and cultural landscape. Many of these leaders were executed by the end of the Easter week, subsequently becoming martyrs. The notion of martyrdom contributed to the spreading of a national ethos of glory and honor in armed conflict and warfare. This concept is closely related to the Greek idea of *kléos*, which denotes the glorious death that transforms a soldier into a well-remembered hero – a theme exemplified by Achilles in the Iliad as he opts for a certain yet glorious death in battle rather than a prosperous, long life. This sentiment – or rather, a philosophy – is noticeable in Yeats' "The Rose Tree":

> But where can we draw water
> Said Pearse to Connolly,
> When all the wells are parched away?
> O plain as plain can be
> There's nothing but our own red blood
> Can make a right Rose Tree (15-18)

Despite the political backdrop, the characters in *The Plough and the Stars* are affected by the Easter Rising in different ways. Representing the working class and those who live at the Dublin tenements, these men and women do not take up arms. From their perspective, the rebellion outside the pub's window is merely another character that speaks several times and does not spark the flame of revolution in their hearts. Meanwhile, within the pub – a cornerstone of Ireland's literature, culture, and society – the characters coexist, communicating their opinions and inner conflicts in a deterritorialized language. This language is marked by distinctive characteristics, demonstrating the impossibility of communicating in and being part of metropolitan English.

Therefore, moving forward and considering each of the features proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, this work aims to understand this territory as a recurring *locus* in the Irish imaginary, transcending the notions of Irishness. It serves as an exported image to the world, whether through the British Empire (in a mocking manner) or through Ireland itself (in a

postcolonial resignification of its own identity). Indeed, the pub can be viewed as a collective space that encompasses not only celebration but also tension, debate, and, in a sense, resistance.

A deterritorialized language

The impossibility of writing without facing a specific political context and the suppressed national consciousness characterize the major language spoken in a (post)colonial environment. This was no exception in Ireland, where by the end of the nineteenth century, numerous movements emerged with the aim of reclaiming the origins of the country's culture and literature. As foreseen by Deleuze and Guattari, these movements sought to represent the Irish people more authentically, discussing the revival of the Gaelic language, Celtic myths, and the epic stories of great warriors such as Cuchulainn.

Deterritorialization is also a crucial tool for understanding minor literature. In *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987), Deleuze and Guattari argue that it is the movement of leaving a territory, physically or not, particularly when bonds are weakened or completely lost. They state it as the operation of the line of flight. The authors argue that people are detached from their territory through cultural, political, and physical means: emigration, changes in the economic system, modified traditions and folklore. These disruptions can be found in Ireland's history and are reflected directly in Séan O'Casey's characters.

While discussing language, Deleuze and Guattari mention Joyce and Beckett, two Irish contemporaries of O'Casey. Despite their differing approaches, both sought to solve the deterritorialization of their place resulting from a (post)colonial perspective by becoming global writers: Beckett wrote in French, while Joyce did not reduce himself to English but chose a very unique, individual language – "the utilization of English and every language" (Deleuze and Guatarri 19). This tendency is evident in the works of many Irish writers and artists of the twentieth century, where the experience of territory (lost and reconquered) is symbolized not only by land but also by the body and self.

Despite the political undertones of many of the art pieces of the time, these representations often preferred the individual and unique characteristics over the significant historical events. For instance, in *The Plough and the Stars*'s pub scene, O'Casey juxtaposes the political background outside the bar – that still can be heard when materialized in the Voice

of the Man, a character that plays the role of a rebel leader during his speech – and a mosaic of other characters' misfortunes.

Hence, we witness the deterritorialization of the mouth and teeth as proposed by Deleuze e Guattari – the act of eating and drinking by these ordinary characters in a bar serves as a manifestation of resistance to live the pub culture against the constraints of Puritan metropolitan costumes. It also serves as a subtle defiance against specific ultranationalist values that were held close by many revolutionary groups. The chewing of the hungry, the chugging of the thirsty symbolize the apathy of those who are minor among minors. In the long run, even during the Easter Rising, the working class of Dublin was neglected and remained hopeless of any change. Seeking to represent many different perspectives and to navigate the complexities of assigning meaning to words such as "metropolis", "king", "rebel", "republic", "moral", "socialism", "church", and more, language goes far beyond its materialization in accents. There is a political tone to it.

Although language plays a significant role in the representation of the Irish people in the play, a crucial aspect of the meaning lies in the subjects addressed by the characters – in a very realistic, raw, and crude way. There is a sense of desacralization in the lines that echoes throughout the scene. Like in a Via Crucis, the characters portrayed by O'Casey carry their crosses throughout the play in a constant tragic movement. For instance, at the beginning of the scene, Rosie, a prostitute, despite seeing the political scenario through a positive lens, complains about a disruption in her income – the dreams of heroism of such times would keep men away from her:

> Rosie. Curse o' God on th' haporth, hardly, Tom. There isn't much notice taken of a pretty petticoat of a night like this... They're all in a holy mood. ... You'd think they were th' glorious company of th' saints, an' th' noble army of martyrs thrampin' through th' sthreets of paradise. They're all thinkin' of higher things than a girl's garthers... (2. 1. 2)

Yet, even though individual lives get overwhelmed by *hýbris*, suffering – and, quite possibly, some learning – the political background is viewed through a secular, ordinary lens. This is particularly evident observing how the characters, while discussing the Rising, still find their matters and affairs more relevant, often suffocating the political discourse coming from outside the window. Fighting for a spotlight, they seek attention and a place in the scene among drunkards, struggles, and philosophical discussion:

> Rosie. It seems a highly rediculous thing to hear a thing that's only an inch or two away from a kid, swingin' heavy words about he doesn't know th' meanin' of, an' uppishly thryin' to down a man like Misther Fluther here, that's well flavoured in th' knowledge of th world he's livin' in.
> The Covey. Nobody's askin' you to be buttin' in with your prate. I have you well taped, me lassie... Just you keep your opinions for your own place... It'll be a long time before th' Covey takes any insthructions or reprimandin' from a prostitute! (2. 1. 123-124)

Standard English is subverted to faithfully represent the voices of the minority – those who are both protagonists and authors of minor literature. Examples abound in the previous quote: "rediculous," "haporth" (halfpennyworth), abbreviations such as in "livin" and "askin'," and the recurring use of dental fricatives such as in "sthreets", "thryin", "Misther". Drama makes room for transgressions such as these, and having actors in the scene performing not only a historical event but an action that elevates marginalized voices is almost holiness within the profane. O'Casey, "as an heir to Synge, who had found the rich idiom of the peasantry" (Kiberd 219), could not have done anything different. As Deleuze and Guattari assert, O'Casey undertakes "the revival of regionalisms, with a reterritorialization through dialect or patois, a vernacular language" (Deleuze and Guattari 24).

All-political

After understanding the mechanisms of language in O'Casey, it is essential to correlate the historical, political, and social milieu portrayed in *The Plough and the Stars* with the second feature proposed by Deleuze and Guattari for minor literature. By introducing some of the nuances of the Easter Rising and the events and sentiments leading up to it we gain insight into the diverse representations of "Irishness" prevalent in the literary texts of the time. However, to contextualize the rebellion – the setting of the play – we need first to contextualize Ireland at that time.

A pivotal point is the nineteenth century, marked by tragedies like the Great Famine (1854-1852), caused by the loss of potato crops – the primary food source at that time. This tragedy, coupled with mass unemployment and extensive emigration waves, led to a significant decline in the population. People did not have access to the land, a problem that affected both rural areas and urban centers. Dublin was known for harboring some of the most impoverished slums in Europe, igniting discontent in popular opinion.

Over centuries of colonization, but particularly in the aftermath of the events described in the last paragraph, Ireland experienced profound losses in both language and culture. Irish Gaelic has seen a drastic decline in the number of speakers. This decline can be attributed to various factors, mainly the Great Famine and mass emigration, as well as the implementation of English as the universal language in the educational systems of the British Empire's colonies.

In response to these losses and a growing sense of rebellion, numerous separatist movements emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These movements were mostly driven not only by political matters but also by cultural concerns. The Celtic renaissance became popular among artists of the time, who sought to reclaim the Irish linguistic and mythological heritage – reviving language, myths, tales, and old stories as a primary source of inspiration.

Therefore, the Easter Rising is the core topic of O'Casey's *Dublin Trilogy* including *The Plough and the Stars*. O'Casey represents the collective experience of Dublin's residents amid the guerrilla warfare. Streets taken by barricades bring war itself as a scenario, which reverberates all around, all the time: politics is the air that the characters breathe. The pub scene is no different: even inside the bar, the rebellion echoes into the scene through the figure that speaks outside the window. The noise of the political discourse, the guns, and the conflict suffocate the characters throughout the play.

Right after the scene where Rosie and the Barman talk, we hear the speech of "The Voice of the Man" for the first time. In this initial moment, the characters stop to listen and comment carefully; however, in the subsequent instances when the Voice speaks, it becomes gradually ignored. The language of this *persona-revolution* is even discordant with the others in the text — it is "cleaner" and more aligned with standard English:

> Voice of the man. It is a glorious thing to see arms in the hands of Irishmen. We must accustom ourselves to the thought of arms; we must accustom ourselves to the sight of arms; we must accustom ourselves to the use of arms... Bloodshed is a cleansing and sanctifying thing, and the nation that regards it as the final horror has lost its manhood. There are many things more horrible than bloodshed, and slavery is one of them! (2. 1. 6)

Let us also consider the imagery of martyrdom: the shedding of blood as a way of cleansing, purging, and purifying the land to set it free. Here, the line of the Voice is comparable to the aforementioned poem *The Rose Tree* by Yeats: just as in the poem, the well is dry, and blood

is the only possibility to water the rose tree – Ireland – so it can live (once again, be reborn). The character in *The Plough and the Stars* adverts and preaches, almost pedagogically, about the necessity of taking up arms and shedding blood – for to be unfree is worse than any other alternative.

However, "The Covey" – a young socialist – considers the future in the scene: what is freedom worth if it does not encompass economic freedom? After all, "unless there was a change in the distribution of wealth, you would simply be exchanging one set of exploiters for another" (Kiberd 219). Such a question sparks a debate that escalates into a never-ending fight involving all the characters at the pub. Rosie even refers to The Covey (as mentioned earlier) as someone who says difficult words without knowing their true meaning. Mrs. Gogan and Bessie Burgess also engage in a fight, which is met with a sexist response from the male characters, who perceive it as mere female rivalry, characterized by hysteria and anger.

Delving into this claustrophobic universe, O'Casey, in a realistic *oeuvre*, charted a different course from those commonly explored during his era. While much of literature tented to essentialize Irish identity – echoing the early years of Yeats, whose "fantasies of old homes and families, his incoherently occult divagations" is "a particularly exacerbated example of nativist phenomenon" (Said 81), O'Casey focused not on the unlikely representation of Dublin's Miserables speaking Gaelic inside their tenements but dedicated himself to breathing life into the reality of these deterritorialized people.

As Deleuze and Guattari pointed out, "a minor literature is completely different; its cramped space forces each intrigue to connect immediately to politics" (Deleuze and Guattari 17). Therefore, when moving around old mythic stories, O'Casey brings each case of every character (their fears, affairs, journeys, and convictions) into the political context. It is not about literature written in a major language, such as Irish. Rather, it is the case of literature grounded in English – a different kind of English, a marginalized one, spoken by a majority within a colony with no choice but to live within the realm of politics.

We also observe that "the family triangle connects to other triangles – commercial, economic, bureaucratic, juridic" (Deleuze and Guattari 17) in the pub scene: acquaintances, relatives, friends, and adversaries get together in the pub and, while they discuss their own lives, politics intrudes from the outside. Issues of financial hardship come from within, but society, nation, and the economy directly interfere in the characters' lives.

Towards the end of the act, we witness Jack Clitheroe, the husband of one of the main characters, Nora, facing the choice of fighting (and possibly dying) for Ireland or staying with his wife. By choosing war, we can infer that even the institution of family is overridden by politics – claustrophobia pervades even marriage. The notion of abandoning a spouse in a time of war is not well received in the play; as we see later, Nora ultimately descends into madness and suffers a miscarriage. However, it is essential to say that the idea of Ireland being greater and more alluring than someone's wife is also present in Yeats' play *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*. Let's consider an example from the end of the pub scene in *The Plough and the Stars*:

> Clitheroe. Three glasses o' port!
> Capt. Brennan. We won't have long to wait now.
> Lieut. Langon. Th' time is rotten ripe for revolution.
> Clitheroe. You have a mother, Langon.
> Lieut. Langon. Ireland is greater than a mother.
> Capt. Brennan. You have a wife.
> Clitheroe. Ireland is greater than a wife. (2. 1. 148-153)

Therefore, the political dimension – or rather, the fact that everything is political and touched by conflicts in some way – is a mark, a scar. It serves as a painful reminder that Sean O'Casey's literature (and that of many others with a last name) carries it. It constantly recalls the feeling of having one's identity denied.

All-collective

"Denied any right of privacy and doomed to live in one another's pockets" (Kiberd 219), the figures of *The Plough and the Stars* experience their individual lives through the constraints of a claustrophobic collective. The characters pry into each other's lives, offer opinions, and deliver moral speeches about others' personal affairs. Whether due to the geography of the tenement, where many residents have to cohabit in the same buildings, or the context of the war that affects all (even those who did not agree with or take part in it), the notion of identity as thought in major literature remains elusive.

Considering the lack of importance given to personal experience, O'Casey adopts a collective enunciation position, as foreseen by the French authors, at a time when "the political domain has contaminated every statement (énoncé)" (Deleuze and Guattari 17). Bearing in mind that "collective or national consciousness is often inactive in external life

and always in the process of breakdown" (Deleuze and Guattari 17), O'Casey offers a fresh perspective on a forgotten class by departing from the bourgeois drama of the individual detached from social life.

Hence, upon reflecting on the pivotal role of literature in this collective enunciation, we come to realize that O'Casey, in his writing, embodies the representation of the spirit – deterritorialized – of his time: prostitutes discuss with socialists, who in turn converse with fervorous religious men, who engage in dialogue with conservative women. In terms of ideology, there is no real consensus among the characters – but there is a sense of collective coexistence, especially when viewed from the perspective of space, habitation, territory, and the necessity of conviviality.

Moreover, the French philosophers propose a revolutionary function of literature through active solidarity. Although somewhat distorted, we can discern this feature in the dialogue behavior and mutual perceptions among the characters in *The Plough and the Stars*. Additionally, even amidst conflicts and debates, we can observe that the figures help each other in times of need. Ultimately, even Mrs. Gogan, who criticized Nora Clitheroe many times throughout the play, helps Nora when she is already mad and abandoned by her husband; Nora does not know where else to go.

The pub as a territory

In summary, it remains worthwhile to discuss the ambiguous territory in which the second act of *The Plough and the Stars* takes place: the pub. Two prominent collective places within the setting can be highlighted: the tenements, where the characters live, and the bar, where they convene. The former exudes tension and claustrophobia, while the latter is a place of confraternization, idea exchange, and even frivolous chatting. Yet, in its peculiar way, the pub in the play operates similarly to a Greek *polis*—a place to discuss the validity of the Easter Rising and socialism. From economy to morals and religion, every subject is accessible. Everyone is a citizen while the barman serves the drinks.

Moreover, considering the pub as a territory traversed by a collective of deterritorialized individuals, it is possible to consider a solution. After all, there is no deterritorialization without reterritorialization, as proposed by Deleuze and Guattari. Reterritorialization presupposes a new territory, and considering how hierarchies and power relations negatively mark tenements and rural fields, the pub may be adequate. Beyond that, the pub is a place of convergence and

encounter. As such, it brings a dynamism typical of a territory, extending beyond geography and individuality.

All things considered, the pub can be a territory – improvised, yet vital. While it may not be the perfect one, it is where some level of democracy is available in the play. In a setting that denies any right to decent and fair habitation to the characters, it is at the bar that they find their possibilities of existence. Their houses are invaded by financial constraints and the colonial and capitalist system, while their sense of belonging occurs at the bar. Rosie's remark about being taxed to bring a man into her room encapsulates the characters' discontent with the tenement:

> Rosie. It's no joke thryin' to make up fifty-five shillin's a week for your keep an' laundhry, an' then taxin' you a quid for your own room if you bring home a friend for th' night... If I could only put by a couple of quid for a swankier outfit, everythin' in th' garden ud look lovely. (2. 1. 4)

In conclusion, bringing together all three characteristics of minor literature discussed in this work, the pub is where language, politics, and collective enunciation converge. The pub's role in O'Casey's play goes far beyond the scenario; it actively shapes the characters' development. Marked by literature that carries Ireland as its last name, whether minor in name or monumental in potential, the symbolic figure of this meeting spot prevails until today. This *locus* represents identity and conflict, but also solidarity and camaraderie.

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ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 105-119.

A ascensão do romance na periferia celta: Um estudo sobre a composição política, didática e antirromanesca de Castle Rackrent

The Rise of the Novel in the Celtic Periphery: A Study on the Political, Pedagogical and Antinovelistic Composition of Castle Rackrent

Michelle Andressa Alvarenga de Souza

Resumo: *O presente artigo demonstra como a percepção da união na diferença pode ser identificada no romance* Castle Rackrent *de Maria Edgeworth, publicado em 1800. Esta breve investigação se debruça sobre o didatismo dessa obra ficcional, classificada como* National Tale*. Este trabalho ainda explora a mediação proporcionada por sua estrutura formal, sobretudo o aparato paratextual, e reflete acerca do desafio da formação de uma dimensão conciliatória no romance, que não traz o casamento como superação do conflito narrativo. Mostra-se, ainda, como os desafios sociais impostos pela conturbada realidade da periferia celta impedem a composição de um romance realista e resultam em uma espécie de antirromance, que evidencia as contradições e ambivalências da realidade irlandesa em um momento crítico da história. Conclui-se demonstrando como o romance estudado apresenta uma solução ideológica que pode ser percebida em duas frentes: a de uma reforma feita pela elite da ascendência anglo-irlandesa, capaz de manter o status quo preservando as tradições do país; e uma atitude assimilativa por parte da Grã-Bretanha na ocasião da União com a Irlanda, que incorpore a alteridade ao invés de rejeitá-la.*

Palavras-chave: *Romance político irlandês;* National Tale*; Irlanda; Grã-Bretanha; Ato de União.*

Abstract: *This paper demonstrates how the perception of union in the difference can be perceived in the novel* Castle Rackrent *written by Maria Edgeworth*

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.p105-119
Received: 17/05/2024 Accepted: 19/07/2024

and published in 1800. It investigates the pedagogical aspects of this fictional narrative, classified as National Tale*, and explores the mediation offered by its structure, especially the paratextual elements. At the same time, it reflects about the challenges of forming a conciliatory dimension in the novel, which does not bring marriage as the solution to the narrative conflict. This work argues that the social challenges imposed by the troubled reality of the Celtic periphery do not allow the composition of a realist novel and result in a sort of antinovel, which marks the contradictions and ambivalences of Irish reality at a critical moment of history. It concludes by demonstrating how this novel presents an ideological solution that can be identified in two fronts: a reformist perspective supported by the Anglo-Irish elite, which would allow the preservation of the status quo and of the traditions of the country; and an act of assimilation to be performed by Great Britain at the time of its union with Ireland, one that incorporates the alterity instead of rejecting it.*

Keywords: *Irish Political Novel;* National Tale*; Ireland; Great Britain; Act of Union.*

Introdução

Este estudo analisa o romance *Castle Rackrent*, escrito por Maria Edgeworth e publicado em 1800, como um exemplar da literatura irlandesa que discute união e diferença no contexto do Reino Unido da Grã-Bretanha e da Irlanda no começo do século XIX. Ele explora como o texto literário em questão, com seus aparatos textual e paratextual, discute a problemática da união de uma nação formada por componentes que se diversificam no campo étnico, cultural, linguístico e religioso.

Com atenção especial ao contexto histórico do Ato de União e ao contexto literário irlandês com o surgimento do subgênero híbrido *National Tale*, este artigo se debruça sobre o forte apelo didático deste romance político irlandês no centro do Império Britânico. Busca-se demonstrar como *Castle Rackrent*, ao mesmo tempo em que educou o leitor inglês acerca da alteridade irlandesa e buscou superar preconceitos coloniais por meio da simpatia, também proporcionou à maioria católica irlandesa uma representação mimética dos costumes e tradições de seu país e a denúncia das condições injustas impostas a eles pelo sistema de posse de terras e pelas cicatrizes das *Penal Laws*. Ressalta-se, além disso, que o romance também

alerta a minoria da ascendência anglo-irlandesa protestante acerca dos riscos que ameaçam o *status quo* que lhes mantinha no poder.

O objetivo central desta breve investigação é demonstrar que esse romance de Maria Edgeworth procura refletir sobre quais seriam as possibilidades da Irlanda em relação a um contexto político crítico, que colocava a Irlanda e os irlandeses (católicos e protestantes) entre a ameaça de uma revolução sangrenta, como a ocorrida na França uma década antes, e a supressão de sua identidade, cultura e tradições por meio da união parlamentar com a Grã-Bretanha, a qual resultaria na supressão do parlamento irlandês em Dublin e levaria a tomada de decisões acerca da Irlanda e dos irlandeses para Londres.

Ao instrumentalizar a ficção para o centro do debate político, Maria Edgeworth pontua cuidadosamente a iminência da provável perda de identidade por parte dos irlandeses ao renunciarem à independência legislativa alcançada em 1782 por meio do pedido de ajuda à Grã-Bretanha após a sangrenta rebelião de 1798. Fala-se explicitamente das incertezas que a anexação da Irlanda ao Reino Unido traria no Prefácio e nas notas do editor, ambos escritos pela voz autoral de Edgeworth. Essas menções deixam clara a preocupação da autora acerca dos efeitos da chamada união para o povo irlandês e a análise a seguir demonstrará como esta percepção pode ser identificada no texto literário.

Castle Rackrent: A história da ruína de uma família da ascendência anglo-irlandesa

O romance *Castle Rackrent* foi publicado à luz do Ato de União que anexou a Irlanda ao Reino Unido da Grã-Bretanha. Ele é composto por três partes distintas, mas complementares: (1) o prefácio, (2) as memórias de Thady Quirk sobre a história da família Rackrent e (3) as notas do editor, o glossário e as anotações da autora. Ainda que as partes 1 e 3 estejam desassociadas da narrativa principal, como veremos mais adiante, elas estabelecem um diálogo direto com a parte 2 e influenciam substancialmente a recepção do texto por parte do leitor. Estes elementos paratextuais serão, portanto, considerados partes constituintes deste trabalho literário que oferecem mais vozes à narrativa já bastante polifônica feita por Thady acerca da ruína da família Rackrent, causada pela negligência e indiferença dos últimos três herdeiros irlandeses.

O prefácio justifica o conteúdo da história de Thady Quirk e valida-o como narrador e biógrafo. Ele começa explicando como histórias privadas emergem pelo amor à verdade, algo pouco abordado pelos historiadores. Portanto, o biógrafo deve ser valorizado por trazer à luz as cartas, os diários e as conversas de pessoas importantes (EDGEWORTH, 2007, p. 3). O prefácio também adverte o leitor de que Thady escreveu a história da família Rackrent em sua língua vernacular, um Hiberno-English que não foi traduzido propositalmente para evitar que dúvidas fossem levantadas sobre a autenticidade da história contada. Ele conclui informando que o tipo de pessoa retratado no romance pelos Rackrents do sexo masculino (bêbados, briguentos e indiferentes) não podem mais ser encontrados na Irlanda no ano de publicação do romance, o que deixa claro que a narrativa representa o povo irlandês antes da união com a Grã-Bretanha.

