
SPR

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Spanish and Portuguese Review (SPR), the annual graduate student journal of the AATSP, invites the submission of original, unpublished manuscripts on culture, film, linguistics, literature, pedagogy, second language acquisition, translation, and other areas related to the study or teaching of Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian languages and cultures. Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods of research are encouraged. In addition to articles, *SPR* invites the submission of book and media reviews, interviews, and notes on technology and pedagogical resources. All submissions should display thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the subject and field in question; be written in Spanish, Portuguese, or English; and strictly adhere to the journal's guidelines. The material published in *Spanish and Portuguese Review* reflects the opinions of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors or the journal's sponsoring organization (AATSP).

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Editor's Message

Stacey Margarita Johnson

Vanderbilt University

Every year since 2015, *Spanish and Portuguese Review* (SPR) publishes a collection of articles written, reviewed, and edited by graduate students—with contributions from a few faculty and staff like myself. The result of their collective efforts this year, I am sure you will agree, is a fascinating volume that digs into some of the most salient issues of the moment. And what a moment it is! As I write this, I am in my home office, my primary workspace since March 2020, connected to the outside world through video conferencing. I imagine many of our readers find themselves in the same situation, as do most of our authors and journal staff this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed life as we know it, but the pandemic is only one of several world-shaking threads in the year 2020. This year has also given rise to widespread protests against state violence as well as other social and political movements. Institutions have changed the way they imagine on-site, hybrid, and online work. Universities, which for most graduate students are their employers in addition to their intellectual homes, have adapted as they face the events of 2020. Some universities have moved classes fully online, while others have embraced hybrid models. Some universities have expanded departments working on race and other vital issues, while many have cut programs and departments to reign in expenses as they face an uncertain future. Responses to the current challenges have not been uniform, although change and uncertainty have been universal.

Of all those who contribute to universities' academic communities, graduate students in particular find themselves in precarious positions in the past year. Graduate students who are instructors of record, as many in Spanish and Portuguese are, have faced a wide range of challenges. Some have been required to teach in person during this pandemic, navigating masks and social distancing to co-construct new ways of interacting with students in the face-to-face classroom. Other graduate students have needed to move their courses online with little notice or training in online teaching. Graduate students engaged in research, such as all of the authors in this issue of *SPR*, have persisted in their intellectual endeavors while also negotiating community participation, changing expectations, and, for those nearing the end of their programs, a dwindling academic job market. There are so many questions that graduate students must grapple with in 2020. How do researchers conduct human subject research

during a pandemic? How do our fields help make sense of current events? How do departments conduct virtual interviews for open faculty positions? How do graduate students continue this work while making room for their own experiences of illness, isolation, and/or precarity?

Issue 6 of *SPR* is a testament to the fact that graduate students in Spanish and Portuguese are not just grappling with these and many other pressing questions, they are providing the academy with a vision of our intellectual future. As you read, I know you will be impressed at how clearly these articles address the current moment and all that it entails.

This issue begins with a guest editorial from Rosie Seagraves with advice and encouragement for graduate students considering the world outside of the ivory tower. Not all is lost, colleagues. There are still opportunities for you to bring your brilliance into the world in ways that will also put food on your table.

In the first of a bounty of articles in this issue of *SPR* that weave together literature, culture, politics, and current events, Nicole Bonino explores how inhabitants of the slums of Buenos Aires are resilient in the early days of COVID-19 and issues a call to action to imagine how research and activism will benefit this and other such communities. Next, Ellen Bishell deconstructs two popular reggaetón music videos, *Calypso* (2018) and *La Gozadera* (2015), to show us how they construct and commodify “Carribeanness” through music and images as they negotiate power relationships and ideologies. Isaac Veysey-White also unpacks power and ideology in his reading of Trifonia Melibea Obono’s *La Bastarda* (2016), particularly how this Equatorial Guinean novel subverts colonial gender norms. Ignacio Arellano-Torres also analyzes gender roles, identity, and expression in the contrast of prison and liberation, this time in the Brazilian film *Madame Satã* (2002). Self-creation is similarly a core theme in Laura Mayron’s article on the book *Visión de Nueva York* (Martín Gaité 2005), a work that defies simple categorizations.

Next, Ofelia Montelongo begins her article with the question, “¿Qué nos hace querer comunicarnos con otras personas?” This question leads to an analysis of exile, nation, communication, and trauma. Linda Gruen also explores nation, specifically Colombia and the U.S. and their racial and political hierarchies, through Salvador Camacho Roldán’s 1887 travelogue. The final article, by Nuno Brito, analyzes poetry by Carlos Drummond de Andrade and brings the reader full circle back to the concept of resistance, one of the central themes of not just this issue, but of the year 2020.