O prefácio também é importante por advertir a suposta perda iminente de identidade por parte da Irlanda quando a união com a Grã-Bretanha fosse consolidada. Ele transmite a ideia de que velhos costumes e tradições irlandesas estão sob ameaça e que é válido deixar a alteridade irlandesa registrada por meio desse texto.

Intitulado *Castle Rackrent: an hibernian tale. Taken from facts, and from the manners of the Irish squires before the year 1782*, o romance deixa claro que os acontecimentos narrados por Thady antecedem o ano em que a Irlanda alcançou a independência legislativa com o estabelecimento de um parlamento irlandês em Dublin. A escolha por esta data para a narração dos acontecimentos da família não é arbitrária pois, como afirma Susan Kubica Howard (2007, p. xvi, tradução nossa), a fundação do parlamento irlandês "ofereceu esperança aos irlandeses quanto à possibilidade da criação de uma identidade irlandesa digna e forte".[1]

Em seguida, o leitor encontra a história de quatro herdeiros da linhagem Rackrent, contada por Thady Quirk, o *steward* da família. Ela possui um aspecto polifônico e o narrador dá lugar a diálogos, cartas, segredos e brigas. Os leitores podem identificar várias vozes à medida em que a história é contada. Essencialmente, Thady cobre a ascensão e queda de quatro herdeiros da família - Sir Patrick, Sir Murtagh, Sir Kit e Sir Condy - devido às suas próprias ações e descuidos.

Sir Patrick Rackrent, nascido Patrick O'Shaughlin, abdicou de suas raízes celtas e da religião católica para poder herdar o nome e a propriedade de seu primo. É possível identificar, já na primeira geração, que os personagens irlandeses abandonam traços característicos da identidade irlandesa para ascender socialmente e obter a posse de terras, já que a conversão à

religião protestante é imperativa. Patrick Rackrent foi amado pela comunidade e era famoso pelas festas que costumava organizar no castelo. Ele era, entretanto, um alcoólatra que morreu devido aos seus abusos com a bebida e cujo corpo foi confiscado para forçar seu filho e herdeiro, Murtagh, a pagar as dívidas do pai.

Sir Murtagh, um advogado, casou-se por interesse com uma mulher rica mais velha do que ele. A sua esposa era, segundo Thady, uma "grande economista" (EDGEWORTH, 2007, p. 14) que conseguia administrar a casa com pouquíssimas despesas. Ela o fez cobrando tudo o que podia de seus *tenants*, muitas vezes forçando os camponeses a abandonarem as suas próprias fazendas para trabalhar nas terras da família Rackrent. Este relato corrobora a historicidade da relação predatória entre os donos de terra e os camponeses que as arrendavam:

> o relacionamento entre camponeses e os donos de terra ou seus agentes na Irlanda desta época era complicado e, em geral, o costume favorecia o proprietário e prejudicava severamente os inquilinos das terras. Sir Murtagh e sua esposa estão determinados a sugar o máximo de seus inquilinos, requerendo animais, trabalho extra, dinheiro ou *weeds*[2] (HOWARD, 2007, p. xiv).

Enquanto a esposa fiscalizava os empregados e explorava os *tenants*, Sir Murtagh redigia severos contratos de aluguel das terras do *estate* e estava pronto a mover um processo legal contra seus vizinhos por qualquer pequeno motivo. Ele alegava ter um processo legal para cada letra do alfabeto, os quais lhe custavam muito, sobretudo quando perdia. Esta situação forçou o início da decadência dos Rackrents, já no segundo herdeiro, que foi forçado a vender partes da propriedade da família para acompanhar o ritmo de seus gastos processuais.

Murtagh morreu subitamente, quase ao acaso, durante uma briga com a esposa por questões de dinheiro e, então, seu irmão mais novo, Kit, tornou-se o proprietário do Castelo Rackrent. Kit revelou-se um *absentee* viciado em jogos e apostas, que gastava os recursos do *estate* e da família para manter-se em Bath, na Inglaterra. A exploração dos *tenants* sob sua negligente gestão também é muito problemática. E foi precisamente essa negligência com a administração da propriedade que Kit demonstrou ter que permitiu o início da ascensão daquele que traria a ruína definitiva da linhagem Rackrent. Foi durante o tempo em que Kit era proprietário da terra que Jason Quirk, filho de Thady, começou a obter uma posição de protagonismo no dia a dia da administração das terras e dos negócios da família.

A propensão de Murtagh de processar todos por motivo algum é substituída em Kit pela propensão de duelar com todos por qualquer coisa. E foi em um desses duelos que o terceiro herdeiro perdeu a vida, dando lugar ao último proprietário da linhagem sanguínea Rackrent: Sir Condy.

Como dito anteriormente, Jason começa a ganhar espaço na administração dos negócios com a autorização de Sir Kit, que o admite primeiro como *tenant* e depois lhe confia o cargo de *agent* da propriedade. Mas é sob o olhar míope de Sir Condy que Jason articula a tomada de poder sobre a propriedade e sobre o título Rackrent. A grande especulação acerca deste complô é se o pai, o narrador Thady, estaria envolvido no processo.

Devido aos excessivos gastos de Isabela, a esposa que Condy escolheu ao acaso, jogando uma moeda no ar, Jason predispõe-se a comprar um pedaço de terra da propriedade, oferecendo alívio imediato ao *landlord* e livrando-o da prisão. É com esta pequena aquisição, com a qual Thady se alegra imensamente, que Jason dá o primeiro grande passo para se tornar dono de tudo o que um dia pertenceu à família que seu pai e avô haviam servido por toda a vida.

É importante ressaltar que não há relacionamentos positivos na história. Nem de pai para filho, nem entre marido e mulher, nem mesmo entre amigos. A amizade que Thady e Jason aparentemente nutrem por Condy mostra-se ilusória e ambígua à medida em que a tomada das terras e do poder vai acontecendo. O único sinal de amor verdadeiro do romance é frustrado em suas últimas páginas, quando o leitor descobre que Judy não nutre afeição alguma por Condy e só estava interessada no dinheiro e prestígio social que o casamento com um Rackrent poderia lhe trazer.

A questão de como o casamento é representado neste romance é um elemento importante porque é colocado, ao contrário dos outros romances do mesmo período publicados na Inglaterra e na Escócia, como um gerador de conflito ao invés de um elemento conciliatório. A impossibilidade de felicidade no casamento e da geração de herdeiros a partir desta união evidenciam a atmosfera de estagnação e infertilidade que este romance de Edgenworth transmite.

Antes de prosseguirmos para as próximas seções deste artigo, cabem alguns comentários sobre o enredo. Nenhum dos proprietários constrói nada, nenhum deles é capaz de transformar o *estate* da família ou modificar as relações sociais, sobretudo a relação com os *tenants*. A sucessão de herdeiros sem uma conexão clara entre eles, a dissipação ou extorsão do

que se possui em termos de dinheiro e terras e o recomeço a cada troca de proprietário dão um aspecto episódico à narrativa, evidenciando o aspecto romanesco dessa obra literária.

Mary Jean Corbett (2004) explica que a indisciplina da família Rackrent é representada como fonte de desordem social e política em toda a comunidade, enquanto Gerry Brookes (1977) reforça esse entendimento refletindo que a maneira como Thady é chamado pelos seus patrões reflete a decadência causada a ele pela família. O narrador que começa o romance sendo chamado de "*Honest Thady*", termina-o como "*Poor Thady*", como um "resultado do declínio da família" (BROOKES, 1977, p. 597).

Uma vez que são diretamente afetados pela negligência da família, o povo (representado por Jason e Thady Quirk) busca uma mudança de condição social e consegue, como vimos, tomar o poder para si. Não podemos nos esquecer que já na primeira página da narrativa, Thady nos deixa claro que agora desfruta do conforto da mansão da família que costumava servir, já que escreve as memórias de frente ao retrato de Patrick Rackrent. Ao considerarmos que os retratos da família costumam estar dispostos em cômodos de prestígio, como a biblioteca ou a *drawing room*, o leitor atento identifica, já no início do romance, que Thady escreve as memórias em uma posição diferente daquela em que esteve no decorrer da história. Fica claro, de início, que ele possui uma posição mais confortável devido à ascensão social de seu filho.

Também é evidente que Maria Edgeworth tem consciência do crescimento do prestígio social de uma classe média de origem católica, convertida ao protestantismo – uma classe média que, como fez Jason, poderia instrumentalizar as instituições para reverter a situação e ocupar o lugar de poder que, à época, pertencia à ascendência anglo-irlandesa. Como discutiremos nas seções a seguir, o fechamento problemático do romance, que mostra Jason repetindo a mesma atitude isolacionista dos *landlords* anteriores, demonstra que esta classe média não seria capaz de oferecer um consenso que solucionasse a divisão dentro da Irlanda. Somente a elite irlandesa poderia oferecer uma solução ideológica adequada à manutenção da independência irlandesa e respeito às tradições e costumes do povo.

O *National Tale*: Uma resposta às mudanças políticas e ideológicas da Inglaterra e da Irlanda

Castle Rackrent reflete sobre os riscos de ruína da ascendência anglo-irlandesa protestante e dos perigos da tomada de poder por parte do povo. A decadência da família Rackrent por meio

dos atos dos últimos quatro herdeiros funciona como uma alegoria para a situação social na virada dos séculos XVIII e XIX e almeja criticar o formato do *status quo* daquela época para tentar manter a estrutura social da Irlanda.

O *National Tale* é um subgênero híbrido que incorpora aspectos do novelístico e do romanesco (Ferris, 2004). Originário na chamada periferia celta, possui uma dimensão didática que costuma ser reforçada pelo aparato paratextual, que almeja tornar a alteridade irlandesa inteligível para o leitor do centro do Reino Unido.

O *National Tale* é um romance político que não só esmaece a distinção entre romance jacobino e anti-jacobino, como, ao contrário deles, não tenta neutralizar o dialogismo intrínseco da forma novelística. A manutenção do dialogismo permite a construção de duas coisas que são fundamentais para pensar o romance *Castle Rackrent* pelo viés da união na diferença: (1) defender e criticar o status quo de maneira simultânea e (2) apelar ao mesmo tempo ao público irlandês e inglês, que, se pensado em um contexto de união, seria o público nacional.

A defesa e a crítica ao status quo é a desafiadora tarefa que os romancistas irlandeses da virada dos séculos XVIII e XIX precisaram superar. De acordo com Chris Fauske e Heidi Kaufman (2004, p. 14) Maria Edgeworth

> procura afastar-se da estrutura de poder que ela critica, mas que, estranhamente, permite a ela que fale a partir de uma posição privilegiada. Suas tentativas de reconstruir e celebrar a cultura irlandesa enquanto, simultaneamente, reprova os efeitos do imperialismo britânico têm o efeito de identificar uma espécie de Irlanda desmembrada que ela valida pessoalmente como algo seu e culturalmente como algo por ela resgatado.[3]

Ainda que haja um predomínio no alinhamento político com o centro inglês, que a dimensão didática de *Castle Rackrent* seja direcionada ao público da Inglaterra e que haja um medo por parte da ascendência anglo-irlandesa de que as massas se rebelem, fica claro como o romance demonstra que não dá para defender um arranjo constitucional que resulta em uma sociedade tão injusta como a irlandesa.

É nesse sentido que essa obra literária possui uma qualidade mediadora e é, ao mesmo tempo, conflitiva e conciliadora. Ela evidencia a alteridade cultural e linguística irlandesa em um contexto de opressão, sobretudo financeira, para permitir a geração de uma simpatia no público inglês. Enquanto o público inglês é alcançado por meio do didatismo inequívoco do *National Tale*, o público irlandês é alcançado pela dimensão mimética e por reconhecer na

obra a representação dos costumes do seu próprio país. Além disso, cabe acrescentar que o público irlandês também reconheceria a representação crítica de uma sociedade injusta, na qual eles, os irlandeses, não conseguem construir nada.

O *National Tale* poderia ser definido, seguindo o raciocínio de Corbett (2004), como um instrumento ideológico que buscava prescrever a assimilação ao invés do domínio. Segundo a autora:

> Determinar a assimilação ao invés da conquista, o governo consensual ao invés da legislação coercitiva, o paradigma Burkeniano para anexar a Irlanda à Inglaterra requeria o desenvolvimento de instrumentos ideológicos que promovessem esses objetivos, arte da paz ao invés da arte da guerra, da influência ao invés da dominação: na revolucionária década de 1790 na Irlanda, em meio à luta por representação política e pela reforma travada majoritariamente por e para homens, talvez não seja uma surpresa que tal tarefa recaiu sobre as mulheres protestantes. O projeto de Burke encontra seu lar ideológico na esfera cultural feminina do romance e, especialmente, nas mãos de Maria Edgeworth.[4] (CORBETT, 2004, p. 39)

Em face da iminente união, *Castle Rackrent* demonstra que há lugar para diversas alteridades no Reino Unido e que o próprio romance, como veremos a seguir, é um exemplo disso. Portanto, quando a Irlanda fosse anexada à Grã-Bretanha, seria importante haver uma política integracionista por parte dos ingleses e escoceses quanto à diferença que os irlandeses trarão à união, uma diferença que pode agregar, uma vez que são um povo com tradições culturais ricas, antigas e dignas de registro e respeito.

Castle Rackrent como um antirromance: A alta carga de ficcionalidade do aparato paratextual

Os desafios sociais impostos pela conturbada realidade da periferia celta impedem a composição de um romance realista nos moldes do postulado por Ian Watt. Na introdução de *Castle Rackrent*, Howard (2007) fornece uma noção suscinta do principal elemento identificável na história: a falta, *the lack of something*. Segunda ela, Castle Rackrent "é sobre a falta – a falta de foco sentimental, a falta de figuras heroicas, a falta de experiências culturais compartilhadas e a falta de uma perspectiva unificada e de uma voz para descrevê-la"[5] (HOWARD, 2007, p. xxxiii).

A realidade de pobreza, violência, preconceito étnico, tensão religiosa e constante agitação social devido às reinvindicações pela emancipação dos católicos não fornece o contexto de sociedade estável e unitária para a construção de um romance ordenado. No caso de *Castle Rackrent*, ao invés de um romance com unidade de ação, encontramos uma narrativa novelístico-romanesca regida pelo acaso, movida por uma sucessão de eventos de força maior que superam a capacidade do indivíduo, que não tem agência, que nada decide e que nada alcança. O momento que talvez deixe isso mais claro é a decisão de Sir Condy de escolher a mulher com quem passaria o resto da sua vida jogando uma moeda para o alto.

Com forte apelo didático, o *National Tale* configura-se como uma espécie de antirromance por constantemente evidenciar a sua ficcionalidade por meio de um generoso e indispensável aparato paratextual. Este paratexto é especialmente notável em *Castle Rackrent*, já que constitui 29 das 86 páginas do romance, totalizando aproximadamente 34% do texto.

Em *Castle Rackrent*, Maria Edgeworth desenvolve estratégias ficcionais que mantêm o didatismo do romance político e legitimam cada um dos componentes da contraditória realidade irlandesa. O prefácio e a nota do editor desempenham esta função, apresentando Thady Quirk como um narrador confiável, explicando que a língua vernácula foi mantida para evitar questionamentos sobre a autenticidade da história narrada. Além disso, são as notas e o glossário que permitem incluir na obra o popular (representado pela tradição irlandesa) e o vernacular (representado pela escolha linguística de permitir que Thady narre em *Hiberno-English*). Deste modo, o paratexto traduz a alteridade irlandesa ao público inglês.

Na realidade, todo o aparato paratextual (prefácio, notas do editor e da autora e o glossário), ao nosso ver, deve ser considerado como parte integrante do entrecho narrativo uma vez que, em *Castle Rackrent*, as dimensões ficcional e não-ficcional não podem ser claramente distinguidas.

Enquanto um romance antirrealista, *Castle Rackrent* reflete a desordem da Irlanda e evidencia as contradições e ambivalências da realidade irlandesa em um momento crítico da história, no qual os irlandeses encontram-se entre o enfrentamento de uma revolução popular ou da perda de sua identidade por meio da união com a Grã-Bretanha. E é sobre esta dupla ameaça que as seções a seguir se debruçarão.

A união entre a Irlanda e o reino da Grã-Bretanha

Castle Rackrent estabelece uma ambivalência em relação a este tratado internacional entre países. Enquanto a voz autoral do prefácio fala da iminente "perda de identidade" do povo irlandês, a nota do editor que aparece depois da narrativa de Thady reflete que "é um problema de difícil solução determinar se uma União vai apressar ou retardar a melhora deste país" (EDGEWORTH, 2004, p. 64).[6]

Fauske e Kaufman (2004, p. 13) afirmam que Maria Edgeworth, como seu pai, se opôs ao Ato de União. Howard (2007) explica que Richard Lovell Edgeworth votou contra o Ato de União somente porque as negociações para alcançá-lo estavam envolvendo atos de corrupção, ainda que ele fosse a favor de sua aprovação. Corbett (2004, p. 39) alega que "Edgeworth vê a Irlanda como necessária à Grã-Bretanha imperial, ainda que subordinada a ela".[7]

Esta investigação não buscará tomar partido quanto à visão que *Castle Rackrent* transmite sobre as incertezas da união entre Irlanda e Grã-Bretanha e, por isso, buscará desenvolver possíveis interpretações oriundas daquilo que vemos como uma posição ambígua do texto.

Foi possível identificar que, por um lado, a obra literária em análise oferece uma solução implícita por meio da realização de uma reforma por parte da elite de ascendência anglo-irlandesa, protestante. Enquanto, por outro lado, promove a assimilação cultural da tradição irlandesa ao invés de sua rejeição por parte da Inglaterra e da Escócia na ocasião da união da Grã-Bretanha com a Irlanda.

Ao demonstrar a difícil situação do povo irlandês nas mãos de *landlords* incapazes e negligentes, ao mesmo tempo em que evidencia o perigo da ascensão social do povo (representado no romance por Jason), *Castle Rackrent* deixa implícito um traço típico do conservadorismo irlandês, ao qual Edgeworth se associava: um conservadorismo pró-reforma. Demonstra-se, por meio desta representação ambígua dos anglo-irlandeses e dos próprios irlandeses, que o mais adequado para a Irlanda seria uma reforma conduzida pela ascendência anglo-irlandesa, que entende e respeita as tradições e os costumes do povo irlandês.

Corbett (2004, p. 41) alega que o romance pode ser lido como um apelo pela reforma, uma reforma capaz de dar àqueles que mandam "uma apreciação por parte daqueles injustamente comandados por eles, capaz de tornar estes governantes capazes de inspirar um tipo de lealdade e capaz de minimizar as divisões entre as classes visando à harmonia social".[8]

Howard (2007, p. xxxi) pontua, entretanto, que também é possível identificar em *Castle Rackrent* "uma ponte, ou identidade fronteiriça, que é alcançada pelo próprio romance: pela sua combinação da história contada por Thady com as notas e o glossário do editor, que fornecem uma integração das sensibilidades irlandesas e inglesas, mitigando as fronteiras genéricas".[9]

Este artigo não almeja julgar qual aspecto é mais proeminente no romance. Ele busca evidenciar como ambos podem ser identificados no texto e como ambos fornecem reflexões valiosas para a interpretação de *Castle Rackrent* com base na noção de união na diferença.

Conclusão

Maria Edgeworthn busca, por meio do *National Tale*, educar o leitor inglês e vencer, pela simpatia, os preconceitos que ele possa ter em relação ao povo irlandês. Walter Scott afirmou que os romances de Maria Edgeworth fizeram "mais para a consolidação da União do que todos os processos legislativos que a seguiram"[10] (SCOTT, apud FERRIS, 2004, p. 12-13). Isso, segundo Ferris (2004), aconteceu justamente devido à capacidade que os textos de Edgeworth tinham de causar simpatia no público inglês quanto à situação do povo irlandês.

A conclusão a que este artigo chega é que, alcançando os públicos inglês e irlandês (este último em sua completude, fornecendo elementos que apelam tanto para a maioria católica quanto para a minoria protestante), Maria Edgeworth oferece, em *Castle Rackrent*, uma conscientização política que almeja manter a união em dois sentidos: o primeiro seria a união da própria Irlanda, evitando uma revolta popular; e o segundo seria a união com a Grã-Bretanha.

A manutenção da união irlandesa seria viável somente por meio de uma reforma conduzida pela elite anglo-irlandesa, a qual, oferecendo uma estruturação social mais justa e favorável à emancipação católica e aos camponeses, manteria o *status quo* e permitiria a continuidade da interlocução com o centro do império.

A união com a Grã-Bretanha, por sua vez, quando consolidada, deveria ter uma construção assimilativa, integradora e inclusiva – dando lugar à alteridade irlandesa representada no romance. Ao evidenciar a união na diferença no próprio corpo do romance (dando voz ao vernacular de Thady e incorporando as suas tradições e sua cultura, dando voz à ascendência anglo-irlandesa pelo aparato paratextual sob a voz autoral de Edgeworth; e respondendo antecipadamente aos questionamentos que poderiam surgir na cabeça do

leitor inglês), *Castle Rackrent* permite que distinções significativas convivam em um livro e façam parte de um todo, ainda que este todo seja ambíguo e confuso. Ao possibilitar o convívio das vozes irlandesa, anglo-irlandesa e inglesa no romance, Maria Edgeworth acomoda simultaneamente as diferenças do povo irlandês católico, do povo inglês protestante e da ascendência anglo-irlandesa que é irlandesa e protestante, ou seja, um pouco de cada um e nenhum deles ao mesmo tempo. Sendo um *National Tale* que visa educar o leitor inglês, *Castle Rackrent* promove, portanto, uma possibilidade de união que incorpora a diferença, ao invés de rejeitá-la.

O que é mais inteligível é a identificação da construção de uma espécie de meio-termo que se adequa às duas frentes da solução ideológica apresentada. Foi argumentado anteriormente que a Irlanda da virada do século XVIII para o século XIX se viu diante de uma dupla ameaça: a ameaça de uma rebelião popular e a ameaça da perda de identidade. O meio-termo capaz de impedir a primeira ameaça seria a reforma mais adequada para a realidade de pobreza e violência da Irlanda no fim do século XVIII: não um controle externo por parte do seu irmão-nação, a Inglaterra, mas uma reforma conduzida pelos próprios irlandeses, pela minoria da ascendência anglo-irlandesa mais especificamente. Uma reforma que, oferecendo mais justiça aos camponeses e a emancipação dos católicos, permitiria a estabilização dos ânimos revolucionários na ilha da Irlanda e manteria tanto o *status quo* da ascendência anglo-irlandesa quanto a continuidade da interlocução com o centro do Império Britânico.

O meio-termo que, por sua vez, neutralizaria a ameaça de perda de identidade diante da união da Irlanda com a Grã-Bretanha seria a assimilação (e não a rejeição) dos irlandeses e de suas tradições à nova configuração política do Reino Unido.

Notas

[1] Texto original em língua inglesa: "1782 was also the year that brought legislative independence to Ireland and a sense of renewed hope in the possibility of a strong and dignified national identity for Ireland." (HOWARD, 2007, p. xvi). Todas as citações deste estudo foram traduzidas pela autora. Por isso, com a finalidade de evitar o excesso de repetições, não será mais feita a indicação de "tradução nossa".