On the language and linguistics side, we have several articles that shine a new light on how languages are acquired and used. Lillian Jones provides a compelling argument in favor of teaching and using texting language based on survey data. Larissa Goulart provides evidence of how formulaic sequences are acquired by learners of Portuguese at different levels, a study with immediately applicable implications for teachers of both Spanish and Portuguese. Finally,

Marc Gandarillas provides critical insights into the process of language change known as subjectification and its implications.

We also feature two reviews in this issue, one by Andrea Amado and another by Laura Colaneri.

This year has been defined by so many social and political events that have affected teachers and graduate students of Spanish and Portuguese. This journal, which is published by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP), has an even broader scope than many other journals because we include scholars in literature, culture, pedagogy, linguistics, applied linguistics, area studies, and other disciplines writing in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. With such a wide range of experts working to address our most pressing questions, the future of our profession is in good hands. This issue is a testament to such resistance, self-creation, and innovation.

Guest Editorial: Go with the Flojo

Rosie Seagraves
Seagraves Marketing, LLC

The times, dear reader, the *times*. They're rotting fabulously, callous to anyone's safety and ravaging even the faintest sense of optimism. You've more than likely been asked to sacrifice your physical health for a semester of teaching while facing a dismal, impenetrable job market.

I'm referencing the regular job market, not the academic one, which we will just ignore.

My message is actually positive. First of all, there's a lot of great advice out there already on the ins and outs of finding a job outside academia. The ship has been sinking for some time, but the lifeboats are multiplying and many have landed ashore with strong prospects. The Titanic this is not. And while many would describe the current job market just as I have, when you compare it to the odds involved in a tenure-track pursuit, suddenly you're swimming in possibility.

For me, even without the weight of a global pandemic blanketed in fascism, it was a bit of a tough road at first. However, I truly would not change a thing (it's taken me a long time to feel that way, trust me). The short version: I completed my PhD in 2013, taught for a year, had a postdoc for two more years and then started considering alternatives. I was tired of moving around and crying before Skype interviews. I was also suspicious that there was more out there, if I was just willing to jump.

And jump I did. I taught Spanish at a private high school for two years, worked as a copywriter at two marketing agencies, and then started my own freelance marketing business at the start of this year (yes, this year, of all years).

When I was searching, I found some of the resources to be a little ambiguous. And the tone of it all has trended toward "relentlessly apocalyptic" even pre-2016. So late last year, my friend Rebbecca Kaplan and I started a podcast, "PostDoctoral," where we broke down all the typical advice and what you really need to *do* to land a nonacademic job. I got too busy to continue after Season 1, but she's still putting out excellent episodes you can listen to on all your favorite platforms (Shameless plug? You bet!)

Assuming you heed all the traditional advice we cover on the podcast (do your informational interviews, write a resume, focus on skills, network, etc.), I have but one additional recommendation:

Do not at any point give up on yourself.

You are absolutely ready to conquer any number of jobs out there. There is a short period of adjustment where you won't recognize some words or know

where the break room is. This is something that your prospective employer will worry about. No matter the industry, they will consider it a fast-paced environment with no room for novices. Practice calmly speaking to this point with confidence: You are coming to the job knowing that you will have to work harder in the beginning to learn the industry, but you are confident that you have the core skills to carry your weight, chief among them perseverance.

I say all of this because when I look back at my own path, it was my ability to articulate confidence in myself that ultimately got me each job—and helped me be successful at it.

Let's pause here for an anecdote.

I remember visiting a professor's office hours as a master's student. I asked about my performance on a recent assignment. Judgement was swift.

"Flojo," he summarily replied.

Truth time: I didn't know what flojo meant and had to ask. I could tell I was embarrassing myself, but I no longer cared. Fine—what was so flojo about it? What did I need to do to improve?

I had entered graduate school extremely self-conscious about my level of Spanish and terrified of revealing my general idiocy to the rest of the crowd. But the more I had to prepare for my master's exam and actually earn a degree, the less I cared about looking stupid. "I can worry about how I seem, or I can do what I need to do to pass this thing," I told myself. It was a turning point—and a detachment that has come in handy time and again.

From oral defenses to client presentations, I've found that calmly processing and responding to feedback is the bread and butter of my job—and a major asset. Let's consider marketing as an example. It's all about convincing people to take action. What that means at a practical level is that you have to be able to present, and at various points defend, a compelling argument. In a business-to-business (B2B) environment, this usually also involves breaking down highly technical and/or complex ideas to make them simple to understand for the buyer.

What do you do to earn an MA, PhD, or EdD *other* than present and defend arguments? Respond and adjust to relentless (albeit constructive) criticism? And I've been out of graduate school for seven years now, so I don't know what's cool in the theory world anymore, but I'm willing to bet it's convoluted in nature and requires a lot of decoding.

You don't have to go into marketing, but you do have to embrace what you bring to the table and make it clear to the people who might hire you. And you are uniquely equipped to handle that task.

You have proven, day in and day out for the last five-plus years, that you are not afraid to have a point of view, then defend and/or modify it based on other perspectives.

This is the essence of having a useful presence in any business meeting.

You can take ideas and break them down to their essence, decoding language and advocating for new ways of thinking.

You will be there to dig in and solve problems when others back away.

You strategize the clearest ways to present information and help students grow over the course of a semester. You think critically about how to help them demonstrate their mastery of a subject.

You can craft a strategic plan and properly benchmark progress.

You know a language that most of the country speaks yet is sorely lacking in a lot of professional spaces.

(Mic drop.)

Forget what anyone thinks or how your journey “seems” as it unwinds. I had to switch careers a few times before I found what really made me happy. My impulse at every pivot was to worry about how it looked. It’s only natural, but you have to set that worry aside and look within. I’ve been smirked at, severely doubted, and called crazy. But you know what I’ve always had? A job.

Please head out and let them know what you’re capable of. Some jobs might be right for you, some might not. All will pay better—and reward your (probably phenomenal) effort with things like raises. You must, and you will, champion yourself until somebody gets it and makes you an offer. And when that time comes, know that you are only at the beginning of what you can accomplish.

Villa miseria también es América: Resistance and Resilience in Argentinian Slums During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Nicole Bonino

University of Virginia

Abstract: The concepts of “resistance” and “resilience” are at the core of the lifestyle of *villeros*, the inhabitants of the slums of Buenos Aires. For these underrepresented communities, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic represents only one of the challenges that living in unregulated residential areas implies. Raised in geographical areas non-suitable for life, Argentinian slums are usually affected by unpredictable climatic phenomena and social plagues that our myopic judgment struggles to identify. Since January 2020, we are witnesses to and protagonists of an extraordinary, global phenomenon that will permanently change the way we perceive our environmental and social surroundings. COVID-19 pushes us to reevaluate issues of social awareness, class, and global justice and to provide long-term solutions that, hopefully, will prevent vulnerable communities from considering measures such as social distancing as a luxury.

Keywords: Argentinian slums, COVID-19, pandemic, resilience, *villa miseria*

On a mid-March night, at 9pm, residents of Buenos Aires showed up on their balconies to applaud the sanitary personnel and those on the front lines of the pandemic. “Esta no es la película que elegimos, pero todos somos protagonistas.” With these words, Argentinian actress Norma Aleandro opened a viral video created with the collaboration of the Argentinian society of actors—the Sociedad Argentina de Gestión de Actores Intérpretes (SAGAI)—in order to cheer up the acting community. Life, at the time of a pandemic, feels like a sci-fi movie.

Global literature has always fantasized on how humanity would react to a pandemic. Past masterpieces by Dante Alighieri, Giovanni Boccaccio, and William Shakespeare, but also contemporary novels—such as *The Andromeda Strain* (1969) by Michael Crichton, *The Stand* (1978) by Stephen King, *Love in the Time of Cholera* (1985) by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and *Station Eleven* (2014) by Emily St. John Mandel, among others—offer catastrophic scenarios caused by implacable viruses or recall past pandemic diseases to reflect, in metaphorical ways, on humanitarian disasters. Soon, “2020” might become the title of some kind of dystopian novel or movie and, unfortunately, we will be its protagonists.

During the “Covid and the Environment Webinar” organized by the Environmental Resilience Institute (ERI) on May 6, 2020, Charlotte Rogers inspired her audience by suggesting that the virus SARS-CoV-2 teaches that the delicate balances that uphold our planet might lead to the realization of creative ecological practices aimed at reinforcing global connections and providing long-term solutions to contemporary crises. Every disaster provides an opportunity to

rethink our relationships with our social and physical environment. Having the intellectual privilege of registering real-time reactions to global phenomena is not something that happens every day. All social spheres are being affected at the same time by the same “invisible enemy,” from food industry and culture, to global and local policies, justice, and environmental studies. We are the witnesses to a global phenomenon that is changing the way we think about human fragility and resistance. Are we going to learn something from this global pandemic? Are we going to build large-scale individual and public policies? We need our socio-political system to be resilient, to recover and protect vulnerable populations.