[2] "the relationship between tenants and landlords or their agents in Ireland at this time was complicated, and, in general, the customs favored the landlord and sometimes severely disadvantaged the tenant. Sir Murtagh and his lady seem intent on squeezing from their tenants every last duty owed them, be it livestock, work, money, or weeds." (HOWARD, 2007, p. xiv)

[3] "attempts to get out from under the very power structure she critiques, but that, oddly enough, enables

her to speak from a position of power. Her earnest efforts to reconstitute and celebrate Irish culture while simultaneously admonishing the effects of British imperialism have the apparition-like effect of identifying a kind of disembodied Ireland she both claims personally and reclaims culturally as valid" (FAUSKE; KAUFMAN, 2004, p. 14).

[4] "Prescribing assimilation rather than conquest, consensual rule over coercive legislation, the Burkean paradigm for attaching Ireland to England required the development of ideological instruments that would promote these ends, arts of peace rather than of war, of influence instead of domination: in the revolutionary 1790s in Ireland, amidst the struggle for political representation and reform waged largely by and for men, it is perhaps not surprising that such work fell to protestant women. Burke's project finds its ideological home in the feminine cultural sphere of the novel, and especially in the hands of Maria Edgeworth" (CORBETT, 2004, p. 39).

[5] "Castle Rackrent is about lack—lack of sentimental focus, lack of heroic figures, lack of shared cultural experience, and lack of unified perspective and voice to describe it" (HOWARD, 2007, p. xxxiii).

[6] "It is a problem of difficult solution to determine, whether an Union will hasten or retard the melioration of this country" (EDGEWORTH, 2004, p. 64).

[7] "Edgeworth understands Ireland as necessary to an imperial Great Britain, albeit subordinate to it" (CORBETT, 2004, p. 39).

[8] "To win the rulers to an appreciation of those they had unjustly ruled; to make those rulers capable of inspiring the kind of (misplaced) loyalty the Rackrents inspire; to minimize sectarian divisions in the interests of social harmony". (CORBETT, 2004, p. 41)

[9] "In Castle Rackrent, a bridge, or border identity, is achieved by the novel itself: by its combination of Thady's story with the editor's Glossary and notes, which provide an integration of Irish and Anglo sensibilities with the blurring of the generic boundaries" (HOWARD, 2007, p. xxi).

[10] "[...] he declared that the novels of Maria Edgeworth had done more "towards completing the Union, than perhaps all the legislative enactments by which it has been followed up" (SCOTT, apud FERRIS, 2004, pp. 12-13).

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Cinema

ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 123-134.

Intertextualities between Frank Berry's films, I Used to Live Here *(2014) and* Michael Inside *(2017)*

Intertextualidades entre os filmes de Frank Berry I Used to Live Here *(2014) e* Michael Inside *(2017)*

Cecília Adolpho Martins

Abstract: *With the support of John Nicholl's (2001) approach on how to "read" a film, this article discusses the intertextual relations between two films* I Used to Live Here *(2014) and* Michael Inside *(2017), by the filmmaker and producer Frank Berry. These two fictional dramas are set in the suburban north region of Dublin and portray issues such as bullying, loneliness, social exclusion, and suicide. In the 2017 film, the director borrows some filmic elements from the previous movie such as visual and sound codes, the setting, specific scenes, and actors. Using images as signs, as defined by Ferdinand de Saussure, the director makes imagetic appropriations to enhance the construction of space and identity, which brings a strong sense of sequel in "Michael Inside", thereby stimulating examinations concerning its originality. Additionally, this research briefly observes the social function of these two community-oriented films and the director's motivation for the usage of intertextualities. In conclusion, it discusses how Ireland's recent history of rapid globalization has transformed Irish cinema tradition, especially in prison-themed films such as Michael Inside, in which the lines between the local and the global become blurred.*

Keywords: *Irish Film Studies; Appropriation; Post-Celtic Tiger, Social Exclusion.*

Resumo: *Sob a orientação de John Nicholl (2001) sobre como se 'ler' um filme, este artigo discute as relações intertextuais entre dois longa-metragens,* I Used to Live Here *(2014) e* Michael Inside *(2017), do cineasta e produtor Frank Berry. Ambos são dramas fictícios que se passam nos subúrbios do norte de Dublin e retratam questões como bullying, solidão, exclusão social e suicídio. No filme de 2017, o diretor faz uso de alguns elementos fílmicos do filme anterior, como códigos visuais e sonoros: cenário, cenas específicas, música e ator. Através do uso*

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.p123-134
Received: 17/05/2024 Accepted: 04/07/2024

de imagens como signos, conforme definido por Ferdinand de Saussure, o diretor faz apropriações imagéticas para aprofundar a construção de espaço e identidade, o que traz um forte senso de sequência a Michael Inside em relação ao filme anterior, estimulando, assim, debates em relação a sua originalidade. Além disso, esta pesquisa analisa brevemente a função social desses dois filmes voltados para a comunidade e o que motivou o cineasta a fazer uso dessas intertextualidades. Concluindo, este artigo discute como a história recente de rápida globalização da Irlanda transformou a tradição cinematográfica irlandesa, especialmente em filmes sobre prisão, como Michael Inside, em que as linhas entre o 'local' e o 'global' se entrelaçam.

Palavras-chave: *Estudos de cinema irlandês; apropriação; pós-Tigre Celta; exclusão social.*

This article investigates intertextualities, or appropriations, from the film *I used to live here* (2014) to *Michael Inside* (2017), both written and directed by the Irish filmmaker and producer Frank Berry. It aims at exploring how these two realistic fictional dramas relate and how images are used as signs to convey meaning and a sense of sequel. These features share the same setting, similar themes, and most especially the actor, Dafhyd Flynn, who plays a secondary character (Dylan) in the previous film, but is the protagonist (Michael) in *Michael Inside*. Both films take place in Tallaght, a suburban north region of Dublin city and portray issues related to drug consumption, trafficking and bullying. They show social dynamics between young people who have no prospects for life and the disaffected way in which they interact.

Despite sharing the same setting and themes, Dylan and Michael have the same personality traits which brings a strong sense of continuity. *Michael Inside* appropriates much from *I used to live here*, not only in terms of plot but also in the usage of similar cinematic elements. However, the stories are different and although one can be seen as a sequel of the other – they are not. The process of appropriation is never mentioned in any sort of paratext in the beginning of the movie. Consequently, the first questions to be asked to involve the matter of originality: why would Berry borrow so much from his previous work instead of creating something new? Is *Michael Inside* an original film?

It is widely known that the practice of making a film from a text that already exists is as old as cinema itself. In *Palimpsests* (1982 apud Stam, 2000), Gerard Genette argues there is no

text that does not evoke another, so in this sense, all pieces of art are somehow hipertextual. In his transtextual studies, the author classifies all types of relation, secret or manifested, between two texts – the hipotext ("source" or text A) and the hypertext (text B). A palimpsestic analysis of a film allows the audience to play the "game" of searching in the text its pre-texts. Most importantly, Genette raised the awareness that any hypertext can be read in relation to the "source" or in relation to itself. We must, then, ask ourselves how much the audience loses if they do not know, or do not consider, hipotexts in a film analysis.

If we perceive films as social texts that combine visual, verbal, and sound codes and conventions to create meaning, many aspects can be adapted or appropriated from one movie to another. According to Julie Sanders (2008, p.18), when one has the knowledge of the "source", there are a series of phenomena that might be explored as: allusions, analogies, bricolage, quotations, continuations, hybridizations, imitations, parodies, pastiches, replicas, revisions, versions – each of these have different functions. Therefore, while adaptations signal relationships to the source, appropriations do not always clearly address or recognize the hypotext. Sanders emphasizes that appropriation differs from adaptation mainly because it is less evident, and especially because parts of the hypotexts are embedded in a new product that might be in the same genre.

However, before trying to look for appropriation phenomena from one film to another, we must look carefully at how movies are made and the way they tell stories. Since motion pictures have arisen as a storytelling art, filmmakers have developed a system of signs and images called visual language, in Nicholl's words: "a way of creating meaning through visual images" (2003, p.15). The author argues that camera codes (as types of shots, angles, frame spaces), temporal codes (suggestions of passage of time as dissolves, fades, cuts, titles), lighting codes (three-point light, front lit, side lit, back lit), sound codes (diegetic and non-diegetic music, voices, sound effects), and other codes, are used in certain ways in different film genres.

These elements mentioned above are keys to tell stories because they feature types of conventions that carry meaning and trigger feelings in the audience. To play the "game" of finding pre-texts in a text, in this instance a movie inside a movie, one has to learn how to read a visual language the same way one has learned how to read a play or a novel. However, to explore intertextualities between the two films, first it is necessary to bring to light important aspects of the hypotext, or the source, which *Michael Inside appropriates*.

I used to live here was inspired in "Breaking the ripple effects of suicide" (2011) by Dr. Tony Bates,[1] an article which speculates about suicide clusters that happened among teenagers in Tallaght. It explains how a suicide may lead to other suicides among youngsters, especially the ones who suffer from social problems as exclusion and bullying. Although the story pictures some days of the life of the protagonist Amy (Jordanne Jones), showing her motivations to commit suicide, the theme of contagion also appears in the subplot of her friends Joe (Richard Price) and Dylan (Dafhyd Flynn). The topic is presented in the beginning of the film when Joe throws himself off an overpass after his brother's death. Joe's passing has a great impact on Amy, who starts flirting with the idea of doing the same. Dylan did not know Joe, but his suicide affects him too.

Dylan is different from the other boys, not physically, but some characters call him weird for being too quiet. He is a victim of physical, psychological, and material bullying at school and his situation worsens throughout the film. In the beginning of the movie, Dylan is suspended from school for fighting, he is afraid of going back to classes because he is being bullied by two gangs. However, he refuses to seek help from his parents or from the school authorities. Seeing no way out from his condition, in the end of the movie Dylan goes to the same overpass where Joe killed himself and then there is an extreme close up of his face. This is the last scene, so the audience does not know if the boy actually jumps from the overpass as Joe did.

On the other hand, the main theme in *Michael Inside* is the representation of an introverted and naive eighteen-year-old who gets arrested twice, first for hiding drugs for a friend at his house, then for a vicious assault. The film pictures how incarcerated adults interact, and how they use an intimidation system to demonstrate power and to get what they want. By presenting violence and the systematic persecution among prisoners, it also shows how Michael's experience in jail changes his identity, and how it socially affects him after he leaves prison.

Dylan and Michael are targets of bullying and are socially excluded. Despite having a quiet appearance, the characters are enduring deep suffering and isolation so there are many scenes that focus on their expressions. Close-ups and extreme close-ups are often used because the characters do not talk much, especially about their emotional state. According to Nicholl (2001), the observing of facial expressions "is inviting us to get into the mind of the character and to identify with what he or she is thinking or feeling" (Nicholl, 2001, p.16). Dylan's and

Michael's suffering are expressed by the actor's internalized-performances and not by what they say. For instance, in *I used to live here*, Dylan is on the overpass, there is an extreme close-up of his face that lasts 80 seconds. While one can see he is grieving, the volume of the instrumental music gradually increases and becomes intense, then there is a dry cut. This is the last scene of the film.

Throughout the two movies, the actor's expressions vary from preoccupation and sadness to despair. The realism in the representation of Dylan's and Michael's isolation is also constructed in a similar way in both movies. Dylan and Michael are often shot through unique mid-shots, in which the characters are by themselves with a side lit to project shadows that suggest a bleak side of their inner state.

Another recurring type of shot in both films is the framing of characters by the back of their heads, when they walk alone roving the streets of Tallaght without a clear direction. These scenes illustrate the teenagers' lack of perspective on life and loneliness. According to Ged Murray (2015), in *I used to live here,* their unfriendliness is also "punctuated by a lot of shots of the backs of people's heads wandering aimlessly around Dublin's suburbs" (XX). The disaffected way these young people interact is remarkable in both movies: they get together on the streets, but there is little communication between them. Most of their dialogues are short and marked by silence about sharing marijuana and alcohol, or based on intimidation.

The great amount of back of the head angle shots and extreme close ups are techniques that, when applied on the same actor, in the same setting, brings that sense of watching the same film. Besides that, the score of both films are very alike – an instrumental tense and melancholic music that is sparse but very significant for being associated with moments of emotional charge. Created by musician and composer Daragh O'Toole especially for the two films, the score evokes the psychological state of the characters as it adds a dark tone to the movies. But in both, despite the predominance of silence, diegetic sounds (which try to convince the audience of the reality of the scene) are quite audible.

The soundtracks emphasize daily noises, especially the sound of the traffic on the road below the overpass where a youngster committed suicide in the first movie. There, the traffic noise is intense because it is an important location. Not by chance, the image of the overpass appears in *Michael Inside* a few days before Michael is arrested for the first time. Michael walks through it and stops to see the cars passing by on the road with his fingers intertwined in the guardrails. This scene echoes a recurring one in *I used to live here*, when Amy is shot from a

back angle staring at the traffic below in the beginning and in the end of the film. The camera changes focus from Amy's hand in the protection gate to the cars on the road (see screenshots 1 and 2); the same technique is applied in *Michael Inside* (see screenshots 3 and 4):

Image 1: Back of Amy's head.

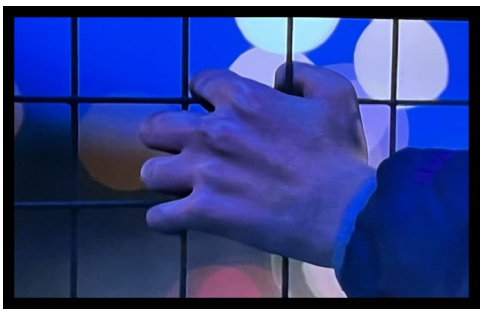

Image 2: Amy's hand.

Image 3: Michael's view from the overpass.

Image 4: Michael's hand.

This sequence of images of Michael on the overpass, through the changing of background and foreground focuses, becomes an important symbol in *Michael Inside*.

Nicholl (2001) states that if we interpret images and their implications as signs, as defined by Ferdinand de Saussure, we will notice that a sign has a given meaning which is influenced by the culture that created it. Signs carry meanings within social and cultural contexts, thus images as signs can be read in a denotative or in a connotative level. In a denotative level, not much can be said about a given image or photography of a film, as one will describe what is there to see. However, the connotative level brings "a personal response which depends on our personal background and so is open to other possible interpretations or criticism" (Nicholl 12). It can be stated that visual signs are symbols that allow different subjective readings of a film.

The overpass is an image that carries meaning in a connotative level, but the meaning of being there can only be perceived for those who have seen *I Used to Live Here*. When Michael stops there and looks at the view, he knows there is a high chance he will be arrested and his life will change dramatically. Of course, it is impossible to know if the character is considering jumping, but the possibility to end suffering that way is a path that some teenagers have taken. According to Dr. Bates [2] (2015), when a young person commits suicide in a community, it sets an example of an exit for their suffering, and that is how contagion spreads. He explains how everyone in a community is interconnected and interdependent, even if they feel alone or "living in a parallel world". The audience who knows *I Used to Live Here* also knows that the idea of taking his own life on that spot is a possibility for Michael. Nevertheless, after being shot standing there by other camera angles, the protagonist walks through it and faces his trial.

It was observed that the usage of the overpass as a symbol enhances meaning and stimulates the audience's imagination. In realistic films, what the director chooses to picture, and how it is shown, reflects socio-cultural and political backgrounds. As in a photograph that captures a certain angle of an image, realistic cinema, as defined by Sigfried Kracauer (1960 apud Andrew, 2002), shows different angles of how relations of space and identity are articulated. In *I used to live here* and *Michael Inside*, the filmmaker sought maximum authenticity to illustrate the circumstances in which young people are inserted to represent them psychologically. Berry brings a realistic register of how some socially excluded and marginalized identities are related to that place.

As Berry said in an interview[3] (2015) that his inspiration comes from relevant themes that need transformation, and the idea was to put on-screen real-life experiences. To achieve that, in *I used to live here,* he spent two years in the community center of Killinarden having conversations with teenagers and adults and also with Dr. Bates. The film was part of a community project and it was starred by an amateur cast from Killinarden community theatre group. The script was written by Berry along these teenagers and some of Dr. Bates' patients. According to Berry, the movie is not based on any real story, but an extra on the DVD says that suicide clusters really happened in Tallaght and there was a need to talk about that and break the taboo. When the director was in contact with the teenagers in this community, he noticed that many of them had no life prospects, they were surrounded by criminality and very disengaged with prosperity. Many of these teenagers end up in prison, just as Michael, because they are naive and can easily get involved in doing small favors to large chains of criminals.

In *Michael Inside*, to take an authentic look at Michael's experience, the director researched with former prisoners from *Path Ways*, a Programme in Ireland for continuing the education of people who get out of jails. All the cast playing the prisoners were former prisoners from this Programme. Berry spent time with them to write the script and with this partnership, he was able to draw real situations that occur inside the prison as bullying or holding something for someone in a higher status so this person will not get caught in a search. According to the director, to work with former convicts to write the script, and as a cast, brought a great sense of reality to the film.

In *I used to live here* and *Michael Inside,* Berry's interest in portraying socially excluded and vulnerable individuals connects to style – filming in low-fi digital format (Tracy 318). Both narratives are constructed through sequences of segmented actions linked through dry cuts. The movies' aesthetic tends towards minimalism and the films share features such as long and uncomfortable moments of silence, especially when young people are gathered.

The sharing of identical cinematic techniques mentioned as camera angles, shot types, music, side lit, and other elements, brings the sense that we are watching a sequel of the same movie. Moreover, Dylan and Michael live in the same neighborhood, share similar problems and have the same face; consequently, they seem to be the same person. The matter of originality and appropriation was brought to the director in interviews and he was asked: why to expand the story of a boy like Dylan instead of creating an original one?

Berry argues that he chose the actor Dafhyd Flynn to star as Michael because it would be easier for the audience to connect with Michael once they have known Dylan. They are very introverted and have many things in common so Michael could easily be Dylan a bit older. Hence, in spite of not being a proper sequel, it could have been. Berry also revealed that the idea to make *Michael Inside* came in the middle of shooting *I used to live here* and it borrows a lot from it. He wanted to represent what happens to boys like Dylan when they get older, picturing the collateral effects of criminality upon the young people, on the vulnerable, to use his words, on "the pressionable".

On a deeper level, it can be stated that *Michael Inside* is not about drug trafficking itself, nor about prison, but how his experiences in jail affects his life and personality, leading him to his second arrestment. In the interview mentioned, Berry also commented on the pun in the title: Michael inside the prison, and how he feels inside. Michael has to learn how to use intimidation to survive; how to use violence to avoid being beaten up and abused. On the

other hand, it can be affirmed that *I used to live here* is not a film about suicide itself, but rather about isolation among young people and the suffering on the living. In *I used to live here*, Berry focuses on those teenagers' subjectivities, representing the feeling of isolation they share, which is real not just in Ireland but in other cultures as well.

Despite all similarities in plot and on representation, both films have other less obvious coincidences in theme that can be explored such as the absence of religious and family ties. Both protagonists do not have their mothers, and church or God is never mentioned throughout the stories. The absence of the mother figure and the Catholic church, traditionally portrayed as the foundation of Irish society, shows the director's intention to present the lack of structure of a post-modern country. It is interesting to notice that there is not a single sign of religiosity in the scenery, not even a cross on a wall.

Frank Berry is well-known for portraying local issues and the idea of listening to his community to make movies is a mark of Berry's work. He became famous in Ireland in 2011, when he wrote and directed the documentary *Ballymun Lullaby*, which was acclaimed by critics for his capacity of bringing a different perspective of the district. Instead of picturing Ballymun's drug trafficking problems – violence and poverty – the director decided to portray the willingness of the people who fight to bring a sense of community to the place. In this documentary, he showed the efforts of a local music teacher to set up a Music Programme and create the choir of the children of Ballymun.

In his last film, *Aisha* (2022), Berry exposes the experiences of a young Nigerian woman who seeks protection in Ireland. The movie presents the refugee crisis, and the endless suffering and liminality of those seeking asylum in the country. Aisha has been trapped for years in Ireland's immigration system, where she is moved from place to place and has to attend hearings in which she must repeat her terrible story to unsympathetic workers. She develops a close friendship with a former prisoner whom she meets at one of the inhumane accommodation centres of Direct Provision.

As we can see, the director's authored-movies entangle multiple realities of marginalized identities, revealing a commitment to give a cinematic voice to lower-income communities. His work portrays local issues of a globalized Dublin, picturing excluded individuals in Irish society and their experience of loneliness, social exclusion, and alienation. Lance Pettitt (2010) argues that films that give voice to local issues, through worldwide paradigms, have been increasing lately in Ireland. As Frank Berry, many contemporary Irish filmmakers, as Leonard

Abrahamsom and Gerard Barrett, have been illustrating how the country has changed in the last two decades.

It is well-known that in Irish cinema if we consider that the artistic representation of individuals who experience exclusion and marginalization has been a topic in Irish literature since the colonial period. Themes associated with social exclusion, suicide, and prison are not groundbreaking, but they carry a temporal perspective and have become current subjects as realistic films explore more universal topics. The sociological concepts of exclusion and marginality are broad and they oscillate not only in place, culture, society, and nationality, but also in time (Argaiz, 2016). Irish contemporary realistic cinema shows a different perspective of the excluded as filmmakers represent topics related to globalization, crisis of identity, and how the changes brought by progress has led to more marginalization and social exclusion.

In *Michael Inside*, Berry offered an updated perspective on the prison subject as it is associated to drug trafficking. Irish prison drama movies were a common topic in the Republic and in Northern Ireland filmography in the 20th century. Traditionally, Ireland's national cinema represented much of the country's political history as the wars of independence, the IRA and the Troubles. Nonetheless, after the Peace Processes signed in the Good Friday Agreement the 1998 (Sheridan, 2013), and the economic boom of the Celtic Tiger in the mid-2000s, the nature of Irish filmic production started to change. By 2010, more than seventy percent of arrests in Ireland were related to drug abuse and traffic (Dyas and Keogh, 2018).

According to Ruth Barton (2002), with the country's transformations, realistic contemporary movies began to spotlight less on political collective matters and more on universal anxieties and subjectivities, reaching markets overseas. Frank Berry's community-oriented films have achieved global market and have attained worldwide acclaim and awards because it connects to universal matters. As *Michael Inside*, the prison movies *Cardboard Gangsters* (Mark O'Connor, 2017) and *Broken Law* (Paddy Slattery, 2020) deal with the Irish jail's new contexts of the twenty first century, and they also found international audiences.

It can be observed that Berry aspires to make movies in response to what is happening to Dublin's citizens now. Thus, he transposes reality by creating a new reality and the observation of this new reality stimulates the public to think, generating a more critical view of reality. Realistic cinema has the power to create deep reflections and "the fact that films are only representation does not prevent them from having real effects in the world" (Shohat;

Stam 178). Berry cuts out facts from his country that need to be understood in order to "free" them, using his ability in the seventh art as a potent instrument for creating awareness and introspection.

To sum up, Berry uses some cinematic elements of *I used to live here* in *Michael Inside* as a strategy to broaden meaning, making conscious use of allusions to enrich the story. This conscious self-referentiality, or appropriation, is a common feature of cinema, in which the filmmakers use their own work and existing discourses as a repository from which to draw. As a storytelling art, films borrow heavily from widespread literary traditions, customs, and social relations to build meaning, thus contributing to the formation of a country's cultural imaginary.

Notes

[1] Dr. Tony Bates is founder of Headstrong, The National Centre for Youth Mental Health in Ireland. His article argues on the evidence of the spread of suicides and suicidal behavior among young people after the suicide of a friend, family member or person of the same community. According to Dr. Bates, this phenomenon is called contagion and might occur mostly between teenagers and young adults with social issues. It is available on: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/health/breaking-the-ripple-effects-of-suicide-1.590289>

[2] The DVD of *I used to live here* brings an extra of a conversation Dr. Tony Bates in which he clarifies some points of his article.