Forced to stay at home for several weeks, people are becoming more or less consciously experts in what Rob Walker calls “the art of noticing.” This forced lockdown is a time to contemplate our surroundings actively: seeing wildlife repopulating the streets of global metropolises can help us reconsider our anthropocentric perspective. Understanding how individuals from different cultures and geographical areas react to this pandemic can sharpen our social consciousness. Experiencing situations of discomfort might suggest that some individuals are leading a privileged existence, unrealistically detached from everyday emergencies. In fact, while nature as a whole is constantly affected by disruptive upheavals—such as deforestation, habitat loss, and diseases—and while asylum seekers, climate refugees, immigrants, and other categories of unsheltered human beings are affected by calamities on a daily basis, our judgment is myopic when it comes to a deep understanding of global realities.

Thanks to the progress achieved in the field of Environmental Humanities, we are seeing a rebalancing between the role of humans and that of the natural realms of which we indissolubly form part. Given this, we are unfortunately still far from observing consistent improvements in the way some individuals consider others. Adapting this concept to one of the ten commandments instituted by the Major in George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* (1945), we could say that all humans are equal, but some humans are more equal than others.¹ Social inequality is a pandemic even more dangerous than COVID-19. This imbalance is easily perceivable in global metropolitan areas, which are microcosms where injustice and deprivation are a terrifying plague.

The aim of this article is to spread awareness on the effects of COVID-19 on unsheltered urban areas. By lending a voice to underrepresented communities, this essay offers a general depiction of how Argentinians reacted to the spread of the pandemic, proving their resistance and resilience. Considering that we are still in the midst of a global pandemic, it is nearly impossible to reconstruct a well-defined picture of the socio-cultural effects of COVID-19. Due to the lack of academic studies on the topic, the present article wishes to update the reader on the latest newspapers’ studies and governmental analysis published

1 The original quote reads “All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others” (Orwell 17).

by American and Argentinian presses about the situations of the slums of Buenos Aires from February 2020 to August 2020. Geographically, the present analysis is confined to Capital Federal and the urban agglomeration known as Gran Buenos Aires as, in view of the dimensions of the Argentinian country, the socio-economic situation of its inhabitants can considerably vary according to the regions that are being investigated.

The global response to the coronavirus disease has resulted in profound changes to society that are impacting human well-being and environmental health in complex ways. Daily habits are now changing for everyone. Nevertheless, while part of the global population complains about the quality of their virtual meetings, or about the lack of supplies that prevent them from finding the yeast necessary to bake, the rest of it is living in toxic environments, where food insecurity is a real challenge. If quarantine makes deprivation a holistic reality, its consequences are not the same for everyone. For example, for the social actors residing in Argentinian slums, where infrastructure and healthcare are inadequate, social distancing is a luxury as entire families are forced to share the same bathrooms and crockery.

According to the data offered by the World Health Organization (WHO), the WHO was first informed of a pneumonia of unknown causes detected in Wuhan (China) on December 31, 2019. A month later, on January 30, the outbreak was declared a public health emergency of international concern. On February 11, the mortal disease received a name, COVID-19, and the virus provoking the illness was identified as a severe acute respiratory syndrome called SARS-CoV-2. Within a couple of months, with the majority of the population locked in their homes, institutions, organizations, and global governances started to use social media to communicate the latest updates on the spreading of the virus. According to the data published in *Americas Quarterly* and *The Nation*, immediately after experiencing the first, detrimental effects of the virus, Argentina offered a rapid response to COVID-19, with a mandatory, nation-wide lockdown and travel ban. These measures had different consequences for the slum dwellers.

The data published in 2019 by the Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INDEC) and updated on April 2020 show that 25.9% of Argentinian dwellings are considered under the poverty line and 5.7% of these residential areas are non-suitable for life.² In the country, 2.2 million people live in these

2 According to the Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INDEC), 35.5% of the entire Argentinian population is considered to live under the poverty line. According to the definition offered by INDEC in 2016: “La línea de indigencia se establece a partir del valor monetario de la Canasta Básica Alimentaria, que representa a los productos requeridos para la cobertura de un umbral mínimo de necesidades energéticas y proteicas de cada miembro del hogar. La línea de pobreza representa el valor monetario de una Canasta Básica Total (CBT), canasta de bienes y servicios obtenida a través de la ampliación de la Canasta Básica Alimentaria. Los hogares cuyos ingresos sean menores a la CBT se caracterizan en el estudio como pobres” (11).

miserable conditions. The Observatorio de la Deuda Social de la Universidad Católica Argentina (ODSA) estimated that there are more than four thousand slums in the country. In this situation, during the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of people are spending months in a mandatory lockdown. In an interview for the newspaper *Crux*, Father Fabian Belay, coordinator of the “pandemic crisis task-force” of the Archdiocese of Rosario, declared:

Keeping up with the mandatory isolating measures when the sun hits on the metallic roof of the one-room more than one generation calls “home” is not easy. People are doing their best in these popular neighborhoods to maintain the isolation, but our goal is “community isolation,” meaning that nobody goes in or out of the neighborhood.

INDEC reported that, in Argentina, 12.5% of the entire population is classified as “NBI” (Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas), which means that it is officially unemployed, and it lacks essential resources, such as running water and electricity. Often, these individuals work informally as bricklayers, cleaners, and street vendors, and are paid under the table. This means that they do not receive official forms of support from governmental and local institutions and that they do not have healthcare or pension funds.³ For them, social isolation has a different meaning than for the rest of the population, as it implies the existence of hygienic, economic, and social supplies and norms that do not apply to these unsheltered areas. Nevertheless, informal social organizations and NGOs—such as Techo, Observatorio del Derecho a la Ciudad, directed by Jonatan Emanuel Baldiviezo, and the Argentinian social movement Barrios de Pie coordinated by Silvia Saravia—are trying to support these “invisible” urban communities by delivering food and medicines and attending to the children and the elderly. Sadly, civil engagement is not enough to support these overpopulated areas. How did it all begin?

Before the urban and rural conformation of Argentina underwent permanent modifications at the end of the 19th century, the country faced the progressive creation of “Gran Buenos Aires,” which included much of the city like the suburbs and villages. This geographical extension favored contacts between indigenous communities, creoles, and immigrants causing identity conflicts, but also facilitating the development of a hybrid and syncretic society. Since the

3 In 1943, the Argentinian government established the Dirección Nacional de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social, an organization that in 1949 became the Ministry of Health. This important step led to the expansion of social rights and social security, but, at the same time, it caused the development of a fragmented system divided into three subcategories of users: low-income social groups, who do not have social security, salaried workers and retirees, and the sectors of the population whose economic status allowed them to purchase private insurance. The first two categories do not receive pension contributions (Belló 100).

1880s, the massive diasporic movements affecting Argentina inspired several writers—such as Antonio Argerich, Jorge Luis Borges, Eugenio Cambaceres, and Lucio Vicente López—who reflected on the changes that technological development and immigration were producing within the urban and rural landscape of the country. Between 1870 and 1885, Buenos Aires became the capital of the Argentine Republic. Its urban transformation led to a rapid process of expansion and modernization in the fields of urban planning, hygiene, and electricity. Technology and architectural advances started to dominate the urban landscape and new buildings extended towards the *pampas*, erasing the boundaries that used to divide the city from the countryside. The 1930s, as María Gabriela Muñiz recalls, were characterized by an economic depression that led many rural inhabitants to settle in the suburbs of the city of Buenos Aires seeking for better job opportunities.

These people were not provided with solutions for their housing needs and, therefore, built their homes on public land with any discarded material they could procure. In 1976, during the dictatorship of Jorge Rafael Videla, 208,783 people were eradicated from Argentinian slums through racist campaigns promoting intimidation and xenophobia (Casabona and Guber 24). Although the regime attempted to eradicate these communities several times in the 1970s and 1980s, their resilience persisted. As a result of internal migration processes, the *villas* began to expand. During the 1990s, the socio-economic changes that affected Buenos Aires resulted in a profound reconfiguration of urban space, and the crisis affecting Argentina between 1998 and 2002 led to decreasing state intervention and increasing inequality and unemployment rates.

What happened in Argentina is common history for many other countries in the Global South, as can be observed in Mike Davis' critical study, *Planet of Slums* (2005), where the author offers an holistic depiction of the misery and vulnerability experienced in urban settlements. Davis notices that, according to the United Nations, more than one billion people live in irregular residential areas around the world. The negative side effect of the uncontrolled expansion of urban centers, such as Buenos Aires, can determine the spread of social exclusion, marginalization, and violence. In contemporary metropolises, these dynamics are enhanced by the presence of "formal sectors" (city center, subcenter, and neighborhoods) and "informal sectors" (slums and peripheries). According to Jorge Mario Jáuregui, this dichotomy determines a "trauma urbano" (125) that causes the loss of individuality and the dissociation between the human subjects living in the "informal sector" and the rest of the population.

As Javier Auyero and Debora Swistun claim in "The Social Production of Toxic Uncertainty" (2008), slums and other illegal residential areas represent the last step of the urban spatial hierarchy and affect both the social and the physical landscape. The emergence of low-income slums in Argentina is determined by the fact that, in most cases, city services and infrastructure lag behind in the

accommodation of high concentrations of people in urban areas that do not adequately support their inhabitants.⁴ Some of these unofficial neighborhoods are built on public land and are developed by using recycled construction material, such as wood, cardboard, and tin. Some others are planned by the government as a way to provide cheap and accessible accommodation to immigrant workers.