[3] This interview was found on *Dublin Called*, a YouTube channel which aims to interview different people, those who have done something unusual, who have a gift, or who just get by through life's adversities. Interviewer: Orla O'Driscoll.

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ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 137-151.

"There was no God for her or the other poor people": Hunger in Liam O'Flaherty and Graciliano Ramos

"Não havia Deus para ela nem para os outros pobres": A fome em Liam O'Flaherty e Graciliano Ramos

Camila Franco Batista

Abstract: *This paper aims to perform a comparative study of the representation of hunger in Liam O'Flaherty's* Famine *(1937) and Graciliano Ramos's* Vidas Secas *(1938). The first novel, published in Ireland, takes place during the Great Irish Famine (1845-1852), in which about one million people died. The second novel, published in Brazil, is set in an undetermined Brazilian region where drought induces hunger and rural exodus. The works, although published in different countries, present similarities and differences in the representation of hunger, especially the period of publication, the narrators' position, and the abjection of the hungry body (Kristeva, 1982). While Vidas Secas adopts an objective narrative, highlighting the protagonists' lack of communication and rusticity, Famine takes an engaged perspective, holding governmental and religious entities responsible for the tragedy. Both works underscore the vulnerability of the poor in the face of repressive forces from dominant classes, emphasizing resistance as the only weapon of the underprivileged. Beyond physical hunger, the novels emphasize the need for political, social, and cultural nourishment for the disadvantaged, illustrating that oppression not only results in material deprivations but also in social exclusion that silences and disempowers the less fortunate.*

Keywords: *Liam O'Flaherty; Graciliano Ramos; Comparative literature; Hunger.*

Resumo: *Este artigo tem como objetivo realizar um estudo comparativo da representação da fome em* Famine*, de Liam O'Flaherty (1937), e* Vidas secas*, de Graciliano Ramos (1938). O primeiro romance, publicado na Irlanda, se passa durante a Grande Fome (1845-1852), na qual cerca de um milhão de pessoas*

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.p137-151
Received: 22/04/2024 Accepted: 01/07/2024

morreram. O segundo romance, publicado no Brasil, se passa em uma região brasileira não especificada onde a seca induz à fome e ao êxodo rural. As obras, apesar de publicadas em países diferentes, apresentam semelhanças e diferenças na representação da fome, especialmente quanto ao período de publicação, à posição dos narradores e à abjeção do corpo faminto (Kristeva, 1982). Enquanto Vidas secas adota uma narrativa objetiva, destacando a falta de comunicação e a rusticidade dos protagonistas, Famine adota uma perspectiva engajada, responsabilizando entidades governamentais e religiosas pela tragédia. Ambas as obras destacam a vulnerabilidade dos pobres diante das forças repressivas das classes dominantes, enfatizando a resistência como única arma dos menos privilegiados. Além da fome física, os romances enfatizam a necessidade de alimentação política, social e cultural para os desfavorecidos, ilustrando que a opressão não resulta apenas em privações materiais, mas também em uma exclusão social que silencia e desempodera os pobres.

Palavras-chave: *Liam O'Flaherty; Graciliano Ramos; Literatura comparada; Fome.*

In his influential work *A Geografia da Fome* [*The Geography of Hunger*] (1968), Josué de Castro (1908-1973) delineates hunger as a pervasive phenomenon with global ramifications, impacting all continents. Castro posits hunger as a manifestation of societal maladies, asserting it to be the "biological expression of sociological ills" (Castro, p. 5, my translation). This characterization elucidates hunger as an outcome of intricate social and economic factors, notably influencing food distribution mechanisms and the purchasing power of communities.

The universality of hunger as a motif pervades world literature. As argued by Delville and Norris (2017), hunger emerges as a narrative trope that challenges entrenched Western ideologies, including the conception of the autonomous body, capitalist consumption paradigms, and immediate stimuli. Within literary discourse, hunger transcends its mere physiological implications to become a potent instrument of protest, with the hunger-stricken body symbolizing acts of ideological defiance (Delville and Norris, p. 2).

Hunger emerges as a recurrent motif within the literary landscapes of both Ireland and Brazil. In Ireland, the historical backdrop of the Great Famine (1845-1852) has inspired a plethora of historical novels since the twentieth century. Similarly, in Brazil, the cyclic

occurrences of hunger, often intertwined with drought periods in the North and Northeast regions, have served as fertile ground for fictional exploration since the nineteenth century.

This article endeavors to conduct a comparative examination of hunger's thematic reconfiguration in two seminal novels: *Famine* (1937), by the Irish author Liam O'Flaherty (1896-1984), and *Vidas Secas* (1938), by the Brazilian writer Graciliano Ramos (1892-1953).[1] O'Flaherty's novel unfolds as a historical narrative set amidst the Great Famine of the nineteenth century, focusing on the trials of the Kilmartin family, native to the fictitious village of Black Valley in Western Ireland. The Kilmartins, smallholders whose meager plot of land is leased from an Anglo-Irish landlord, find themselves ensnared in a web of destitution when their potato harvest succumbs to blight. Subsequently, they and their compatriots are thrust into dire straits, grappling with the inadequacies of public relief measures and the callousness of the ruling elite. *Famine* stands as O'Flaherty's masterpiece, acclaimed by literary scholars as his most eminent work (Sheeran, 1976).

In contrast, *Vidas Secas* unfolds as a narrative chronicling the plight of a family of Northeastern migrants, comprised of Fabiano, Sinhá Vitória, their two sons - simply called Older Boy and Younger Boy - and their faithful canine companion, Baleia. The novel refrains from specifying the temporal setting or geographic locale, thereby capturing the cyclical oscillations between drought-induced scarcity and intermittent abundance endemic to the Brazilian hinterlands. Anchored within the "Romance de 30" [Novels from the 30s] movement, characterized by its unfiltered portrayal of reality, *Vidas Secas* epitomizes a raw and unflinching scrutiny of societal conditions, aiming to incite critical introspection among its readership (Bosi, p. 416). Graciliano Ramos's masterpiece stands as a cornerstone of the Brazilian literary canon, engaging scholars and enthusiasts alike in ongoing literary debate since its inception.

This article employs thematology analysis as its methodological framework. Published with a one-year interval between them, the novels under examination exhibit a plethora of intersecting and diverging thematic trajectories in their depiction of hunger. These include the temporal context of publication, narrative perspective, and, significantly, the portrayal of abjection. Consequently, the study endeavors to dissect these thematic strands across both literary works, employing selected textual excerpts as analytical focal points.

A critical period: the years 1937 in Ireland and 1938 in Brazil

The publication of *Famine* and *Vidas Secas* coincides with periods of profound crisis both domestically and globally, emblematic of the tumultuous socio-political milieu prevalent during the 1930s. The epoch is characterized by the reverberations of the Great Depression and the looming specter of the Second World War, casting a pall over the global economic landscape.

In Brazil, the year 1937 heralded the advent of the Estado Novo regime under Getúlio Vargas (1882-1954), an authoritarian dispensation that persevered until 1945. Concurrently, 1938 witnessed the grisly denouement of Lampião and his cohort, their execution and public display of their severed heads in Sergipe marking a watershed moment in Brazilian history.

Brazil and Ireland both grapple with agrarian economies during this period, albeit with different development trajectories. Brazil's industrialization prompts significant migration from rural areas to urban centers, leading to urbanization. Conversely, Ireland, in its early stages as an independent nation, faces poverty and high unemployment (Barry and Daly, 2011) resulting in waves of Irish emigrants seeking better opportunities in distant countries such as the United States, England, Australia, and Canada.

During this epoch, world literature assumes a resolute stance of condemnation towards prevailing social maladies. In Brazil, the advent of the neorealist novel signals a pronounced shift towards the portrayal of the "common man" (*uomo qualunque*), a figure who epitomizes the ordinary populace and grapples with both internal strife and external adversities. As delineated by Alfredo Bosi,

> The "raw" or "brutal" character of this new realism of the twentieth century corresponds to the level of effects that its prose aims to produce in the reader: it is a novel that analyzes, assaults, and protests. To achieve this goal, however, an entire reorganization of narrative language was necessary, giving the realism of Faulkner, Céline, or Graciliano Ramos a profoundly original aesthetic appearance. (Bosi 416, my translation)

Throughout this era, the novel emerges as a poignant vehicle for interrogating the recent societal transformations and their reverberations on interpersonal dynamics. This sentiment finds resonance in *Famine*, a neorealist historical novel characterized by its vehement tone of indictment. O'Flaherty's narrative stands in stark opposition to the romanticized ethos of the Gaelic Renaissance, eschewing idealized portrayals of the Irish peasant in favor

of a mode characterized by what Seamus Deane terms "vindictive realism" and "wild naturalism" (Foster 156). Post-Civil War (1921-1923) Irish fiction similarly repudiates the tenets of romantic nationalism, foregrounding instead the inherent violence underpinning nationalist ideologies within the political and cultural spheres (Vance, 2006). The narrator's critiques in *Famine* can be considered reflections of the author's own perspective, with O'Flaherty attributing culpability for the Great Famine to a nexus of actors including the British Government, local authorities, rapacious merchants, and the Catholic Church (Mikowski 150).

Similarly, the "Romance de 30" movement, epitomized by works such as *Vidas Secas*, imbues its protagonists with a palpable sense of existential unease amidst the confluence of natural and societal forces. According to Bosi, these novels exemplify a genre characterized by critical tension, wherein the hero grapples with the relentless onslaught of social and environmental pressures (430). Graciliano Ramos crafts characters who embody a profound sense of anguish, emblematic of the pervasive oppression filling their experiences. Ramos's narrative prowess lies in his adept portrayal of humanity's profound sense of displacement within its milieu, with the language of his novels serving as a conduit for elucidating the ruptures between man and environment, bespeaking a palpable discontinuity (Bosi 431).

In *Famine*, the narrative foregrounds the palpable conflict between individual agency and societal constraints. As noted by Patrick F. Sheehan (1976), O'Flaherty's thematic preoccupation centers on the perennial struggle between the ostensibly boundless potential of humanity and the harsh, unyielding realities imposed by political, economic, and social forces, which precipitated the cataclysmic events of the Great Famine. The narrator assumes the mantle of an accuser, positioning himself as a vigilant arbiter intent on laying bare the manifold injustices pervading society.

Voices of hunger: the narrators of Ramos and O'Flaherty

Graciliano Ramos published Vidas *Secas* as a series of individual short stories, intermittently, throughout 1938. Ramos began this literary project shortly after his release from a ten-month period of incarceration in 1937, following charges of subversive conduct, although without formal indictment. The novel's structure, often described by critics as a "disassembled novel," consists of standalone chapters, capable of being consumed in any sequence.[2] Nonetheless,

Antonio Candido contends that *Vidas Secas* embodies a cohesive narrative thread akin to a "composition in rosary," wherein the episodic vignettes are intrinsically interconnected, forming an indissoluble narrative continuum (Bueno 649). Luís Bueno further elucidates this notion, underscoring the palpable impression of unity pervading the work, despite the absence of contiguous chapter sequences. Bueno posits that while the chapters lack contiguous coherence, they maintain a thematic continuity, thereby ensuring narrative cohesion (649).

Notably, *Vidas Secas* stands as Ramos's sole exploration of third-person narration. The narrator maintains a dispassionate stance akin to a documentary filmmaker, avoiding emotional involvement with the characters in favor of a minimalist narrative approach focused solely on essential elements. Through the selective use of visual imagery, including vivid descriptions of colors, fauna, and flora, the narrator constructs the arid expanse of the novel's setting, alternating between panoramic vistas and intimate close-ups to evoke the desolate beauty of the dry landscape:

> The jujube trees spread in two green stains across the reddish plain. The drought victims had been walking all day; they were tired and hungry. Generally they did not get very far, but after a long rest on the sands of the riverbed they had gone a good three leagues. For hours now they had been looking for some sign of shade. The foliage of the jujubes loomed in the distance, through the bare twigs of the sparse brush. . . . The brushland stretched in every direction, its vaguely reddish hue broken only by white heaps of dry bones. Vultures flew in black circles over dying animals. (*Vidas secas*, 4, my emphasis)

The use of colors in the passage authentically portrays the landscape, presenting vibrant hues without intermediate shades, thus accentuating the intense sun. The plain is described as "reddish," with patches of "vaguely reddish hue," interspersed with "sparse" vegetation marked by vivid "green stains," and punctuated by skeletal remnants that appear as stark "white heaps." This depiction, mirroring the landscape itself, avoids ambiguity, emphasizing the harshness of the environment with clear precision. Additionally, the dry riverbed and circling vultures, whose "black circles" foreshadow further death from the ongoing drought, adds to the tableau of desolation. The narrative description mirrors the aridity of the scene, avoiding unnecessary embellishments in favor of stark realism.

In *Vidas Secas*, the omniscient narrator assumes a multifaceted perspective, scrutinizing each character's thoughts and emotions, thereby crafting an immersive "expressive inner

universe" for all (Candido 149). According to Candido, the narrator eschews the role of a mere mimetic interpreter, instead adopting the posture of a detached "prosecutor" determined to maintain a requisite distance, thereby fostering an aura of objectivity in his indictments.

The utilization of a multiple omniscient narrator in *Vidas Secas* may be attributed, in part, to the illiteracy prevalent within Fabiano's family and their consequent restricted vocabulary. Unlike a typical first-person or limited third-person narrative, the omniscient narrator abstains from directly reproducing the characters' speech patterns and interventions, thereby maintaining a level of detachment. Instances where the narrator does intervene, such as in the critique of Fabiano's attempts at expression, underscore the characters' linguistic limitations and rusticity (*Vidas Secas*, 65). Indeed, the characters' taciturnity serves as a poignant marker of their rustic existence, with the narrative suggesting that their capacity for verbal expression is severely constrained (Candido 145-146). The children, for instance, communicate primarily through grunts and sparse vocabulary, a reflection of their rudimentary linguistic proficiency. The narrator underscores this by likening their vocabulary to that of the family's parrot, which, devoid of utility, is ultimately sacrificed for sustenance: "[Sinhá Vitória] justified the act by telling herself the bird was quite useless––it didn't even talk. That wasn't its fault. The family was normally one of few words" (*Vidas Secas*, 6).

Similarly, in *Famine* a third-person narrative mode predominates, foregrounding vivid scene-setting and sensory descriptions. Natural phenomena, colors, odors, and sounds assume paramount importance within the narrative tapestry. For instance, the arrival of the devastating blight that ravages the potato crops is depicted with meticulous detail:

> . . . A rumour got abroad that the *blight* had struck in the County Cork. Would it come this far? Every day, they anxiously inspected the crop. But the days passed without any sign of the evil. The potatoes that were dug for food still remained wholesome. It promised to be a miraculous crop. Even Mary began to take courage. And then, on the fifteenth of July, the bolt felt from the heavens. When old Kilmartin came into his yard shortly after dawn on that day, he looked up the Valley and saw a *white cloud* standing above the Black Lake. It was like a great mound of snow, hanging by an invisible chain, above the mountain peaks. It was *dazzling white* in the glare of the rising sun. . . . Gradually, a *sulfurous stench* affected the senses of those who watched. (*Famine,* 290, my emphasis)

In *Famine*, analogous to *Vidas Secas*, the narrative palette avoids intermediary shades, favoring stark depictions of natural phenomena. The onset of the potato fungus is described as a menacing "white cloud" enveloping the valley, staining the foliage of the plantations with a somber brown hue, ultimately resulting in the putrefaction of the tubers and emanation of a noxious "sulfurous stench." While both novels evoke an atmosphere of oppressive nature, in *Famine*, it is the relentless and torrential rain rather than drought that portends ominous times.

The narrator of *Famine* assumes the task of delineating the profound helplessness pervading the populace, employing indirect discourse to delve into the characters' innermost thoughts and direct discourse to convey their spoken words. The characters, hailing from a larger community compared to the isolated family in *Vidas Secas*, exhibit a more varied vocabulary reflective of their diverse backgrounds and experiences. Furthermore, the narrative imbues the characters with vernacular expressions, snippets of Gaelic, and constructions of standard language, underscoring the multifaceted linguistic milieu of the community (Foster, 2008). Unlike the constrained vocabulary of the illiterate family in *Vidas Secas*, the characters in *Famine* possess a more expansive lexicon, enabling them to articulate the multifaceted impacts of hunger and societal upheaval.

In *Famine*, in stark contrast to the narrative style of *Vidas Secas*, the narrator assumes a more overtly interventionist stance, frequently interjecting with commentary on the prevailing historical milieu and casting blame upon those deemed culpable for the unfolding catastrophe. This marked intervention is exemplified in the following passage:

> When government is an expression of the people's will, a menace to any section of the community rouses the authorities to protective action. Under a tyranny, the only active forces of government are those of coercion. Unless the interests of the ruling class are threatened, authority remains indifferent. We have seen how the feudal government acted with brutal force when the interests of the landowner were threatened, even to the extent of plundering the poor people's property. Now it remains to be seen what that same government did when those poor lost, by the act of God, all that was left to them by the police and Mr. Chadwick - the potato crop which they had sown. (*Famine*, 311)

In *Famine*, the narrator assumes an actively engaged role, akin to a "*compagnon de route*" as characterized by Duarte (2018), aligning sympathetically with the oppressed and fervently

denouncing the societal inequities that precipitated the famine. Through various interjections, the narrator unreservedly lays blame at the feet of entities such as the British government, the Catholic Church, Anglo-Irish landlords, and rapacious local merchants for their complicity in the unfolding catastrophe. This interventionist narrative stance positions the narrator as a vanguard of the proletariat, wielding the power of speech to articulate political grievances on behalf of the marginalized (Duarte, 2018).

While both *Vidas Secas* and *Famine* center on impoverished protagonists, their respective third-person narrators maintain differing degrees of narrative distance. In *Vidas Secas* the narrator adopts a stance of aloof detachment, whereas in *Famine*, this distance fluctuates, at times drawing closer to the characters' experiences and at others adopting a more distanced perspective. Graciliano Ramos presents the poor migrant as perpetually enigmatic and inscrutable, symbolizing the "otherness" inherent in their marginalized existence (Bueno 21). Conversely, Liam O'Flaherty's portrayal of the Irish small farmer aligns them as comrades-in-arms, united by their shared social class and collective struggle for recognition. Ramos's work epitomizes the prevailing ethos of the Brazilian "Romance de 30," which champions the proletarian poor as its central protagonists and enlists the intellectual narrator as a vociferous advocate for social justice. Conversely, *Famine* emerges as a reaction against the romantic nationalism propagated by the Gaelic Renaissance, which valorized the Irish peasant as the embodiment of national identity. The political inclinations of the narrator in *Famine* veer decidedly socialist, echoing sentiments articulated by figures such as James Connolly, who attributed blame for the Great Famine squarely on England's doorstep (Connolly, 1910).

Abjection in *Vidas Secas* and *Famine*

Both novels illustrate that beyond the basic need for physical sustenance, there exists a profound requirement for political, social, and cultural nourishment. Oppression not only results in literal hunger but also generates social hunger, depriving the impoverished of voice and agency. Hunger renders both physical and social bodies abject, signifying their rejection and exclusion from societal norms.

Drawing from Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection (1982), it can be understood as the process through which individuals construct their subjectivity by establishing boundaries between the "self" and the "Other," thereby rejecting elements perceived as threatening to

these boundaries. These elements include bodily fluids, excrement, corpses, and dirt, which cease to be considered part of the "self" and become relegated to the realm of the "other." Consequently, food, crucial for sustenance and survival, can become associated with abjection when it symbolizes the body's decay and impending death.

In this context, the hungry body assumes an abject status, symbolizing the potential for death and decomposition. It is perceived as contaminating life, embodying the existential threat posed by hunger. Through Kristeva's lens, the novels elucidate the multifaceted dimensions of hunger, transcending its physiological manifestations to encompass broader implications for individual subjectivity and societal marginalization (Kristeva, p.4).

The narratives of *Vidas Secas* and *Famine* are deeply marked by the specter of death as hunger reaches its most dire stages. In Graciliano Ramos's work, the depiction of the migrants' bodies evokes a sense of distance between the narrator and the characters. The bodies of the migrants are portrayed as contorted, hardened, and weather-beaten, exemplified by Fabiano's description as someone who "leaned first to one side and then to the other in an ugly, lopsided twist" (*Vidas Secas*, 16). The narrator accentuates the characters' disheveled appearance, highlighting their soiled and tattered clothing, as well as the wounds inflicted by the arduous journey in search of sanctuary:

> The dark spots of the jujube trees reappeared. Fabiano's step grew lighter; he forgot hunger, weariness, and sores. His rope sandals were worn at the heel; the fiber thongs had made painful cracks between his toes; the skin of his heels, though hard as a hoof, had split and was bleeding (*Vidas Secas*, 12).

The portrayal of the characters' bodies as abject in *Vidas Secas* signifies a disruption of established notions of order, as posited by Kristeva (8). The descriptions of burnt and wounded skin, along with contorted limbs, serve to delineate these bodies as "other," requiring their rejection for the establishment of a coherent "self." Even seemingly mundane details such as the characters' clothing, described as "short and tight, and showed much patching" (*Vidas Secas*, 72), underscore the absurdity of their existence within the narrator's perspective, further emphasizing their displacement from the narrative space.

According to Kristeva, abjection stems not from "lack of cleanliness or health ... but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules" (8). The characters in *Vidas Secas* are depicted as abject to symbolize the erosion of subjectivity and the pervasive systems of oppression they endure. Fabiano, for instance, is dehumanized as he

is reduced to something else: "he would always be just what he was now, a *half-breed*, ordered around by gentry, little more than a piece of livestock on another man's ranch" (*Vidas secas,* 21, my emphasis). This depiction suggests that he, and by extension his family, are condemned to a perpetual state of displacement and vulnerability, forced to flee eternally from the ravages of drought and societal indifference.

The theme of abjection is depicted with heightened intensity in *Famine*. The narrator consistently evokes sensory experiences, emphasizing smells, filth, excrement, disease, and the physical deformities wrought by poverty and hunger. Brian Kilmartin, for instance, is portrayed as an elderly individual with "only two yellow teeth" in his mouth, a "long and hooked" nose, and a "bony" face, lending him "a hawk-like appearance" (*Famine*, 8). The impoverished residents of Black Valley inhabit squalid conditions, with pigs and chickens residing within their homes, leading to spaces permeated by "the heavy odor of unwashed bodies and of human breath" (*Famine,* 44).

As the famine takes hold, even the depiction of the once-beautiful peasant woman undergoes a transformation, shedding her feminine attributes to resemble a man. This metamorphosis underscores the erosion of conventional gender roles and societal norms in the face of extreme deprivation. Through such vivid portrayals, the narrator accentuates the pervasive sense of degradation and despair that envelops the community, emphasizing the dehumanizing effects of hunger and destitution:

> Now [Mary] looked quite a virago. The imminence of famine had wrought a marked change in her countenance. . . . There was no similarity of features and her beauty was still as radiant as ever. But there was a similarity in the expression of the mouth and of the eyes. Her mouth had gathered together, somehow, like the first movement of the mouth of a person going to whistle. Her eyes seemed to be searching for something. They were never still. They were fierce, on the alert, suspicious. Her hands, too, were shifty, and it was pitiful the way she now grabbed at her food, tore it greedily with her teeth and looked around in an uncouth fashion while she ate. . . . Indeed, all five of them ate as if this were their last meal and as if some enemy were coming, hotfoot. to pluck the food from their lips (*Famine,* 324).