Despite the presence of a labor market and the consumption of urban goods and services, most of Argentinian slums do not constitute a well-defined urban social space within the boundaries of the city. Due to job insecurity and unemployment, the unprotected sectors of urban populations can hardly be integrated in a concrete and satisfactory way into the productive system of society. Slums become “invisible cities.” Not only society, but also urban configuration contributes to its marginalization in physical and metaphorical ways. Usually, these residential areas are geographically separated from the rest of the city by natural or artificial barriers. For example, Villa Celina—protagonist of the eponymous novel by Juan Diego Incardona—is located between the Matanza River and Avenida General Paz, while Villa 31 and Villa 31 bis are separated from the rich neighborhoods of Retiro and Recoleta by the highway Arturo Umberto Illia and the railway Ferrocarril San Martín. This spacial collocation determines that slums are not easily visible to the average citizen and this factor contributes to the spread of an imaginary that depicts the *villa* as a receptacle of social fears, a disturbing space, a sub-city to avoid. Despite their social and architectural relevance, slums seem to be considered as an abnormal, non-urban excrescence of the city. They are commonly associated with undesirable characteristics, such as crime, violence, social disintegration, and poverty. Slums are what Michel Foucault would define as “heterotopias,” a space characterized by different layers of meaning, relationships, and connections:

There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from

4 This determines a conflict between “biopolitics”—which, according to Michel Foucault in *The Birth of Biopolitics* (1979), deals with individuality and subjectivity—and “biopower”—which, in *The History of Sexuality* (1976), is defined as the control exercised by institutions over the entire population: “[a] power that exerts a positive influence on life, that endeavors to administer, optimize, and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations” (137).

all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias (3-4).

Similar to a heterotopia, slums are considered parallel, invisible spaces, utopias (non-places) in the real sense of the word. Sometimes their inhabitants, the *villeros*, are truly socially “invisible” as they often hide their place of residence for fear of being discriminated against or incurring legal problems. Xenophobia, rejection of minority communities, and anguish towards poverty are feelings that have to be eradicated in contemporary societies. In fact, these unregulated areas are not only a receptacle of social problems, but also a place where individuals constantly prove their resilience by fighting against the lack of governmental protection and issues of racism and xenophobia.

Recently, we are witnessing small changes in the ways these urban spaces are perceived. As María Gabriela Muñiz recalls, “The marginal place has become a center of attention/attraction due to an increasing spectacularization in the media of violence, poverty and social marginality” (8). Muñiz’s words refer to the tendency of commercializing these realities as proved by the local spread of agencies that promote the so-called *turismo villero* or by the presence of themed souvenirs. In addition to the touristic sector, literature and art are shifting the focus of attention towards these vulnerable communities. What was previously seen as a subculture today has greater dissemination in the media and, consequently, greater social acceptance. Novels, documentaries, and movies represent fictionally and realistically these urban spaces. Visual artists—such as street painters and muralists—and musicians—in the form of the popular genre known as *cumbia villera*—also encapsulate the lifestyle of the slum dwellers. These new aesthetic facets have the merit of conferring a protagonist role to the inhabitants of Argentinian slums but, at the same time, are at risk of diminishing the dramatic challenges that *villeros* have to face every day.

When the first settlements started to appear in Argentina, the general opinion was that the dwellers of shantytowns would have been able to leave their housing thanks to their efforts and the support of local authorities. Instead, a number of studies started to provide evidence that shantytowns were growing as a result of people not being able to afford their rent or to buy official properties. In her attentive studies on the slums of the Global South, Tanja Bastia explains that there are four key structural elements that influence social exclusion in urban settings: unemployment, housing, immigrant status, and social differentiation based on race and ethnicity (89). These factors make it difficult for people to permanently leave the *villas*. As a result, becoming a permanent dweller of these unregulated residential areas is not always a choice. Despite high crime rates, precarious housing, and the absence of public services, housing is much cheaper than in other places within the city. This factor allows immigrants and other

dwellers to save the money necessary to support family members and maintains the possibility of returning, eventually, to their place of origin.

To denounce the miserable situation characterizing the lives of these vulnerable communities, in 1957, Argentinian author Bernardo Verbitsky published *Villa miseria también es América*, re-edited in 2003. Influenced by the aesthetic sensibilities of “social realism,” Verbitsky represents the universe of the slum through a documentary-like lens, creating a hybrid novel at the crossroads between journalism and literature. Throughout his novel, Verbitsky offers accurate descriptions aimed at representing the misery of the *villa*, the humanity of its inhabitants, and their resilience and solidarity, by denouncing the lack of social and governmental protection. Verbitsky explores the uncertainty characterizing the lives of his young protagonists, the dwellers of the outskirts of Buenos Aires. In his work, the city becomes a map of the human psyche leading to the exploration and representation of the challenges faced by the individual. Verbitsky’s novel is not the only one focused on Argentinian slums, nor is it the most recent approximation of this topic. In fact, there are many theorists and critics interested in the peculiarity of the urban space represented by the slum—such as Beatriz Sarlo, Josefina Ludmer, Dianna Niebylski, Fernando Reati, Martin Lienhar—and several novels written about the cultural and social aspects characterizing “el estilo de vida villero,” such as *La Villa* (2001) by César Aira, *Puerto Apache* (2002) by Juan Carlos Martini, and *Cuando me muera quiero que me toquen cumbia* (2003) by Cristián Alarcón. What makes *Villa miseria también es América* a detailed documentary of the resilience of the inhabitants of Argentinian slums is the representation of the different sorts of calamities that affect them on a daily basis. For these communities, catastrophes such as COVID-19 have devastating consequences that, most of the time, differ in terms of magnitude from what happens to the rest of the population. In this vulnerable situation, tragedies such as the spread of a global pandemic can lead to massive socio-economic challenges that can be hard to evaluate from an outside perspective. Moreover, the architectural structure and the geographical location of these unregulated residential areas increase their fragility and expose them to unexpected environmental phenomena.

For example, in April 2013, the northeastern section of the province of Buenos Aires experienced several flash floods that cost the lives of more than one hundred people between the cities of Capital Federal and La Plata and the urban agglomerations known as Gran La Plata and Gran Buenos Aires. The extremely heavy rainfall led to flash floods, transportation routes were submerged, and the majority of the population experienced power shortages. The general director of Civil Defense announced in an interview with *El País* that 155 cm of water (around 5 feet) inundated the streets of the capital. According to CNN and BBC reports, in three days, from April 1 to April 3, more than three thousand people were evacuated. The situation in the *villas* was miserable. Vast portions

of the local slums located on the north side of the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, such as Barrio Mitre, were underwater. While efforts were made in order to rescue the victims of the flood still trapped in their homes, and evacuation centers were prepared, local charities collected donations of food, water, diapers, and mattresses. If the situation was dramatic for the whole country, slum dwellers were particularly affected and deprived of means of sustainability. This is only one example of the extremely delicate balance that characterizes the lives of *villeros*.

Floods are a common threat in these areas, and Verbitsky, as a careful reporter of the resilience and resistance demonstrated by the inhabitants of the *villa*, does not omit it. The words *lluvia* and *agua* are used precisely 100 times throughout his novel. Water is, at the same time, a source of life and death. On the one hand, it periodically destroys the hand-made houses of the community through massive floods, as the slum arises in a geographical area non-suitable for construction. On the other hand, it allows people to drink, cook, and maintain their families. The dramatic life conditions of the inhabitants of Argentinian slums, as depicted by Verbitsky, are far from being a matter confined to the 1950s and 1960s, the time when the novel was written and disseminated. As Zygmunt Bauman argues in *Wasted Lives: Modernity and Its Outcasts* (2003), one of the main problems of contemporary life is that the spread of modernity and the fluidity of human capital have given rise to growing quantities of human beings who are deprived of adequate means of survival. Sustainability is a serious issue, provoking difficult interactions between global citizens, and spreading xenophobia, security paranoia, and social anxiety towards immigrants, asylum seekers, and other minorities.

While unexpected events, such as floods and pandemics, affect the entirety of the population, their consequences have different weights according to the socio-economic status of certain communities. On March 20, Argentinian president Alberto Fernández proclaimed the beginning of a period of social distancing. Concurrently with the commencement of the southern hemisphere's winter, the situation in Argentina got worse. In June 2020, Argentina's number of days in isolation exceeded the length of that undertaken in Wuhan. As Veronica Smink underlines in her report for the BBC, while the world was applauding the efficiency of one of the longest lockdowns of the planet, the internal reaction of Argentina was different, especially in Buenos Aires, which hosts the majority of the confirmed cases registered by August 2020.

In the slums of Buenos Aires, the situation is dramatic. Living in precarious conditions, often without water and electricity, more than four thousand vulnerable neighborhoods have to respect a "communitarian quarantine," as a form of protection imposed by the government. With the closure of social centers and work activities, the majority of *villeros* are losing their jobs and, with that, the opportunity of feeding their families and providing them with

other basic necessities. On a daily basis, national television and social media show images of dwellers struggling to respect health measurements, and, as a consequence, the cases are increasing, as tests performed on the inhabitants of slums such as Villa 31 and Villa 1-11-14 show. Clearly, collecting precise data on the health status of these vulnerable sectors of the population and on their working condition is nearly impossible to do.