The bodies of the emaciated children in *Famine* are depicted as equally abject. The narrator portrays them in animalistic terms, likening their gait to that of geese (*Famine* 86). Hunger drives the characters to desperate measures for survival, prompting behaviors that mirror

primal instincts. In a harrowing example, Sally O'Hanlon, a neighbor of the Kilmartins, resorts to feeding her children dog meat before ultimately taking their lives: "'I had a right to put them out of their suffering,' Sally cried . . . 'I couldn't let them lie there screeching with the pain and nobody to help them. Is it with the meat of a dog I would go on filling their mouths . . .?'" (*Famine* 395-396). This chilling portrayal underscores the profound impact of starvation on human dignity, reducing individuals to the most primal of impulses in their struggle to endure.

Encountering the lifeless bodies of the children profoundly traumatizes Mary Kilmartin, serving as a poignant embodiment of abjection. In this stark confrontation with mortality, hunger inexorably leads to death, and death, in turn, to the inexorable process of decomposition (Kristeva 3). The visceral reaction elicited by such a sight underscores the inherent horror of abjection, as it represents the ultimate confrontation with the fragility of human existence.

Indeed, abjection functions as a psychological defense mechanism against the pervasive threat of pollution and contamination (Delville and Norris 5). By distancing oneself from the abject, individuals seek to safeguard their own sense of identity and integrity in the face of overwhelming degradation and despair. In encountering the stark reality of death wrought by hunger, Mary Kilmartin is forced to confront the fragility of human life and the grim consequences of societal neglect and indifference.

In both *Vidas Secas* and *Famine*, hunger emerges as a formidable threat precisely because it precipitates encounters with the abject. The narrative distance maintained between the narrators and the characters serves to accentuate the portrayal of their bodies and behaviors as abject manifestations, akin to those nearing decay. The vivid depictions of deformed, twisted, and dirtied bodies, often likened to animals, serve to underscore the inexorable deterioration brought about by physical hunger. Moreover, the narratives poignantly illustrate how social and political hunger, stemming from entrenched social inequalities, effectively entraps the characters within their marginalized and silenced social stratum.

The emphasis on the characters' physical deterioration serves as a stark reminder that hunger not only brings them closer to their physical demise but also perpetuates their social and political disenfranchisement. Despite the glimmers of hope presented in both narratives – whether through potential escape to distant lands or migration to more promising

environments – such prospects are contingent upon the characters' ability to survive the arduous journey.

Ultimately, *Vidas Secas* and *Famine* illuminate the multifaceted dimensions of hunger, portraying it not only as a visceral struggle for sustenance but also as a pervasive force that corrodes both the physical and social fabric of individuals' lives. The narratives compel readers to confront the profound implications of societal neglect and inequality, underscoring the urgent need for collective action to address the root causes of hunger and its attendant afflictions.

Conclusion

In both *Vidas Secas* and *Famine*, hunger emerges as a manifold phenomenon rooted in physical, political, and social oppression. The characters, confined by their social class, find themselves relegated to a perpetual cycle of migration in search of survival. Far from being solely a consequence of food scarcity, hunger is depicted as a product of the avarice of the powerful elites who seek to uphold the existing social order.

The third-person narrators in both works serve as vigilant chroniclers of societal injustices, yet they engage with their characters in distinct ways. In *Vidas Secas* the narrator assumes the role of a detached observer, striving for objectivity in denouncing the plight of the poor. Conversely, in *Famine* the narrator adopts a more intimate stance, positioning themselves as companions to the characters, directly criticizing the agents responsible for perpetuating hunger.

The narrative distance established by the narrators underscores their respective social positions, as they confront the abject bodies of the characters, symbolic of their proximity to death and decay. In encountering the hungry bodies, the narrators are compelled to confront their own mortality in the presence of the Other. However, both narrators depict hunger as a phenomenon that dehumanizes the Other, reducing them to a state of quasi-existence, akin to animals. The abject body thus serves as a poignant symbol of the poor's deprivation, not only of physical sustenance but also of social justice.

A comparative analysis of *Vidas Secas* and *Famine* offers insights into the shared themes and divergent approaches employed by authors from Brazil and Ireland during the 1930s. While rooted in distinct historical contexts, these works highlight the universality of hunger literature and invite further comparative studies across a broader spectrum of authors engaged

with this enduring theme. Such comparative analyses not only enrich our understanding of hunger as a literary motif but also shed light on the socio-political dynamics shaping narratives of deprivation and struggle across diverse cultural landscapes.

Notes

[1] *Vidas Secas* has been translated into English by Ralph Edward Dimmick (*Barren Lives*, 1965). While the excerpts from the novel are from Dimmick's translation, I have chosen to refer to the novel by its original Portuguese title throughout this paper.

[2] Lúcia Miguel Pereira was the first literary critic to state, in 1938, that *Vidas secas* comprises a series of meticulously crafted tableaus. Subsequently, Rubem Braga further elucidated this perspective, characterizing the work as a "disassembled novel" (Bueno 642).

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ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 153-163.

The Harp and the Eagle: Teaching Irish Poetry in Mexico

A harpa e a águia: Ensino de poesia irlandesa no México

Mario Murgia

Abstract: *Ireland and Mexico share a long tradition of intercultural relationships. The Latin American nation has received significant influence from the mind-frames and oeuvre of Irish or Irish-descended thinkers, and authors. In the field of literature, the presence of Irish writers in Mexico has been equally relevant. A number of them are constantly referenced in middle- to higher-education institutions as paradigmatic examples of the Anglophone belles lettres. Nevertheless, and with the possible exception of Yeats, limited academic and pedagogic attention has been paid to Irish poetry, almost exclusively in English, until comparatively recent times. As of the mid-2000s, the School of Philosophy and Literature (FFyL) of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) has witnessed a surge in academic efforts to promote the verse production of Anglo-Irish poets in the country. With the publication in 2003 of the anthology Una lengua injertada [A Grafted Tongue] and, more recently, with the establishment of the Contemporary Anglo-Irish Literature Research Project, FFyL-UNAM have inaugurated a new era for the study of (Anglo-) Irish verse in Mexico and Spanish-speaking America. This article will explore the critical and pedagogical approaches with which FFyL-UNAM have tackled the teaching of (Anglo) Irish poetry over at least one decade.*

Keywords: *Anthology; Spanish-speaking America; Irish Poetry; Literature; Pedagogy.*

Resumo: *A Irlanda e o México partilham uma longa tradição de relações interculturais. A nação latino-americana tem recebido uma influência significativa da estrutura mental da mente e da obra de pensadores e autores irlandeses ou de ascendência irlandesa. No âmbito da literatura, a presença de escritores irlandeses no México tem sido igualmente relevante. Alguns deles são constantemente referenciados em instituições de ensino médio e superior como exemplos paradigmáticos das belles lettres anglófonas. No entanto, e com a possível*

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.p153-163
Received: 06/04/2024 Accepted: 01/07/2024

exceção de Yeats, a atenção académica e pedagógica prestada à poesia irlandesa, quase exclusivamente em inglês, foi limitada até tempos relativamente recentes. A partir de meados da década de 2000, a Faculdade de Filosofia e Letras (FFyL) da Universidade Nacional Autónoma do México (UNAM) assistiu a um aumento dos esforços académicos para promover a produção de versos de poetas anglo-irlandeses no país. Com a publicação, em 2003, da antologia Una lengua injertada [Uma língua enxertada] e, mais recentemente, com a criação do Projeto de Investigação de Literatura Anglo-Irlandesa Contemporânea, a FFyL-UNAM inaugurou uma nova era para o estudo do verso (anglo-) irlandês no México e na América de língua espanhola. Este artigo explorará as abordagens críticas e pedagógicas com que a FFyL-UNAM tem abordado o ensino da poesia (anglo)irlandesa durante pelo menos uma década.

Palavras-chave: *Antologia; América de língua espanhola; Poesia irlandesa; Literatura; Pedagogia.*

Ireland in Mexico?

Mexico, as it turns out, was once about to have an Irish king. At least that is what the Mexican author, military leader, and politician Vicente Riva Palacio (1832–96) would have his readers imagine from his lengthy 1872 novel *Memorias de un impostor. D. Guillen de Lampart, rey de México* (*Memoirs of an Impostor. Mr Guillén de Lampart, King of Mexico*). In a little over 500 pages, Riva Palacio fictionalizes the existence of a certain Guillén De Lampart, an individual who, to this day, remains the object of much biographical and political debate among those who are even aware of his life and deeds in the North American territories of the Spanish Empire during the seventeenth century. In the "Author's Preface" to his historical novel, Riva Palacio claims that "many years before the priest Hidalgo had proclaimed the Independence of Mexico, a man, of Irish nationality, had intended to become King of Anahuac, thus freeing Mexico from Spanish domination; but the conspiracy had been discovered, and the Irishman was executed by the law" (v).[1] That "Irishman" is none other than De Lampart, the Hispanicized name of William Lamport (1611–59), a very adventurous and highly educated native of Wexford (*Loch Garman*) who became a pirate in Spain and ended up in Mexico as part of the entourage of the incoming Viceroy of New Spain, the Marquis of Villena, in the early days of 1640. By means of his fictional

narrative, Riva Palacio romanticizes Lamport (incidentally, also a poet) as a fiercely heroic independentist and polymath who merges the stories of two nations inextricably united by a complex historical past and the yearning for independence from two great colonial powers: England and the Spanish Empire.[2] The fact is that historically – and Riva Palacio never loses sight of this in his long narrative endeavor – Lamport represents the first link in a long chain of Irish personalities who have exerted a considerable degree of influence upon Mexican art, history, and politics for a little more than 400 years.[3]

Needless to say, De Lampart/Lamport never ascended the throne of the Hispano-American nation. What he did do, as both a historical and literary figure – at least in the minds of several members of the Mexican intelligentsia ever since the nineteenth century –, was to place Ireland in a segment of Mexico's imagination as a sibling nation whose achievements and struggles over the course of history appear, more often than not, in the cultural and literary panoramas of the country. It can be stated, rather safely, that Ireland and Mexico share a long-standing tradition of intercultural relationships. From the figure of Lamport and the political influence of New Spain's Viceroy Juan de O'Donojú (or actually *O'Donoghue*) y O'Ryan (1762–1821) to the artistic and literary legacies of brothers Edmundo and Juan O'Gorman (1906–95/1905–82) and public intellectual Guillermo Sheridan (1950), the Latin American nation has received significant influence from the mind-frames and oeuvre of Irish or Irish-descended statesmen, thinkers, and writers. In the field of literature, the presence of Irish authors in Mexico has been equally relevant – the works of James Joyce, Jonathan Swift, and Oscar Wilde, to name but only three of the most celebrious, are constantly referenced in middle- to higher-education institutions as paradigmatic examples of the Anglophone *belles lettres*. Nevertheless, and with the possible exception of W. B. Yeats, limited academic and pedagogic attention has been paid specifically to Irish poetry, and exclusively in English, until comparatively recent times. In this chapter, I will refer to the experience and the implications of the dissemination and teaching of Irish poetry in the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras (School of Philosophy and Literature) of Mexico's National University, or UNAM, where the study of Anglophone and Anglo-Irish literature and poetry spans over nine decades of increasingly robust academic research and didactic activities.[4]

Irish Literature and Poetry, and their Presence in Twentieth-Century Mexican Culture: A Quick Overlook

Ever since the early decades of the twentieth century, some of the most influential poets of Mexico have traced the character of Irish poetry, originally written in English, in their own craft as verse writers and as poetical-theatrical translators. A few examples, perhaps some of the most obvious ones, will suffice to begin exploring these artistic interrelationships. In 1932, the opening season of Mexico City's seminal *Teatro de Orientación* (Theatre of Orientation), began with the staging of John Millington Synge's *The Tinker's Wedding*, or *La boda del calderero*, as the influential Mexican poet, playwright, and public intellectual Salvador Novo (1904-74) translated it. Novo would go on to translate and stage Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* in 1955 for the opening of the *Teatro la Capilla* (Chapel Theater), in Mexico City's borough of Coyoacán. Translations and stagings of Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* and George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* would ensue in 1958 and 1961, respectively. This is, of course, dramatic rather than lyrical poetry, but poetry, nonetheless.

In turn, a seminal anthology of classic Mexican poetry, commissioned by UNESCO and compiled by Nobel-prize winner Octavio Paz, was translated into English by none other than Samuel Beckett, just out of Trinity College, in 1950. Even though Beckett considered it "his worst literary experience," nineteen out of the 103 poems that he had translated were included in the 2014 edition of *The Collected Poems of Samuel Beckett*. The pieces were long considered to be "the single most neglected work in the Beckett canon" (Carrera, p. 159). Beckett's lyric poetry would be translated, in Mexico, only as late as 2004, when the accomplished Mexican filmmaker and author Pablo Sigg turned his attention to Beckettian verse rather than to the drama, as had most often been the case in the previous century. Curiously enough, in his *Antología Poética* (Poetical Anthology) – published by the Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM) – Sigg only presents, rather than translates, Beckett's virtually unintelligible "Whoroscope," a long poem that, according to Sigg himself, "stubbornly resists being translated into another language" (9).

As the previous instances indicate, and for quite a long time now, Spanish-language renderings of dramatic works and, even more significantly, anthologies of lyric poetry have proved to be key for the dissemination and teaching in Mexico of the literature originating in the Anglo-Irish tradition, particularly the most "canonical" of its poets. However, and apart from the usual suspects – i.e. Beckett, Shaw, Wilde, Yeats –, it was not until 2003 that other

virtually unexplored Irish poets started being mapped in the Mexican academic and literary scene by means of the art of translation. That year, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) published *Una lengua injertada*, or *A Grafted Tongue*, a title which editor Eva Cruz Yáñez borrowed from the famous poem by John Montague. This is an unprecedented bilingual anthology conceived by the Seminar of Literary Translation at the National University's School of Philosophy and Literature. Co-ordinated by the late José Juan Dávila, the collection includes pieces by thirty-six Irish poets, from Patrick Kavanagh and Louis MacNeice to Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill and Moya Cannon. The pieces were carefully and skilfully versioned by a group of eminent authors, scholars, and translators, among whom can be named the poet Mónica Mansour, the narrator Federico Patán, and the renowned literary academic Flora Botton. In his brief "Prologue" to *The Grafted Tongue*, professor José Juan Dávila Sota, a specialist in British poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, states the following:

> The struggle for the land [in Ireland] turned the land itself, as well as the landscape, into important topics – the rural landscape and even the urban one are present in much of the poetry of the twentieth century. Similarly, tropes retrieved form the distant past by several authors of the 19th century have mutated into the nostalgia and sadness expressed in an iconography that, in some cases, is still current. ... But most of all, the problems of identity, the atrocious consequences of war, and an intense imagination are fertile territories where poetry blossoms in everyday experience and delights us with its intensity. It is thus that contemporary Irish poetry has become one of the most vital and arresting experiences of our time.[5] (14)

Some of the key terms in this reflection are "landscape," "iconography," "identity," and "territory." These conceptions form part of one of the most significant leitmotifs of recent Irish verse: a poetical notion of being-in-the-world. Dávila Sota's choice of words is undoubtedly grounded upon the representational possibilities inherent in the poetry of a number of modern and contemporary Irish and Mexican poets. Such realizations articulate a chart of the imagination that, in turn, expresses itself in terms of cartographic imagery. The poets locate themselves, their assumed identities indeed their Irelands and their Mexicos – in the measures of their lines. They present their poems as verbal and imagistic maps where being and world coexist, find, define, and point to each other: "I want to go back to it – // my nation displaced / into old dactyls," says Eavan Boland's poetic voice in "Mise Éire," translated by Eva Cruz for

Una lengua injertada (248–49).[6] This sense of poetic representation of, and identification with, the (mother)land has traditionally constituted the thematic starting point of most pedagogic and translational efforts relating to Irish verse in Mexico.

With this in mind, it is impossible not to suspect that *Una lengua injertada* is, in the specific territory of Irish poetry, a correction and an improvement on a previous anthology by the same group of translators: *De Hardy a Heaney. Poesía inglesa del siglo XX* (From Hardy to Heaney. English Poetry of the 20th Century), also edited by Cruz Yáñez.[7] As can be noted from the title, the volume still retains a tendency to include "canonical Anglo-Irish poetry" in the broad category of "poetry produced in the British Isles," or even more misleadingly, under the label of "English poetry." The anthology includes Yeats, Louis MacNeice, and Seamus Heaney – here worthy representatives of "English" verse –, and intends to "fill a gap in the understanding of this important poetical tradition, which, unlike US-American literature, has not been properly disseminated in our country" ("Presentation").[8] The comment may be a generalizing one but, if we consider that, in Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries, the British, Irish, and US-American literary traditions are more often than not conflated under the umbrella term "literature in English," it comes as no surprise that the editors should make such an explanation, even if it implies that fusion of British and Irish verse for the purpose of localized circulation. The editors and translators of the volume, being also literary scholars and professors of Anglophone literature at Mexico's National University, did know better than to leave the matter at that, and the later launch of *Una lengua injertada* was definitive proof of their awareness in this regard. The much-needed correction, no doubt, owed a great deal to a gradual-yet-stalwart change of critical perspective towards Irish poetry, as the "EngLit" syllabi of undergraduate courses in the UNAM's School of Philosophy and Literature continue to evolve in terms of their theoretical approaches to the culture and letters of Ireland.[9] In order to arrive at this stage of Irish studies, however, Mexico's National University has had to go a long, winding pedagogical path.

Irish Poetry among Mexican Undergrads

Ever since a limited series of undergraduate courses on English and Anglo-American Literature were first offered at the *Escuela Nacional de Altos Estudios* (National School of Superior Studies) in 1913, the reading and teaching of Irish authors like Laurence Sterne and Jonathan

Swift became a pedagogical commonplace in the Humanities Department of Mexico's National University.[10] It was until 1975, however, when the complete syllabus for the *Letras Inglesas* (English Literature) courses in the *Colegio de Letras Modernas* (Faculty of Modern Literature) was approved, that Irish poetry appeared as a separate category on the students' lists of readings. While the study of authors like Beckett, Joyce, Shaw, Sterne, Swift, or Wilde was limited to either their prose or their drama, poets like MacNeice, but above all Yeats, received heightened analytical and pedagogical attention in the twentieth-century *Historia Literaria* (Literary History) courses of the *Departamento de Letras Inglesas* (Department of English Literature). Even though English-literature students could resort to different printed materials to conduct their readings in English, the faculty's text of choice was *The Oxford Anthology of English Literature*, where both MacNeice and Yeats are still listed under the heading "Modern British Literature" in volume II (xxvi). The approach to these poets' pieces was essentially based on historicist close readings of famous poems like "Bagpipe Music," by MacNeice, or "Easter 1916" and "The Second Coming," by Yeats, with special emphasis on the latter poet's affinities with English Modernism, as well as on his achievements and influence within the *British* literary tradition.

It was only by 2010, and with the increasing influence on literary studies from currents of thought and criticism like Cultural Studies, Postcolonialism, Postmodernism, and Poststructuralism, that the syllabus was modified in such a way that the "Literary Histories" of the past would give way to language-based classifications of inter-cultural literary phenomena. Thus, in the subjects corresponding to "Literature in English," Anglo-Irish literature – and especially poetry – became the focus of renewed enquiry and research. With the publication of translated anthologies like the ones edited by professor Cruz Yáñez, the study of (mostly modern and contemporary) Anglophone Irish poetry expanded its scope to include women poets as well as poets of the Irish diaspora and of Irish descent. Furthermore, the use of updated textual sources, like the *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, has allowed the faculty of UNAM's Department of English Literature to diversify the didactic possibilities of literary analysis and intercultural translation in the teaching of Irish verse. Given that some of the most prominent translators of Irish poetry in Mexico are also members of the University's faculty, the nuances of allusion, cultural reference, phrasing, and prosody in the work of poets such as Eavan Boland, Moya Cannon, Ciaran Carson, Alice Fulton, Seamus Heaney, and

Paul Muldoon, among many others, are turning into cultural and poetic reference points for students at UNAM's School of Philosophy and Literature.

With a view to "training professionals who are capable of excelling in interpreting and comprehending the reality of the gobalized world we are living in from a cultural and literary viewpoint" (*Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*), the general syllabuses of the undergraduate courses in *Letras Inglesas* at UNAM were re-revised and updated in 2020.[11] One of the most noticeable results of the adjustments was an increased emphasis on the presentation, analysis, and (re) contextualization of (Anglophone) Irish literature, and especially of Ireland's vibrant poetical tradition, in the milieu of world literature and intercultural exchange. A clear example of this is the academic and professional background required now of any professor teaching a subject like "Literatura en Lengua Inglesa VI," or "English-Language Literature VI." According to the *Proyecto de Modificación del Plan de Estudios de la Licenciatura en Lengua y Literaturas Modernas* (Project for the Modification of the Syllabi of Undergraduate Courses in Modern Language and Literatures), professors must specialize in "literature from the United Kingdom *and Ireland*" (480, my italics). Similarly, by the end of the course students are to "formulate critical opinions on artistic currents pertaining to diverse literary genres in Anglophone literature, particularly from the United Kingdom and Ireland, in the twentieth century" (477).[12] The current emphasis on Ireland and its literary tradition as being independent from – yet still culturally and historically linked to – that of the UK was conspicuously absent in syllabi from previous stages in the development of similar programs for undergraduate studies. In the context of Mexico's higher education system, these stances can be deemed academic responses to the fact that "Irish poetry [and indeed Irish writing] is *in* and of the world" and has become "an important influence in shaping other poetries far beyond the island's borders," as critic Omaar Hena has rightly put it (339).

Coda. Irish Poetry in Mexico—Present and Future

The year 2021 witnessed the creation of UNAM's *Cátedra Extraordinaria Eavan Boland – Anne Enright de Estudios Irlandeses* (The Eavan Boland – Anne Enright Chair of Irish Studies). As can be perceived from its title, the *Cátedra* intends to foster the exploration, analysis, and promotion in Mexico, and the rest of Spanish-speaking America, of Ireland's cultural expressions, and especially of its literature and poetry. With support from the government

of the Republic of Ireland, the *Cátedra* has already produced *La hoja verde de la lengua. Poesía anglorlandesa contemporánea* (*The Green Leaf of Language. Contemporary Anglo-Irish Poetry*), a collection of essays featuring critical and poetical pieces by authors, poets, and scholars from Canada, Ireland, the UK, Mexico, and Spain. Basically intended for, but not restricted to, undergraduate and postgraduate students of the public university system, the volume is the first of its kind in the context of Hispano-American and Mexican literary studies and "offers, from varied critical and theoretical viewpoints, approaches to the work of Irish poets writing in English and pertaining to a contemporariness that began in the promising post-WW2 years" (Murgia 11).

Clearly, much remains to be done in Mexico and its National University with regard to the reading and studying of Irish poetry. The centuries-old tradition of Ireland's verse requires further exploration, not only in Mexico, but in the rest of the Spanish-speaking world. Poets writing in the vernacular language of the Irish still need to be recognized, in the Hispanosphere, for their contributions, not only to the culture of Ireland, but also to Western and World literature. They ought to be translated, more frequently, to the variant(s) of Spanish used in Mexico, the country with the largest number of Hispanophone inhabitants in the world. But in spite of these and other shortcomings, the teaching of Irish poetry within the context of Mexico's higher education has begun to bear academic and, hopefully, literary fruit, with Irish authors and verse makers steadily turning into household names, even if, for the time being, only in intellectual and scholarly circles. But the (poetical) art of the Irish harp has surely attracted the attention of the Mexican eagle. William Lamport, for one, would not be disappointed.

Notes

[1] Original Spanish: "... *muchos años antes de que el cura Hidalgo hubiera proclamado la independencia de México, un hombre, de nacion irlandés, habia pretendido alzarse como rey de Anáhuac, libertando* á México de la *dominacion española; pero la conspiracion habia sido descubierta, y el irlandés habia muerto* á *manos de la justicia.*" All English translations are mine unless otherwise noted. The original orthography is preserved. Riva Palacio refers here to the Catholic priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1753–1811), one of the leaders of the Mexican War of Independence, which raged from 1810 to 1821). "Anáhuac" is the Hispanicized *Nahuatl*, or Aztec, name to refer to the Basin of Mexico.

[2] It has been claimed that Lamport's life in the Americas is at least a semi-factual inspiration for the famous character "El Zorro," created by American author Johnston McCulley. See, for example, Gerard Ronan's *The Irish Zorro: The Extraordinary Adventures of William Lamport* (1615–1659).

[3] Unbeknownst to many, a great deal has been written on the presence of Ireland and the Irish in Spain

and the Spanish-speaking Americas. See Edmundo Murray's "The Irish in Latin America and Iberia: An Annotated Bibliography," which includes a sizeable section on Mexico and Hispanic North-America.

4 Founded in 1910 in its modern form, the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico* (or National Autonomous University of Mexico) is the largest and most prestigious higher-education institution in the country. UNAM is a public research university.

5 Original Spanish: *"La lucha por la tierra hizo que la tierra y el paisaje se volvieran importantes y el paisaje del campo o incluso urbano aparece en gran parte de la poesía del siglo XX. De la misma manera, los motivos rescatados del pasado lejano por algunos escritores del siglo XIX se convierten en nostalgia y tristeza expresada en una iconografía que, en algunos casos, aún está vigente. [...] Pero sobre todo los problemas de identidad, las atroces consecuencias de la guerra y la intensa imaginación son territorios propicios para que la poesía viva en lo cotidiano y nos deleite con su intensidad. De esta manera, la poesía irlandesa contemporánea se ha vuelto una de las experiencias más vitales e interesantes de nuestros días."*

6 Cruz's close translation of the lines avers: *"No volveré a todo eso: // mi nación desplazada / en dáctilos antiguos."*

7 Even though this volume is also dated 2003, in a conversation with the author of the present chapter, editor Cruz Yáñez stated that the translational work on the poems included there pre-dates the translation of the pieces in *Una lengua injertada*.

8 Original Spanish: "*... cubre un hueco en el conocimiento de esta importante tradición poética que, a diferencia de la literatura norteamericana, no ha sido muy difundida en nuestro país*." Incidentally, while Heaney and MacNeice were later re-included in *Una lengua injertada*, Yeats was not.

9 It should be noted that UNAM is, to this day, the only university in Mexico that offers full undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Anglophone literature.

10 It should be noted that UNAM is, to this day, the only university in Mexico that offers full undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Anglophone literature.

11 Original Spanish: *"... formar profesionales capaces de interpretar y comprender, de manera sobresaliente, la realidad del mundo globalizado en el que vivimos desde el punto de vista de la cultura y la literatura."*

12 Original Spanish: *"... formular opiniones críticas sobre tendencias artísticas, pertenecientes a diversos géneros literarios, de la literatura en lengua inglesa, especialmente del Reino Unido e Irlanda, del periodo correspondiente al siglo XX*."

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The independence of Ireland in the Provincial Press: Laurence Ginnell and the Irish Diplomatic Mission in Argentina (1921)

A independência da Irlanda na imprensa provincial: Laurence Ginnell e a missão diplomática irlandesa na Argentina (1921)

Jeremías Daniel Rodríguez

Abstract: *In the context of the negotiations surrounding the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, at the end of July 1921, the nationalist deputy, member of the Irish Parliament (Teachta Dála), Laurence Ginnell, arrived in Buenos Aires with the aim of raising money for the Irish cause, intensifying the propaganda campaign and expanding the diplomatic network in Latin America. The main Buenos Aires newspapers – with the exception of the community newspaper T*he Southern Cross *– considered the arrival of the diplomat a minor event, but what happened in the case of the provincial press? The present work attempts to explain how the provincial newspapers, particularly belonging to Entre Ríos and Santa Fe, reflected the actions of the Irish diplomatic personnel in Argentina. Three important newspapers in the region will be analyzed:* La Acción *and* El Diario de Paraná *and the morning newspaper Santa Fe from the capital city of the same name.*

Keywords: *Ireland; Press; Laurence Ginnell.*

Resumo: *No contexto das negociações para a assinatura do Tratado Anglo-Irlandês, Laurence Ginnell, um membro nacionalista do Parlamento Irlandês (Teachta Dála), chegou a Buenos Aires no final de julho de 1921 com o objetivo de arrecadar dinheiro para a causa irlandesa, intensificar a campanha de propaganda e expandir a rede diplomática na América Latina. Os principais jornais de Buenos Aires, com exceção do jornal comunitário* The Southern

Received: 17/04/2024 Accepted: 24/06/2024

Cross — *consideraram a chegada do diplomata de pouca relevância, mas o que aconteceu com a imprensa da província? Este artigo tenta descrever como os jornais das províncias, especialmente os de Entre Ríos e Santa Fé, refletiram as ações da equipe diplomática irlandesa na Argentina. Três importantes jornais da região serão analisados:* La Acción *e* El Diario de Paraná *e o jornal de Santa Fe, da capital de mesmo nome.*

Palavras-chave: *Irlanda; Imprensa; Laurence Ginnell.*

Introduction

In the context of the negotiations surrounding the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, at the end of July 1921, the nationalist deputy, member of the Irish Parliament (*Teachta Dála*), Laurence Ginnell, arrived in Buenos Aires with the aim of raising money for the Irish cause, intensifying the propaganda campaign and expanding the diplomatic network in Latin America. The main Buenos Aires newspapers – with the exception of the community newspaper *The Southern Cross* – considered the arrival of the diplomat a minor event, but what happened in the case of the provincial press?

The present work attempts to explain how the provincial newspapers, particularly belonging to Entre Ríos and Santa Fe, reflected the actions of the Irish diplomatic personnel in Argentina. Three important newspapers in the region will be analyzed: *La Acción* and *El Diario de Paraná* and the morning newspaper *Santa Fe* from the capital city of the same name.

As a hypothesis, we maintain that the deployment of collective actions by diplomatic personnel made it possible to make the Irish cause visible beyond the Buenos Aires borders. In this process, the provincial press became a key vector of propaganda in the interior of the country, allowing it to break with the hegemony of the main Buenos Aires newspapers in clear support for Irish independence.

The provincial press at the beginning of the twentieth century

As Ernesto Picco (2018) states, until the advent of mass society in the early twentieth century and the construction of an integral media space of the territory, the journalistic offer in the Argentine provinces "was predominantly local, small, with factional publications, and had

few readers" (15, my translation).[1] It developed at different speeds, with different social and political functions and involved diverse social actors. However, with the broadening of participation frameworks, the development of parties, organizations and mass media, the "popular" press reached a fundamental importance and the provinces converged towards a business, liberal and professionalized model that implied a reconfiguration of objectives by the main journalistic firms to adapt to the new demands: acquisition and modernization of equipment (rotary presses, linotypes), supply of inputs (ink, paper), connection with news agencies, advertising, expansion of the number of pages and printings, points of sale and distribution, etc. (Damianovich, 2013). In the words of Sylvia Saítta:

> Slowly, the first two decades of the century witness the process of configuration of a specific field of relations where written journalism is particularized as a practice, formally separates from the power of the State and political parties and lays the foundations of modern, massive and commercial journalism characteristic of the twentieth century.[2] (Saítta 30, my translation)

This process was not free of tensions between the new journalistic formats, such as the North American one characterized by the variety of notices, the breadth of news and an efficient telegraphic service (different from the French model), and old practices typical of nineteenth century journalism.

By then, the supply of news had increased substantially as a result of the technological advances that took place at the end of the nineteenth century, especially the invention of the telegraph, influencing the daily lives of readers:

> Although ordinary citizens had no direct access to the magic of the cable, the impact of the sub-Atlantic flow of signs reached them through the press, which spoke daily of what was happening in that world. Since the last decade of the 19th century, that world was closer in time and, therefore, in subjective space. Its daily alternatives, which circulated in tens of thousands of copies, made up an offer of big and small news: arriving by various means, it was offered to readers more constantly and abundantly than ever.[3] (Caimari 155, my translation)

Thus, the extension of telegraphic cables and Argentina's entry into the Postal Union in 1887 meant unprecedented access to the international publication market. But at the same

time, the advances in communication implied a higher level of competitiveness and a challenge for small local publications.

The awakening of this "agitated journalistic life"[4] (Picco 11, my translation) is also visible beyond Buenos Aires, for example, in Entre Ríos and Santa Fe. And although for the period studied there existed in both provinces a large number of newspapers in circulation, in this opportunity we have selected for our analysis three of the most important at a regional level: *La Acción* – important Catholic newspaper – and *El Diario* from the city of Paraná and the *Santa Fe* newspaper from the homonymous capital city.

Laurence Ginnell, "the deputy for Ireland"[5]

Laurence Ginnell was 69 years old when he arrived in Buenos Aires. Born in 1852 in the town of Delvin, county of Westmeath in the province of Leinster, he began his political career at a very young age, at the beginning of the 1870s. Self-taught, a radical nationalist, his life moved between parliament, being elected deputy in different occasions – the last of them being active in the ranks of *Sinn Féin*[6] – , in prison. For his staunch defense of the Irish cause he earned the nickname "the Deputy for Ireland". He wrote numerous letters and some books, married twice (but without children) and was chosen by Éamon de Valera in 1920, along with his wife Alice, as representative in the United States of the new Irish Parliament (*Dáil Éireann*) formed in 1919. He embarked on a trip to Argentina with the purpose of requesting support, expanding the diplomatic network in Latin America and raising funds.

He died in Washington in 1923, aged 71, and was buried in Dublin. In Buenos Aires, solemn masses were celebrated in his honor at the Passionist monastery of Capitán Sarmiento and the church of the Holy Cross, in Buenos Aires. *The Southern Cross* dedicated an extensive obituary to him where it described that in Argentina he was fondly remembered as a veteran warrior, a courteous envoy from the Republic of Ireland (Keogh, 2016).

Laurence Ginnell in Buenos Aires: repercussions in the provincial press

Laurence Ginnell and his wife Alice arrived at the end of July 1921 in the city of Buenos Aires. By order of the new Parliament of Ireland, Ginnell had to be in charge of raising funds and expanding the diplomatic network in Latin America in order to sustain the independence

campaign in a context of tense negotiations with the English authorities for the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. From de Valera's point of view, Ginnell was the right person – along with Eamonn Bulfin[7] – for this task due to his previous experience in the United States.

For most of the main national newspapers – with the exception of the community newspaper *The Southern Cross*[8] – the arrival of the deputy did not represent an important event that deserved wide repercussions. Only some Buenos Aires newspapers announced the arrival of the Irish envoy.[9] Consequently, the provincial press limited itself to reproducing the telegrams from Buenos Aires. In this regard, *El Diario*, *La Acción* and *Santa Fe* reported on the presence of "parlamentario irlandés, Mr. Guinnell",[10] the meeting with Irigoyen to present the Letters of Credence, signed by De Valera, "como enviado del gobierno republicano de Irlanda",[11] the reception by the "Comité Pro Libertad de Irlanda"[12] and Ginnell's invitation to the *Te Deum* at the Metropolitan Cathedral to celebrate Peruvian independence, where he later offered "a wreath on the tomb of Saint Martin"[13] (*La Acción*, August 5, 1921, my translation) However, coverage of the actions of the Irish diplomatic mission will take an unexpected turn in the coming months.

As the formal negotiations on the Anglo-Irish Treaty advanced, anti-British propaganda intensified not only in Buenos Aires but also in different provinces in the interior of the country. In this context, the local press will become a key vector in the dissemination of different events that involve diplomatic personnel, in clear support for the Irish cause. This is reflected in the increase in the number of news stories related to Ginnell, especially towards the month of October. A series of telegraphic cables published by *El Diario* and *La Acción* reported on the conferences he planned to preside "in favor of the ideals of freedom that the Irish people cherish"[14] (*El Diario*, October 8, 1921, my translation) and the envoy's interest in remaining in the country for a while longer with the purpose of continue his "propaganda in favor of separatist parties" and to plan "a tour of the main Argentine provinces"[15] (*La Acción*, October 9, 1921, my translation).At the same time, *El Diario* announced the receipt of a weekly bulletin on Irish affairs[16] and in a cover story stated that the document "with enthusiasm the Irish cause chronicling the development that events take in favor of the Republic"[17] (*El Diario*, October 16, 1921, my translation).

Between meetings, rallies and masses: collective actions of the Irish diplomatic mission

At a critical moment in the negotiations on the Anglo-Irish Treaty, where the Irish and English representatives were settling key points of the document, in Buenos Aires the diplomatic mission deployed a series of collective actions[18] during the month of October and November with the purpose of giving greater visibility to the Irish question: a reception at the Savoy Hotel,[19] a political rally at the Teatro Coliseo[20] and the celebration of masses in numerous churches for the Irish martyrs.[21]

The coverage of these events overwhelms the main Buenos Aires newspapers. Since his arrival, Ginnell ensured that the independence cause had a wide impact not only in Buenos Aires but also in the interior of the country. Therefore, it is not surprising that the actions of the diplomatic staff are also influential in the provincial newspapers, being the press a key and unavoidable propaganda device for the time, shaping public opinion.

The organization of the reception at the Savoy Hotel did not have much impact. The same did not happen with the political rally. In the days prior to its realization, a series of telegraphic cables and cover notes are responsible for announcing not only the date and place where it will take place, but also its purpose: to provoke "an opinion movement for Irish freedom"[22] (*Santa Fe*, October 23, 1921). It is reported that the meeting would take place on Saturday, 29 October in the afternoon and that the chosen location was the emblematic Teatro Coliseo in the city of Buenos Aires.[23] The event was sponsored by the Irish diplomatic mission and would feature the participation of "elocuentes oradores" – mainly Ginnell – who will speak extensively about "la actuación de Irlanda" and special guests: "los irlandeses residentes en la capital federal para que presten su ayuda a su patria, contribuyendo a que el mitin asuma las mayores proporciones".[24] Verbatim words of the invitation manifesto which, in the case of *El Diario*, is reproduced in its entirety:

> We only wish to make known the truth about Ireland, for which purpose we ask our friends and collaborators to induce as many people as possible to attend, giving this meeting the greatest resonance. We make a special call to the Irish to lend their help to their homeland by helping to make the rally take on the greatest proportions. We also call on those who appreciate the high significance of the law of nations, and who sympathize and respect a small nation suffering for the cause of its freedom, and

> whom we ask to deploy their efforts in order to contribute to forming and guiding public opinion. on the irish problem. "Mitin irlandés".[25] (*El Diario*, October 25, 1921, my translation)

The call was not only aimed at the Irish community. Ginnell was aware that the republican cause also required the support and efforts of those, outside the *diaspora*,[26] who sympathized with the principles of self-determination or empathized with the suffering of Ireland. The Teatro Coliseo turned out to be a suitable place, due to its capacity and favorable location, to gather a large number of guests.

At the same time, by organizing the rally, the diplomatic mission not only intended to spread the pro-independence cause – especially through the promotion of the bulletin mentioned above – but also to raise money through the sale of bonds. Ginnell, by express order of de Valera, had to take on this difficult task. For this, the Irish cabinet had confirmed to the diplomat the sanction of the issuance of bonds of up to 500,000 pounds and requested that he hire suitable personnel to be in charge of registering the bondholders and collecting the money. *El Diario* and *Santa Fe* reported on this initiative through telegrams where they explained that the Irish government had resolved to "colocar un empréstito en nuestro país con certificados y valores de 10 to 10.000 pesos, con interés del 5%".[27] But the marked divisions within the community overshadowed the Irish MP's plans.[28]

The propaganda and fundraising campaign was carried out on different fronts. In the days following the rally, numerous masses were held throughout the country for "aquellos que murieron por Irlanda".[29] The Catholic newspaper *La Acción* is the only media outlet – possibly due to its religious affinity – that highlights what happened in a note, detailing the churches that participated and stating that "jamás ha presentado la Argentina un tributo de esta naturaleza a ningún otro país, como jamás lo ha sido prestado tampoco, en ningún momento de la historia, por ningún país a otro".[30] A review of the list of towns and temples that opened their doors in Buenos Aires and the interior to honor the Irish martyrs reflects the strong support of the Catholic Church – through the Irish Catholic Association – for the cause of Ireland.[31]

Foreign action, internal tensions: the Argentine-Irish congress

The fight for Irish independence required unified criteria and the definition of a clear action strategy capable of coordinating the efforts of groups of Irish immigrants dispersed in different regions of the world (Cruset, 2019). But, in the particular case of Argentina, the accentuated internal divisions of the community conspired against this ideal. This did not represent an obstacle for Ginnell, determined – despite the firm opposition of some of the most prominent members of the community – to create an institution that would bring together the different Irish organizations in the country (Keogh, 2016).

The moment came with the call for the First Argentine-Irish Congress at the end of November. The main purpose of this event was to form a delegation to participate in the Irish Race Convention in Paris in January 1922. The congress took place at the Sisters of Mercy Irish Girls Home, in the city of Buenos Aires, on the morning of 29 November.

In the case of the provincial press, once again it is *La Acción* who reports what happened.[32] According to the newspaper, the event was presided over by "Mr. Guillermo Morgan and Mr. Santiago E. Bowen acted as secretary, after a speech by Mr. Ginnell, who made an extensive and documented speech, referring to the current events in Ireland". "Primer congreso argentino-irlandés"[33] (*La Acción*, December 2, 1921, my translation). The interesting part of the note lies in a fragment of Mr. Ginnell's speech that the newspaper highlights:

> The present truce, said Mr. Ginnell, will not be violated on our part. No nation in the world needs or desires peace more urgently than we do. Our army is not an army of occupation, but purely of defense, for our military chief is not a minister of war, but a minister of defense. But peace must exist with independence, a just and permanent basis. If England needs peace, all she need do is to leave us alone. However, if armed forces land on our shores to intimidate and destroy, they will be resisted. Self-defense and self-preservation is the first duty of a country". "Primer congreso argentino-irlandés".[34] (*La Acción*, December 2, 1921, my translation)

From all that Ginnell exposed in an extensive and acclaimed speech focused on the need to establish the foundations for a solid and permanent organization, *La Acción* decided to select, in an intentional way, the paragraph mentioned above. This arbitrariness has an explanation. The editorial line of the Catholic newspaper is in line with the postulates of Benedict XV, the "Pope of peace", the same one who had interceded a year earlier for the

Mayor of Cork, Terence MacSwiney, as he perished in Brixton jail after a prolonged hunger strike that ended his life.[35]

A perusal of the pages of *La Acción* reveals the centrality of the question of peace. At the beginning of August, the newspaper published a note exhorting the faithful to recite the Pope's new prayer with the "deseo de que por medio de ella todos los fieles del catolicismo se unieran en una santa cruzada para implorar a Dios el beneficio de la paz"[36] (*La Acción*, August 2, 1921). A few days later, another note details the words of Monsignor Andrea's last conference in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Buenos Aires entitled "La paz social". In his speech, the prelate states that:

> No social advantage ... neither wealth nor glory can ever equal the benefits of peace ... it is this peace that we are going to deal with and not that which results ... from foreign wars and civil revolutions..[37] (*La Acción*, August 5, 1921, my translation)

And in September, a cover story strongly questions England's position in relation to peace in the world: England at peace with the whole world? ... We find it hard to believe. We should ask it, above all, to Ireland, to India, to Turkey ... And just in case ... to Argentina's Malvinas, to... half the world. "¿En paz con todo el mundo?",[38] (*La Acción*, September 3, 1921, my translation), and the Pope's statements "regarding the forthcoming conference on the disarmament of nations ... the only way to achieve the pacification of peoples"[39] ("La voz del Papa", *La Acción*, September 3, 1921, my translation)

La Acción concluded by describing details of the congress related to the designation of delegates to be sent to the Irish Convention and the appointment of consuls in Dublin and Buenos Aires, with the purpose of establishing commercial relations between Ireland and Argentina. According to the words of Mr. Bowen, one of the leaders of the community – reproduced by the newspaper – "Argentina could find a good market for its products in Ireland, in exchange for manufactured goods, from that country, which at present, due to the British control, are passed off as British godos"[40] ("Primer congreso argentino-irlandés", *La Acción*, December 2, 1921, my translation).

The actions of the diplomatic mission met with resistance from the beginning on the part of the British representatives in Buenos Aires, especially when it came to seeking formal recognition by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which meant recognizing Ireland as

an independent republic. The tensions were reflected in a striking episode. In November, the *Santa Fe* newspaper published a cover story revealing the uneasiness of the president of the Argentine Committee for Irish Freedom in Rosario, Juan A. Throne, as a result of a controversial speech made by the British Ambassador, Sir Ronald MacLeay, on "*la delicada cuestión irlandesa*." According to the note, Thorne "claimed for the propaganda that he and his compatriots carry out in a free country, the respects they deserve, given that the minister has described it as 'abominable, inspired by hatred'" [41] ("La cuestión irlandesa en la Argentina". *Santa Fe*, November 6, 1921, my translation). Pro-Irish propaganda posters had been posted in the city of Buenos Aires and some provincial centers, which were harshly criticized by MacLeay for their content. In view of this, Ginnell considered that the English diplomat's statements deserved a response and suggested to the Committee to act on them, which resulted in the sending of a letter from Throne to the British ambassador.

Conclusion

Although Laurence Ginnell's arrival initially went virtually unnoticed – both in the national and provincial press – the situation became different as the months went by, once the anti-British campaign intensified. Public meetings, political rallies and masses allowed the diplomatic envoy to fulfill different objectives – give greater visibility to the republican cause, raise funds, strengthen ties within the community, etc. – and extend the propaganda campaign to the rest of the country. In the particular case of the masses for the "Irish dead", the figure of the martyrs was used as a cohesive element – amalgamating the religious and the political – in an attempt to inspire nationalist sentiment in favor of the Republican cause, even outside the diaspora.

The deployment of these collective actions by the diplomatic mission made it possible for the Irish cause to acquire greater resonance beyond the borders of Buenos Aires. In this process, the provincial press became a key propaganda vector, spreading in towns and cities of the interior of the country the different activities organized by the diplomatic staff, thus allowing to break with the hegemony of the main newspapers of Buenos Aires – some of them critical because of their pro-British affiliation – in a clear support to Irish independence.

Notes

1 "era predominantemente local, pequeña, con publicaciones facciosas, y disponía de pocos lectores"

2 Lentamente, las dos primeras décadas del siglo asisten al proceso de configuración de un campo específico de relaciones donde el periodismo escrito se particulariza como práctica, se separa formalmente del poder del Estado y de los partidos políticos y sienta las bases del periodismo moderno, masivo y comercial característico del siglo veinte.

3 Aunque los ciudadanos de a pie no podían acceder directamente a las magias del cable, el impacto del flujo subatlántico de signos les llegaba por la vía de la prensa, que cada día hablaba de lo que ocurría en aquel mundo. Desde la última década del siglo XIX, ese mundo estaba más cerca en tiempo y, por lo tanto, en espacio subjetivo. Sus alternativas cotidianas, que circulaban en decenas de miles de ejemplares, componían una oferta de noticias grandes y pequeñas: llegadas por vías diversas, se ofrecía a los lectores de manera más constante y abundante que nunca.

4 "agitada vida periodística."x

5 The book "La independencia de Irlanda: la conexión argentina" (2016) written by the Irish historian Dermoth Keogh – constantly consulted in this work – covers in depth the life and work of Laurence Ginnell.

6 *Sinn Féin* (Ourselves), left-wing political party founded in 1905 by Arthur Griffith.

7 Eamon Bulfin (1892-1968) was an Irish republican born in Argentina. His father, the writer and journalist William Bulfin (1864-1910), had emigrated to Argentina at the age of 20 where he would become editor and owner of *The Southern Cross*.

8 According to Keogh (2016), *The Southern Cross* dedicated an extensive review to him where it recounted details of his life and political career.

9 According to Dermot Keogh (2016), "periódicos argentinos, a excepción de *La Razón*, o ignoraron la llegada de Ginnell o lo trataron como un suceso menor. Según Alice Ginnell, *La Nación* decidió no cubrir la llegada porque el editor consideraba inapropiados los comentarios del enviado. J.E. Bowen, un destacado irlando-argentino le contó a Ginnell que originalmente La Nación había reservado dos columnas para cubrir su llegada. Sin embargo, cuando el enviado describió a Lloyd George como 'hipócrita', el periódico decidió no publicar semejante comentario" (p. 297).

10 "Irish MP, Mr. Guinnell". *Santa Fe*, July 27, 1921.

11 "as envoy of the republican government of Ireland". *El Diario*, July 27, 1921.

12 "Irish Freedom Committee". *La Acción*, August 5, 1921.

13 "una corona de flores en la tumba de San Martín."

14 "a favor de los ideales de libertad que abriga el pueblo irlandés."

15 "propaganda a favor de los partidos separatistas" ... "una gira por las principales provincias argentinas."

16 "La Misión diplomática de la República de Irlanda". *El Diario*, October 16, 1921.

17 "con entusiasmo la causa irlandesa haciendo crónica del desarrollo que toman los acontecimientos a favor de la República." *El Diario*, October 16, 1921.

18 Keogh (2016) uses the term "tacticas" (tactics). In our case, we prefer to use the concept of "acciones colectivas" (collective actions). The historicization of the concept of "acciones colectivas" (collective actions) refers to the classic works of Charles Tilly (1978) and Sidney Tarrow (1994). In this regard - and recovering the contributions of the aforementioned intellectuals - Andelique, M. (2022) points out that there are multiple ways of classifying collective action and that, in general terms, it is carried out by individuals who share resources around goals. collective. Collective actions can emerge in various spaces or can be defined as episodes of conflict or cooperation where participants present their claims or demands on behalf of more abstract structures or groups. For his part, in his study on collective action and social movements in 20th century Spain, Cruz, R. (1998) maintains that at the beginning of the century an evolution of the forms of collective action takes place, the transition of a traditional repertoire to a new one characterized by greater flexibility and breadth, and a lower degree of violence. In this

sense, demonstrations, rallies or strikes are social processes that are framed within this new repertoire since they are deployed for any type of objective, they go beyond the local framework, that is, they can have national scope, and they do not require the compliance with violent means for its realization. In the Spanish case, rallies were used repeatedly by the population towards the end of the second decade of the century. We could maintain the same in the case of Argentina regarding the political rituals of radicals and socialists at the time of the Centennial (Reyes, 2016).

[19] The Savoy Hotel is a historic building built at the beginning of the 20th century, blocks from Congress Square, by the Italian architect Gerónimo Agostini, in an Eclectic style, inspired by the Milanese Liberty. Due to its privileged location, it has been a center for meetings and political events. Historia (s.f.). Savoy Hotel. https://www.savoyhotel.com.ar/es/about-us/history

[20] The Teatro Coliseo is an old Argentine theater built in the 19th century, located in the city of Buenos Aires. Its history went through different stages, being remodeled and relocated on different occasions. It had an extraordinary structure with "localidades para 2000 personas sentadas en los palcos y 500 paradas". In its terraces took place "la primera transmisión radiofónica de la historia musical argentina: la Ópera Parsifal de R.Wagner". Historia del Teatro Coliseo (s.f.). https://www.teatrocoliseo.org.ar/historia/

[21] As Menéndez, Marisol (2015) points out, martyrdom, as a cultural device, constitutes a cohesive and mobilizing mechanism that can be found even in the secular sphere. In his own words, martyrdom represents an "aparente paradoja que la noción clásica de modernidad plantea, es decir, la diferenciación entre las esferas política y religiosa se ve desfigurada en el martirio, ya que éste implica una creación política de sentido a partir de movilizaciones sociales originadas en el ámbito religioso" (p. 3).

[22] *Santa Fe*, October 23, 1921.

[23] *El Diario*, *La Acción*, October 25, 1921; *Santa Fe*, October 23, 1921.

[24] "Mitin irlandés". *El Diario*, October 25, 1921; "Mitin público". *La Acción*, October 25, 1921.

[25] Solamente deseamos hacer saber la verdad sobre Irlanda a cuyo efecto pedimos a nuestros amigos y cooperadores de inducir a que concurran a todas las personas que sea posible, dando a este mitin la mayor resonancia. Hacemos un llamado especial a los irlandeses para que presten su ayuda a su patria contribuyendo a que el mitin asuma las mayores proporciones. Hacemos también un llamado a aquellos que aprecian el alto significado del derecho de las naciones, y que simpatizan y respetan a una nación pequeña sufriendo por la causa de su libertad y a quienes pedimos desplieguen sus esfuerzos a fin de contribuir a formar y orientar la opinión pública sobre el problema irlandés. "Mitin irlandés". *El Diario*, October 25, 1921.

[26] According to Cruset (2015), although a multiplicity of meanings have been attributed to the category of "Diaspora", it can be applied to "casi cualquier pueblo desterritorializado, que se desplaza del centro a la periferia" and is frequently uses instead the concepts of race, nation and culture.

[27] *El Diario*, October 26, 1921.

[28] Ginnell organized a lunch with Irish community leaders in Argentina to tell them about the campaign and solicit their support, however, he soon "descubrió que había divisiones en la comunidad con respecto a la viabilidad y conveniencia de lanzar un préstamo tan poco tiempo después de que los irlando-argentinos hubieran hechos generosas donaciones a la White Cross" (Keogh, 2016: 310).

[29] *La Acción*, November 8, 1921

[30] *Ibid*.

[31] The towns and temples according to the newspaper: Acebal, Capilla del Señor; Capitán Sarmiento, Colegio San Patricio; Mercedes, Campana; Colonia Caroya, Córdoba; Cacharí, Colonia de la Isla Choele Choele; Carodilla, Mendoza; Colegio San José, Patagones; El Eje, Bequina, Prov. de Corrientes; French, General Lamadrid, General Viamonte, General Belgrano, General Villegas, General Piran, Haedo, Dean Funes, Isla Martín García, Las Heras, Loberia, La Cruz, La Merced, Buenos Aires, Luján

de Cuyo, Lules, La Concepción, Buenos Aires; Holy Cross, Buenos Aires; Mar del Plata, Merlo, Monte, Máximo Paz, Prov. de Santa Fe; Norberto de la Riestra, Olivos, Pehuajó, Pigué Juarez, Passo, Juan N. Fernández, Salto, San Isidro, Suipacha, Santa Teresa, San Cristóbal, Saujil, San Antonio de Areco, San Martín, San Javier, San Fernando, Santuario de Nuestra Señora del Valle, Catamarca, QueQuen, Quilmes, Telén, Rodeo del Medio, Prov. de Mendoza; Tilcara, Jujuy; Venado Tuerto, Talpalqupe. La Acción, November 8, 1921. In the case of Ginnell, he attended the mass held on November 2 at the Santa Cruz Church, located in the city of Buenos Aires (Keogh, 2016).

[32] By then, the reform of the *Santa Fe* constitution absorbed the attention of the Santa Fe newspaper and in the case of *El Diario*, the communal elections in Entre Ríos -with a sweeping victory of the radicalism- constituted the main news.

[33] "el señor Guillermo Morgan y actuando de secretario el señor Santiago E. Bowen, previo un discurso de Mr. Ginnell, quien hizo una alocución extensa y documentada, refiriéndose a los acontecimientos actuales de Irlanda.". *La Acción*, December 2, 1921.

[34] "La tregua actual, dijo el señor Ginnell, no será violada por nuestra parte. Ninguna nación del orbe necesita o desea la paz más urgentemente que nosotros. Nuestro ejército no es un ejército de ocupación, sino puramente de defensa, pues nuestro jefe militar no es un ministro de guerra, sino un ministro de defensa. Pero la paz debe existir con la independencia, una base justa y permanente. Si Inglaterra necesita la paz, lo único que necesita hacer es dejarnos solos. Empero, si fuerzas armadas desembarcan en nuestras costas para intimidar y destruir, les será opuesta resistencia. La propia defensa y conservación, es el primer deber de un país.". "Primer congreso argentino-irlandés". *La Acción*, December 2, 1921.

[35] See Rodríguez, Jeremías (2022). La huelga de hambre como método de protesta política: el caso de Terence MacSwiney en la prensa local de Entre Ríos y Santa Fe, y la revista "Cuasimodo" (1920). Suplemento IDEAS, Vol. 10, No. 10. School of Modern Languages, Universidad del Salvador

[36] "La plegaria del Papa". *La Acción*, August 2, 1921.

[37] "Ninguna ventaja social ... ni la riqueza, ni la gloria, llegan a equivaler a los beneficios de la paz ...; de esta paz vamos a ocuparnos y no de la que resulta ... de las guerras exteriores y de las revoluciones civiles.". *La Acción*, August 5, 1921.

[38] "Inglaterra en paz con todo el mundo? ... Nos cuesta creerlo. Habría que preguntárselo, ante todo, a Irlanda, a la India, a Turquía ... Y por las dudas ... a Malvinas de la Argentina, a... medio mundo". *La Acción*, September 3, 1921.

[39] "a propósito de la próxima conferencia de desarme de las naciones ... el único sistema de llegar a la pacificación de los pueblos". "La voz del Papa". *La Acción*, September 3, 1921.

[40] "Argentina podría encontrar buen mercado para sus productos en Irlanda, a cambio de artículos manufacturados, de ese país, que actualmente, debido al control británico, se hacen pasar como mercaderías británicas". *La Acción*, December 2, 1921.

[41] "... reclamaba para la propaganda que él y sus connacionales realizan en un país libre, los respetos que se merecen, dado que el ministro ha calificado de 'abominable, inspirada en el odio'". "La cuestión irlandesa en la Argentina". *Santa Fe*, November 6, 1921.

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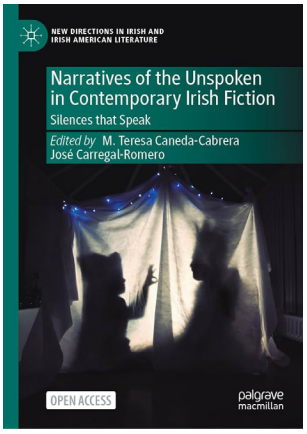
Reviews



Caneda-Cabrera, Maria Teresa & Carregal-Romero, José (editors). *Narratives of the Unspoken in Contemporary Irish Fiction: Silences that Speak*. Palgrave Macmillan, February 2023, pp. 258. ISBN 978-3-031-30455-2 (eBook)

Published in 2023 by Palgrave Macmillan, *Narratives of the Unspoken in Contemporary Irish Fiction: Silences that Speak* proposes to explore the topic of silence by analysing how it is embedded in language, culture, society and institutions and providing a forum for the discussion of the uses (and abuses) of silence in the context of Irish fiction. The collection was edited by Maria Teresa Caneda-Cabrera (Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Vigo, Spain) and José Carregal-Romero (lecturer at the University of Huelva, Spain). Caneda-Cabrera has been a member of the Editorial Board of European Joyce Studies-Brill since 2010 and coordinated the State and ERDF funded Research Project "INTRUTHS: Inconvenient Truths: Cultural Practices of Silence in Contemporary Irish Literature". Carregal-Romero is the co-editor of *Revolutionary Ireland, 1916–2016: Historical Facts & Social Transformations Re-Assessed* (2020), and the author of *Queer Whispers: Gay and Lesbian Voices of Irish Fiction* (2021).

The introduction, titled "Silences that Speak", focuses on presenting the different definitions of silence proposed by different authors. The collection of essays aims at reframing silence not as a void or absence, but as an active agent in the construction of meaning, and a vehicle for the communication of various forms of quietly perpetuated or repressed knowledge. In literature, and especially in Irish literature, silence is then used to denounce the existence of a normative silence deeply embedded in social, religious and cultural practices which have shaped individual behaviours and interpersonal relationships and are woven into the fabric of society and politics in contemporary Ireland. The essays cover a span of different well-known authors in the Irish literary sphere such as Donal Ryan, Emma Donoghue, Colm

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.p183-186
Received: 20/04/2024 Accepted: 24/06/2024

Tóibín, Evelyn Conlon, Kevin Barry, Edna O'Brien, William Trevor, Claire Keegan, Maeve Kelly, Eibhear Walshe, Emer Martin and Sally Rooney

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the role of silence within the framework of contemporary historical novels. Chapter 2, titled "Conspicuously Silent: The Excesses of Religion and Medicine in Emma Donoghue's Historical Novels *The Wonder* and *The Pull of the Stars*" by Marisol Morales-Ladrón, argues that this specific genre should not be perceived merely as narratives set in the past, but rather as vehicles that challenge and fill in the gaps left by traditional, often biassed historical narratives. In a similar vein, Chapter 3, "To Pick Up the Unsaid, and Perhaps Unknown, Wishes: Reimagining the True Stories of the Past in Evelyn Conlon's Not the Same Sky", by M. Teresa Caneda-Cabrera, analyses the rewritings of the Great Famine and the unstable and often ambiguous use of memory as a narrative device.

Chapters 4 and 5 analyse the use of silence via an aesthetic perspective. Chapter 4, "He's Been Wanting to Say That for a Long Time": Varieties of Silence in Colm Tóibín's Fiction" by José Carregal-Romero, focuses on multiple works by writer Colm Tóibín in which silence features as an aesthetic practice to highlight the tensions between emotional release and reticence, and the ambiguities between knowing and unknowing. Meanwhile, Chapter 5, titled "The Irish Short Story and the Aesthetics of Silence" by Elke D'hoker, observes a rising trend in contemporary short stories where silence emerges not as a void, but as a mode of reverence, privacy, and connection, particularly with the natural world. D'hoker argues that in an era marked by growing environmental consciousness, silence in Irish short fiction serves as a conduit for communion with the non-verbal aspects of existence.

Chapters 6 and 7 focus on the tool of silence via a gendered approach. Chapter 6, "Infinite Spaces: Kevin Barry's Lives of Quiet Desperation" by Thomas O'Grady, focuses on the male character and the social landscape that forces men to confront not only the limitations of language but also its inadequacy in articulating the emotional complexity of their private traumas. O'Grady argues that male characters in the text are faced with varying degrees of silence, which manifests in feelings of loneliness, isolation, and diminished self-worth, underscoring their struggle to express themselves effectively, both internally and in their interactions with others. On the other hand, the following chapter titled "The Silencing of Speranza" by Eibhear Walshee, takes on the female perspective, not by analysing female characters but by considering the mother of Oscar Wilde, Speranza, and the silencing and distorting of her scholarly and intellectual career through her life and after her passing.

Chapters 8 and 10 focus on the interconnections between silence and the feeling of shame, often connected to the history of the catholic church in Ireland. Chapter 8, "A Self-Interested Silence": Silences Identified and Broken in Peter Lennon's Rocky Road to Dublin (1967)" by Seán Crosson, focuses on Peter Lennon's 1967 documentary *Rocky Road to Dublin* as a relevant text which illustrates how silence has prevailed well into Ireland's society and culture until this very day, concerning clerical abuse in Ireland. Chapter 10, the second contribution by Caneda-Cabrera, titled "Sure, Aren't the Church Doing Their Best?: Breaking Consensual Silence in Emer Martin's *The Cruelty Men*", further expands on the topic. The analysis focuses on the novel partly inspired by the Ryan Report and the Murphy Report, and directly confronts institutional abuse, challenging not only its existence but also its pervasive silence. To Caneda-Cabrera, Martin's narrative explicitly highlights how institutional abuse often occurred in plain sight, yet paradoxically remained unspoken, relegated to the margins of official discourse due to complicit social norms of silence.

Chapters 9 and 11 focus on the cultural shift post-Celtic Tiger and the habituated silences where power resides. "Silence in Donal Ryan's Fiction" by Asier Altuna-García de Salazar explores how Ryan's depiction of social silences in Ireland exposes the consequences of religious, institutional, hetero-patriarchal and class structures on different discourses of the individual and the community over time and those silenced by it. Chapter 11, "Unspeakable Injuries and Neoliberal Subjectivities in Sally Rooney's *Conversations with Friends* and *Normal People*", once again by Carregal-Romero, explores how Rooney's protagonists display an uneasiness that exposes the inequalities and deceptions of their neoliberal culture, while also using silence as the abandonment of pretences, creating a sense of deep intimacy of close relationships within characters, creating a feeling of more genuine connection.

The tradition of silence in Irish history and culture is undeniable – and that is well reflected in its literature and the essays presented in this volume. *Narratives of the Unspoken in Contemporary Irish Fiction: Silences that Speak* offers a profound exploration into the multifaceted dimensions of silence within the Irish contemporary literary context. It delves into the historical, cultural, and literary implications of silence, revealing it not merely as an absence of sound, but as a powerful force shaping Irish identity and its narratives. From the silence of sociopolitical oppression to the quietude of contemplative spaces, each chapter uncovers layers of meaning, inviting readers to contemplate the significance of what is not spoken out loud, but in actions, beliefs or erasures. As we journey through each of

the works selected for this insightful compilation, we are reminded of the nuanced ways in which silence both conceals and reveals truths, echoing throughout the rich tapestry of Irish culture. With its thought-provoking analysis and illuminating perspectives, this book stands as an indispensable resource for scholars and enthusiasts alike, inviting us to listen attentively to that which is left unspoken.

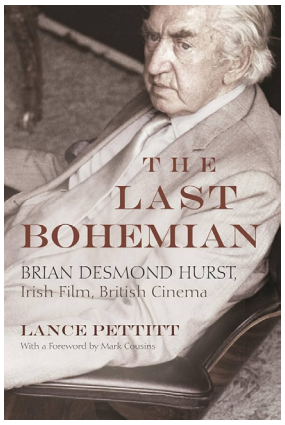
Esther Borges[1]

Notes

[1] Grant Number 2022/04123-, São Paulo Research Foundation.

ABEI Journal – The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies, v. 26, n. 1, 2024, pp. 187-200.

Lance Pettitt's The Last Bohemian: *a snapshot of Hurst's status as a filmmaker*



Pettitt, Lance. *The Last Bohemian: Brian Desmond Hurst, Irish and British Cinema*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 2023. P. 312. ISBN-13: ‍978-0815637295.

Despite its confident title, *The Last Bohemian*: Brian Desmond Hurst, Irish and British Cinema is a large and still evolving research on accumulative knowledge of more than a decade of "extensive use of archival collection and library research" (14), academic work and conferences about Hurst's (1895-1986) life, work and critical reputation, edited by Lance Pettitt. The book inspires and explores the reasons why Hurst and his films were forgotten, included "mainly in the footnotes and film-directory entries in British and Irish cinema history", called as "cinema astray" (by Tom Gunning) and have lately been reclaimed. Among other relevant aspects, the book draws heavily on Hurst's reputation "as lacking sustained critical attention as a filmmaker" (1). This makes the reader think, react to, and engage with the subject. Its wide scope is its greatest strength.

The aim of *The Last Bohemian* is, then, to examine Hurst's full filmography to give ample evidence to the quality of his art, by considering not only his biographical profile, but also his hyphenated Northern-Irish identity, his "formative years of artistic development" in Canada and the United States (13) and his "interstitial status as Ulster exile in London" (16). To describe and analyse the themes proposed, Pettitt approaches a plethora of different concepts of identity, subjectivity, diaspora studies, nationality, spirituality, sexuality, social mobility, migration, home and elsewhere within philosophical and interdisciplinary perspectives.

An Introductory chapter is crucial to any book's ultimate success. *The Last Bohemian's* Introduction captures the readers' attention and compels them to continue reading by clearly

ISSN1518-0581 | eISSN2595-8127 | DOI 10.11606/issn.2595-8127.p187-200
Received: 30/09/2023 Accepted: 04/07/2024

outlining what is to come. In the prelude of his book, Lance Pettitt presents an overview of the organisation of each chapter. First, the writer defines Hurst's status as an exile produced by cultural and historical conditions and states that this subject is developed further in Chapter 1. Still in the Introduction, he presents a list of films that gives him a "sense of measurement and significance" (2), according to subject and genre. Besides it, he also takes into account the three broad phases of Hurst's critical evaluation. The first phase comprises the context of Hurst's individual films in the 1930s and 1940s. The second corresponds to the late 1950s up to the mid-1980s when he dies. It was the period he gained seniority. The third phase of critical evaluation of Hurst's work includes academic and scholarly portraitures, reference works and popular writing from the late 1980s.

Pettitt highlights four important words in the Introduction: "Belfast, British, Bohemian ... and Irish" (2). These words tie together the themes of his research which are developed in the five chapters. Each word resonates within the whole context of the discussion he proposes to hold. They assist the understanding of Hurst as an individual person, his sea journeys and maritime experiments in the British army in the Mediterranean island of Lemnos and Gallipoli (1915), the history of the conflict of the geopolitical division of the island of Ireland, the corpus of films within the cinema history, his transatlantic career as a filmmaker in Canada, New York, Los Angeles and journeys to other countries, such as France. Given the "successive personal experience of exile" and interaction with different places and people, it seems quite suggestive to call it a "transatlantic subjectivity" for the "fluid, transient and mutable existence" (7) he adopted.

As *The Last Bohemian* is divided into five chapters, which provide an impressive and relevant survey for scholars, filmmakers or anyone interested in film studies. The themes mentioned above are explored since his origin as a Belfast-born individual, followed by his transnational subjectivity phase, moving from Ulster to London, then Canada, Los Angeles, New York and Paris and his last phase in London, embracing British cinema. While Chapter 1 is entitled "Formation", Chapter 2, 3 and 4 have three different themes: "Filmmaker", "Fame", and "Finale". Pettitt believes they form the "bulk" of the book, for they cover Hurst's experiences in three decades, from the 1930s to the 1960s, within British cinema. Chapter 5, "Forgotten", examines how himself and his work did not receive the deserved recognition, as they were disregarded from the British and Irish cinema and were only reclaimed in 2004. The resurgence of Hurst's work has lately taken place in face of

significant circumstances, such as press reviews of Hurst's films, "academic and popular writing" about his work, his archive material, "the selective rerelease of films and DVDs" (19), among others. All these topics are essential background for anyone who intends to develop or is developing research on Irish and British films.

Pettitt names the first chapter of the book, "Formation", by highlighting how Hurst's Irishness was inflected by different circumstances in life along the decades of the twentieth century. First, his identity was formed at the intersection of particular social, aesthetic and cultural elements for having inhabited "successive diasporic realms". Then, a combination of successive transatlantic material and experiences and lifelong exile from his hometown "under the flux and pressures of modernity". He further shares the fact that Hurst's Irishness-within-Britishness was formed within a set of transformative migrant creation. Pettitt concludes by recognizing Hurst's identification with a "cosmopolitan, bohemian outlook" peculiar to a generation that used to revolt from bourgeois social norms and conventions of straight culture. Thus, significant part of the poor Edwardian Belfast working class boy can be defined by "an interaction of "here" and "elsewhere" (22).

The aim of Chapter 1 is to highlight the transformations Hurst experiences across his life span which Pettitt associates with his exilic migrations. His Belfast upbringing, early manhood as an Ulster Protestant, name-changing, shape-shifting, "idiosyncratic devotional practice" from Ulster Presbyterianism to Roman Catholicism, and interest in spiritualism make Hurst "a man with highly individual, eclectic and unorthodox ideas about faith and spirituality" (21). Still, his experiences in military service either in contact with other people or with the violence he witnessed (torture, mutilation and rape), together with his libidinous life, having relationship with both sexes and other sort of sexual encounters, help to understand the characters he portrays in his films.

After analysing and interpreting Hurst's attitudes to sexuality and morality, portraying homo- and bisexuality in Anglo-American cosmopolitan cities, albeit illegal and criminalised, and Hurst's social class in Belgravia, London, Pettitt moves to his time in Canada subsidised with a grant of 100 Pounds by the British government. His engagement with arts and aesthetics in Canada was extended to Paris. Together with many artists who flocked to the city of light in search of innovations and revolutions in terms of painting, sculpture, architecture, design, and culture fashion, he improved his sketching and painting techniques. During his time in Paris, he enjoyed not only professional experiences in the art field but also the variety of social

connections in the Parisian avant-garde. In Paris, Hurst teemed with several "figures associate with impressionism, cubism, and the futurists" (41), receiving instruction from them and other talented artists from different areas.

Mapping Hurst's transatlantic journeys back and forth, Pettitt ends Chapter 1 describing his time in Los Angeles in the 1930s, when he encounters John Ford and other important film directors – an opportunity he had to develop "his understanding of film design, camera setups and lightening by observing Ford and many other directors ... of the Hollywood system" (44).

As the final section of Chapter 1 suggests, Toronto, Paris and Los Angeles were three relevant geographical locations for Hurst's social and cultural transformations. Pettitt is successful in bridging every space Hurst to which moved over the first decades of the twentieth century. Throughout the chapter, he skilfully provides not only a crucial reflection on Hurst's personal life, professional career as a filmmaker, but also covers a few political, religious and historical aspects of Irish, British, French and North American cultures. This chapter is particularly inspiring for anyone engaged in Irish culture as well as in Irish and British films.

Chapter 2 discusses Hurst's ten films made from 1934 to 1939 within the British film industry, at a time when "unemployment and widespread austerity" and "financial crash", from 1936 to 1937, hit industry sectors. It noticeably demonstrates that the economic depression that started in the end of 1929s up to 1934s in the financial world did not affect Hurst's career, but rather led him working intensively at Elstree studio in London, achieving prominent social and professional status during this period. Painting, illustration and graphic art blended with his training and experience in direction, staging and camera working in Hollywood's studio system gave him enough support to work partially independently and with studio contract in Britain cinema.

The series of films examined in Chapter 2 evinces a terrific mix of fact, memory and images, capturing the history of a man, his Irish-British identity, extraordinary training in visual art and creative and formalist film directing. Undeniably, the way the writer describes the filmmaker's transatlantic experiences, the films he produced and its contents related to political events, moral values, sexual infidelity, murders, social and cultural concerns and different kinds of sexual defiance raise the reader's curiosity and interest. They are also tempted to watch the films and learn how a person should watch and interpret a film. It is quite impossible to follow Pettitt's analyses of Hurst's short period in "avant-garde" credential

and later as an independent spirit, the subject matter he embraces, and not sense his exilic status and "displaced familiarity with England".

In terms of subject matters, the chapter analyses the different contexts of his films within the British industry. *Irish Hearts* (1934), *Riders to the Sea* (1935) and *Ourselves Alone* (1936) correspond to his early productions. *The Tenth Man* (1936), *Sensation* (1936), and *On the Night of the Fire* (1939) belong to the crime drama topics. The romantic themes he embraces, such as *Glamorous Night* (1937) and *Prison without Bars* (1938) were film adaptations of literary works. His Irish connections in England in the world of "literature, the arts and creative works" and his multitasking roles about revolutions in different contexts, form the basis to produce two famous films: *Ourselves Alone* (1936), and Middle East's revolutions, *Laurence of Arabia* (1936-1938).

Chapter 2 makes readers acquainted not only with Hurst's trajectory in British cinema from 1934 to 1939, but also with his social network in Paris and London (Liam O'Flaherty, Francis Stuart, Nina Hamnet, Patrick Kirwan Denis Johnston, among other important figures in his connections), his residence in Belgravia, and his "non-monogamous" relationship with Norman Dean in London. Not less relevant are the references to Hurst's critical engagement with the art of making films, such as debates on techniques and styles of working developed into British film studios. His profile within the concept of cinema as art form as well as industry come to justify his great influence upon a new generation of directors.

What follows is the analysis of the films Hurst made. In his battle to lift Hurst's profile, Pettitt's top priority is to inform readers about the content and quality of the films in order to show his remarkable achievements. He draws attention to the personal strength of the subject matters of the films along with the specific aspects of editing, cinematography, acting, and sound. They provide information on relevant events and ideologies of the period for a better understanding of its historical background. He devotes the last part of Chapter 2 to the analysis of films, such as *Irish Hearts* (adapted from *The Night Nurse*, 1935), *Riders to the Sea* (J.M. Synge's same title play), *Ourselves Alone* (1936) and *Lawrence of Arabia* (1938). To display the creative force of the director behind them, he presents Hurst as a person responsible for shaping the vision and executions of films and shares the Irish British director's choices and technical standpoints in terms of film's storytelling, pacing, overall atmosphere, music and sound and light effects, characters, location, among others. In short, Pettitt provides a well-rounded critique of the films by capturing striking cinematic elements

that contributed to their overall impact. Cinematography as the visual side of a film is the key feature of Hurst's productions.

Still embarking upon an ambitious attempt to restore Hurst's directing talent, Pettitt presents different critical receptions of *Ourselves Alone* in the press, such as in *The Irish Times*, *The Irish Press, The Evening Standard, The Limerick Licker, the Spectator, Life and Letters Today* and others that highlighted the positive aspects the film generated and Hurst's public profile into British industry. Additionally, he praises the direction, production and performances of its cast.

Pettitt finishes Chapter 2 analysing three of Hurst' film versions that came from tested literary materials, such as the novel, the stage play and the musical: *Glamorous Night*, 1937, *Prison without Bars* (1938) and his last production On the *Night of Fire* (1939). The chapter focuses on the interwar context and influences on Hurst's forays into the writing and direction of film which is situated within "alternative film culture', which alludes his life in Paris and the connections he made there.

In Chapter 3, "Fame, Wartime, and Film Work in the 1940s", Pettitt's research moves forward and embraces Hurst's trajectory in London within British cinema in the 1940s. The author outlines the purpose of the chapter which is aimed at recognizing some of Hurst's "most memorable" films at the wartime period and the success they achieved. Throughout this recognition, he identifies films that explore the impact of war on people's life and the crisis impinged by the post-war order. Here, the author points out Hurst's creative skills and domain of the art of cinematography connected to wartime experiences as responsible for his great success in the 1940s. This leads him to explain the whole scenario of the country affected by the War and how the underlying daily pressures on exiles and internally displaced persons, knowledge of combat and conflict, and melodrama were incorporated into Hurst's varying production. Attentive to the notion of "film as a social medium", he forged the source material of his films to attend the claims of the time in terms of "societal anxieties", class, gender and the new cultural identity after the war. Furthermore, he was aware of British audiences' "feeling of extreme emotions under pressure" (133) together with his personal interest in exploring the historic Irish-British relations in a challenging time.

Moreover, this chapter provides insights on the nature of Hurst's identity in a wider context of the British society. By covering his "sexually promiscuous, open, and socially alternative to hetero norms" (106), life in London at routine air raids, blackout restrictions and

other hard circumstances, the author goes beyond his film work and fame, reaching his personal identity. Meeting friends at clubs, dimly-lit parties in town, having guests in his countryside house on weekends were part of his "upmarket bohemian" life aside documentary, propaganda and commercial filmmaking activities and the Mass Observation projects to capture everyday experiences, thoughts and opinions in of people living in Britain. Here, the chapter is especially instructive in delineating the films sponsored by the Government in London to "convince the British viewing public that the Royal Air Force (RAF) was resourced, prepared, and ready to defend Britain against the Nazi Luftewaffe" (108). *The Lion has Wings* (1939), A *Letter from Ulster* (1942) and *Theirs is the Glory* (1946) are examples of short documentary-style propaganda war films directed by Hurst which highlight the significant British and the Irish military participation in the War.

The comments the author gathers about these films are relevant to understand their contents and the intended effect of the production on filmgoers, that is, the idea of altering their behaviour. Then, two short-form documentary *Miss Grant Goes to the Door* (1940) and *A Call for Arms* (1940) are presented. To the insights of the production comes the films' purpose: "to alienate many sorts of working-class or other feelings" (114).

In terms of feature film, the author considers *Dangerous Moonlight* as Hurst's most memorable film of the time for many reasons, which include scenario, beautiful music, plot, new narrative structure (the film starts at the end of the story) and "strong exploration of exilic angst about belonging, personal love, and national duty" (124). He devotes a few pages of the book to analyse the theme music of the film and its exilic significations which he associates with loss, separation, displaced people and socially eclipsed identities – aspects that resonate with Hurst's life.

What follows are two films that distinguish themselves in the combination of box office and critical praise: *Alibi* (1941) and *Two Hundred Pounds Window.* While the former explores murder and crime in cabaret culture of Paris in the late 1930s, the latter, the moral consequences of gambling within the middle-class family. The author reviews genuine information about *Alibi* and its most memorable moments. Expressly, the film's overall message, the key members of the cast, camera methods, the composition of the film, encoded on-screen queerness in the performance, lighting, among others. These elements the author analyses help readers to improve the understanding of the depth of the film and develop an appreciation of its unique

film techniques. What Hurst attempted and by all accounts achieved in all aspects of the film portrayals, fluidity, and cinematography was a sense of authenticity.

Pettitt chooses *Theirs is the Glory* as "... Hurst's favourite film and the one with which he was most satisfied as a director" (134). *Theirs is the Glory* is a true cinematic reconstruction of the attack of the German forces to the British and Allied at the Battle of Arnhem in September 1944. The film was a tribute to the soldiers deceased in the war. By examining *Theirs*, he shares Hurst's knowledge and experiences from different areas alongside his training with Ford in film aesthetics, lightning, camera work, art design etc. Each of them happens to have a direct effect on the film storyline, portrayal of the characters, cinematic lighting, to mention just a few. These elements work together in a different way to visually and emotionally reinforce or underscore the characters' fear, suffering, grief or heroism in order to seem credible, accurate and authentic to the actual events. In doing so, the author focuses much more on its quality of poetic realism rather than in its plot. He rightly places that the overall success of the film would not be reached without the director's artistry.

Likewise, the writer meditates upon the outcome of the authenticity of visual effects, that is, how they have captivated the emotion of the viewers despite their knowledge of the end result. He provides reflections on the fact that the techniques Hurst incorporated in *Theirs* helped to frame his superb prestige as post-war director within British cinema. Evidently, his expressive writing to describe a few memorable sequences of film makes readers feel touched and compelled to watch it to see how both facts and fiction have worked together the emotional memory. *Theirs is yours* is to be commended for introducing readers to the history of the Second World War and British cinema and it is an excellent choice for those interested in war films as art and those who seek an emotionally charged and heartfelt piece.

The chapter closes highlighting a few compelling points in Hurst's career after the war: his entry in the *British Film Yearbook, 1949-1950*; British films seen in 'quality productivity and filmic achievement" five years after the war; Hurst's contact with Ireland and his idea of building a film studio there; Hurst as the director of *Mercury Film* (Ireland); his sense of exclusion from his country after the Irish government's "unwelcoming rebuke" to his plans of a cinema in Ireland; Hurst's "social mobility and cultural capital" (143); Hurst as part of the portfolio of a famous photographer in London, Angus McBean; British "noir" Films: Hurst's historic drama *Hungry Hill* (Ireland as a setting: 1846-1847 centenary of Irish Famine, class

mobility and sexuality); *Mark of Cain* and *Trottie True, 1946* (first Hurst's technicolour film is a criticism on the institution of marriage) – back to literary-sourced, historical melodramas.

By the end of the 1940s, Hurst was able to reveal to cinemagoers how his craftsmanship, aesthetic talents, and experiences were shaped to attend the context of the Second War and post-war scenarios. His 'lingering memory of the war", Ireland's relations with Britain in a varied of fields but also the Anglo-British way of life, Hurst's increasingly cultural politics in the British scenario.

Further in chapter 4, there are different sections; each one comprises new phases of Hurst's career in the 1950s now. At this point, Hurst is deeply involved with both Ireland and Britain's relations. In this regard, the author remarks that Hurst's Irishness and English patriotism come together and are recognized within the film adaptations he made, such as *Scrooge* (Charles Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, 1848), *Tom Brown School's Day* (Thomas Hardy's *Tom Brown School's Da*y, 1857 novel), *The Playboy of Western Wo*rld (J.M. Synge's play). A plethora of themes is explored to mark Hurst's concerns with "the Second World War", "colonialism", "mixed race" and "cultural belonging", "memory of the war" and "monarchy". Still, he underlines Hurst and Killenin's unsuccessful attempt to set a film studio in Ireland again.

Nevertheless, what the author presents in this chapter is a brief outline of the geopolitical context of Britain and the world during the post-war phase (1950-1960). Independence of many British colonies and dominions, the United Kingdom out of the EEC (European Economic Community), "the newly crowned Elizabeth II" and Britain's political relationship with Ireland, the increase of emigration in Ireland, particularly, from the Republic, working-class Irish people occupying different positions in different sectors in Britain, among others are source materials for Hurst and his Irish-born generation react artistically.

Pettitt recalls the arrival of television in the 1950s and how the new social medium comes to affect both independent production companies and cinema audience. As Hurst's strategy was to produce films to attend the interest of overseas market in the colonies, the world he expresses and builds is related to the world of the audiences. *Simba* (1955), *Dangerous Exile* (1957), *The Malta Story* (1953) and *The Black Tent* (1956) were the films he directed. However, the author recognizes the 'discursive tensions and limits' of his films due to the dramatic narratives featuring exilic Irish or estranged "nationals" in "foreign lands".

Still concerning the period called "the Elizabethan age", "Englishness and the assertion of cultural values" entered into question. It was the opportunity to celebrate great names of English literature while trying to contest and reconfigure the nature of Victorian texts. Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1946) and *Great Expectations* (1948) and Alberto Cavalcanti's *The Life and Adventure of Nichols Nickleby* (1947) were examples of literary pieces adapted by different film producers, such as Olivier and David Lean.

Following Pettitt's analysis, what we see early in the decade is Hurst working for two different independent companies, Talisman Films and Renown Films. His contract with Rank studio had expired and was soon renewed to direct wartime projects in Africa. *Tom Brown School Days* and *Scrooge* (1951) are films he directed in the period whose critical reception shows dissonances and ambivalences due to the changes he introduced to the source texts. By analysing Hurst's cinematic version of *Tom Brown School Days* and *Scrooge* (1951) according to different critics and reviewers, Pettitt offers a few distinct creative visual elements and overtones which work against Dickens's original text and its previous film version. The author points out questions the director shapes in the screen narratives which are related to the excluded and the socially marginalized individuals, in conjunction with vulnerable children and "the isolated older generation". He underscores different comments the critics made on the versions, not only related to distortions, flaws and merits but also to "the intensity of emotional attachments between boys" (174), "underlying homosexual tension within a homosocial setup", moral dilemma of the time fused with his personal humanism (p. 175). For those interested in film adaptation of literary works, the analyses Pettitt presents help them to see the new medium as a different piece of art.

Going further in Chapter 4, the author invites readers to understand the success of *Scrooge* by discussing its special effects, "spiritual impetus", attempts to reconcile the Kenyan political issues with those of Ireland, the position of Britain past and present in the world, among other elements which also dominate the films of the middle years of the decade. After signing another contract with Rank, Hurst directs *Malta Story* (1953), *Simba* (1955), *The Black Tent* (1956) and *Dangerous Exile* (1957) with African settings. Every project he embraces represents "opportunities to rekindle interests in Ireland as well as in Britain" (p.199), independent of location and time the story originally takes place. The same can be said about *Behind the Mask* and *His and Hers.* His second and last screen version of Synge's *The Playboy of Western World* is another product of his exilic imagination. He wrote the screenplay together

with Killanin. As usual, reviewers and critics (*The Irish Time*, for example) consider the source text as the starting point to criticize the production based on the transformations the director makes. Pettitt presents the faults and merits critics recognize in the film. The design/costume hair, music track, "the acting of both leads", too long scenes of sports, bad as a film and as a screen version of a drama text are the "critical opprobrium" of Sanford Sternlicht. Despite the demerit the critics give to *The Playboy*, a few positive aspects can be pointed out in terms of casting, performances of the main actors and cinematography.

Pettitt comes to the end of the chapter examining Hurst's career along the decades of his life when he recognizes his "significant status and critical respect" within the film industry, "periods of relative contractual security", disappointments for cancellation of projects (Lawrence of Arabia project, film versions of O'Casey's play, *Shadow of a Gunman* and Liam O'Flaherty's *Famine*, among others) and "his position of being Irish in England".

Chapter 5, "Forgotten: The Wake of a Fame", is an intriguing title given to what we have seen thus far. The two opposite words, "forgotten" and "fame" invite readers to ponder over the reasons and circumstances why this has happened to Hurst's life and career. The massive number and success of great number of the films he produced could be enough reasons to be remembered and celebrated. If they were "not always in themselves artistically innovative" (219) but a product of his in-between mentality is another question to be discussed.

As any curious reader, I am prepared to understand Hurst's marginal and invisible position in cinema history and the process of "reclamation" and "rediscovery" of his reputation that Pettitt proposes in the final chapter. A selection of critical comments about his exilic and queer condition in conjunction with the films he produced and directed seem to justify his obscure career. Incorrect birth dates, dismissive judgment about his production, interests more directed to bohemian life than to "the art and business of making films", problematic status in England, "his anecdotal recall of his life in and out the world of cinema" (227) audio recorded, self-serving bias in tension with a true Hurst did not help to project a positive image.

After examining the facts that have clouded Hurst's biographical profile and filmography, Pettitt moves to the events that provided conditions for putting him back in people's mind, for his rediscovery. To fulfil the expectations of the readers who have followed his biography and film legacy so far, the author gathers a list of events and works that have helped his popular rebirth. Most of the events are related to Ireland. In Britain, BFI (British

Film Institute) archives have made its own contribution. Opinions about his significance in the cultural scenario are among them, despite a few controversial ones.

Following Pettitt's research, the millennium 2000 corresponds to the year when Brian Desmond Hurst's revival started to proliferate. "Titanic Quarter" (the urban project in Belfast), the commemorations of Good Friday Agreement, 2004 Cork Film Festival, the publication of the first edition of Robbins's *The Empress of Ireland*, academic works on his films, his inclusion on the Trinity College "Irish Film and TV Research" website, "popular commemorative practices" in Ireland (p. 234), renaming of Belfast city airport in 2005, the creation of Hurst Estate to raise his profile with publications, websites, events, etc. are a few events which have helped the talented director and producer to be recognized and celebrated within British cinema. Regarding Hurst Estate, Pettitt recognizes relevant historical data about his "unorthodox sexuality and religious practice" but sees a few aspects of Hurst's profile which are regrettably overlooked, such as the definitions of "the men and masculinity of a generation" explored in his films, his critical positioning within war conflict films, among others new biographical contributions he added in *The Last Bohemian.*

In the end of Chapter 5, Pettitt suggests a few questions for future research. He considers they need to be explored in further works to robustly capture a more in-depth information about Hurst, given the resources available and positive currents to investigate fluid identities. I, particularly, believe articles would benefit by assessing the likely value of possible further research.

After offering a solid and organised analysis of Hurst's filmography, emphasising his talent and taste as a visual artist (especially in the framing composition of human profile) and suggestive evidence of his queer sexuality, Pettitt examines the events that favoured his revival, reaching the conclusion that Hurst has finally been found in the twenty first century. As far as the title he gives to the book, he considers Hurst as the last bohemian of the era of cinematic modernity who was forgotten by the Irish cinema, despite being "a major British director who begins his career with Irish features", as the film historian Anthony Slide claims (239).

In the Conclusion, Pettitt sets out with a brief summary of the ideas developed in the chapters, reassessing a few aspects of his research. First, he reexamines "the nature of his bohemianism and reputation as a film director" (240), by comparing Hurst's achievements with his other Irish and British peers of the time. As in the conclusion of any book, he does not introduce any content but restates the book's thesis, reviews the chapters in a different

tone, stating Hurst's position in both British film industry and Irish film history, presenting the results of his research. He reconsiders the main purpose of the book, that is, to analyse the whole range of films Hurst produced for different studios in Britain, the circumstances within which they were made, his recognition and success in the film industry. By doing so, he came to see how stable Hurst's career was. He reappraises other aspects, such as the primary source of his films and its critical reviews, his critical writing on filmmaking, Hurst's artistic formation in Toronto, his "Ulster Exilic" identity and status, his "film versions of Ireland and his self-styled Irish identity", and Hurst's critical reputation as a filmmaker within Irish and British cinema history.

Before reaching his conclusion, he raises a few points on Hurst's national identity as an Ulster Protestant and the transformations this status underwent according to his different spatial mobility and time. Overall, Pettitt presents a cohesive argument to justify his view of Hurst's films, reappraising his qualities as a talented film director within the British film industry from the 1930s to the 1960s. He is skilled in demonstrating the relevance of Hurst's films in British film dynamics. As far as the illustrations, they help to foster a deep understanding of Hurst's life and films on a variety of levels. On the thematic level, the reader may be able to comprehend the themes of the films analysed through the lens of the shot sequences selected to illustrate them. In this regard, the use of a few screenshot images with scene sequence analysis was very relevant to effectively clarify the author's approach. Still and all, we can say that the author was very skilful in the use of scene sequence analysis together with a good number of screenshot illustration images. They successfully communicate the intended message to the readers. In other words, the visual elements embedded in the images were crucial to provide a fully understanding of the textual content. As the data, they are referenced in a comprehensive 19-page bibliography and films referenced, 34-page notes, 12-page appendix and 21-page index.

In many respects, *The Last Bohemian* deserves to be read widely beyond the boundaries of film studies, for it has much to contribute to other disciplines, such as cultural studies, anthropological and biographical studies, identity studies, migration studies, social sciences, particularly, academic writing. It is still worth highlighting how easy it is to read and digest the book, and how the paragraphs of the chapters are well-organised and provide background information to support the thesis statement. Readers have the opportunity to access substantial knowledge about Hurst's life, filmography and directorial reputation from

Pettitt's analyses in *The Last Bohemian*. He actively contributes with powerful and concise reflections on Hurst's career more than a half century from his death. I would recommend *The Last Bohemian* for teaching because it is advantageous to have so many perspectives and historical overviews collected in one book. In my opinion, it is a pioneering study on Hurst, since early works did not make readers recognize a sense of genius in Hurst as Pettitt did in the detailed analyses he provided.

As my final remarks, I must say, based on what I have read in The Last Bohemian, that the marginalisation of Hurst's work by film studies and Ireland cinema history must be regarded as nothing short of a scandal.

Noélia Borges

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Ficha técnica

Formato	21cm x 29,7cm
Tipologia	EB Garamond 11 / 21
Número de páginas	190

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