The situations of the 17 million Argentines living in the province of Buenos Aires are difficult to register and quantify. According to the INDEC, 44 million Argentines require food assistance. To support these communities, during the past months, the government, the municipality, local organizations, and the army have offered monetary contributions and physical assistance to this part of the population in need by distributing food and medicine. According to the newspaper *La Vanguardia*, the inhabitants of Argentinian slums are given the opportunity to call a centralized phone number in order to receive help concerning COVID-19. Unfortunately, most of the time, ambulances and doctors cannot access the patient due to architectural impediments, such as narrow streets and lack of space. No matter how universal and equal the anti-COVID-19 measures are, they are not able to provide the same support to the whole population. Even if several non-profit and governmental organizations—such as the association Manos de la Cava, the San José congregation, and the Argentinian army—are offering their support daily, the emergency is far from being solved.

Despite the current difficult situation, in regard to the spread of COVID-19, Argentina has shown itself, once again, to be a resilient country. Several sectors of society, from regular workers, to the members of the educational system, and the health personnel, made great sacrifices in order to guarantee physical and emotional support for the community. While doctors, nurses, and volunteers worked exhausting shifts to provide the assistance necessary to fight the consequences of this pandemic, artists and cultural organizations offered their contributions by sharing their home-produced work not only through online exhibitions and recorded performances, but also live, in front of virtual audiences. For instance, on March 26, Red Solidaria invited several well-known artists to take part in the project “Argentina canta en cuarentena.” At 8:50pm selected artists sang “Como la cigarra” by the famous singer María Elena Walsh, whose hopeful message is an invitation to continue singing despite the difficult times. What is happening in Argentina is just one example of the wide range of projects that have been generated recently throughout the globe in order to share psychological comfort and social awareness during quarantine. The humanities, in both their traditional and innovative forms, play a fundamental role in the registration and elaboration of innovative strategies aimed at responding to global crises. Too often, human sciences are considered merely as witnesses to the significant crises of contemporary life. Yet, their intellectual formation is deeply resonant with the displacement of values and the revision of norms that shape

the transitional narratives of the planet. The spread of a global pandemic urges us to rethink our relationships with concepts such as physical and metaphorical borders, social constructs, human rights, and the role of humanities in collecting and interpreting these phenomena.

This study does not claim to be a comprehensive analysis of the reaction of Buenos Aires to the COVID-19 pandemic. The reality of Argentina, as a country, can sometimes differ considerably from the social phenomena affecting the capital. At the same time, it is not possible to holistically recount the dynamics of resistance that are characterizing the metropolises of the Global South and its inhabitants. This analysis aims at offering an emblematic example of resilience that can be evaluated as a paradigm of the different socio-political factors involved in a global crisis. The spread of COVID-19 and the reaction of the Argentinian population reveal how complicated an urban system is and how superficial opinions can be towards the reaction of a country in a catastrophe. Metropolises are the juxtaposition and sedimentation of cultures, social practices, and psychological nuances that cannot be judged based on the actions taken by the political class and its representatives. The challenges faced by the dwellers of Argentinian slums during the COVID-19 pandemic are just one example of how differently the consequences of planetary crises are perceived by the individuals who form part of urban communities.

Since January 2020, we are witnesses to and protagonists of an extraordinary global phenomenon that will permanently change the way we perceive class, social equality, and metropolitan issues. Right now, research is time sensitive. COVID-19 demands a rapid response from the academic community, which is called to collect information, reflections, and ideas through the production of interdisciplinary research and global collaborations. How will the global community address this need? What will be the role of social media, social activism, artistic performances, and academic studies in the intellectual reaction to this pandemic? What can we learn from the past but, most of all, from the present reality? Hopefully, this global pandemic will illuminate the future of academia, inviting scholars from all over the world to provide long-term solutions on issues connected to urban justice and social awareness.

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Affective (Re)constructions of the Imaginary Caribbean and Caribbean Imaginary in Reggaeton Music Video: The Cases of *Calypso* and *La Gozadera*

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Abstract: Since the release of Daddy Yankee's *Gasolina* in 2004 and the subsequent entrance of reggaeton music onto the global stage, contemporary artists and music video directors have had to negotiate between the needs to address the changing tastes and demands of local, national, regional, and international audiences. Applying an affective, systemic functional lens to the analyses of Luis Fonsi's *Calypso* (2018) and Gente de Zona's *La Gozadera* (2015), this article investigates the various musical and visual strategies taken in these videos to meet the expectations of international consumers while simultaneously constructing an agentic image of Caribbeanness. Attending to the often-neglected coexistence of hypervisibility and limited and/or conditioned mobility for Caribbean peoples, places, and cultural products in an age of global capitalism, it argues that these videos' channeling and mobilization of affect in the reproduction of hegemonic tropes associated with the region creates a space in which they can be reconfigured and revalorized through a strategic appeal to the senses.

Keywords: affect; Caribbean Imaginary; imaginary Caribbean; music video; reggaeton

Following a series of internationally successful releases, reggaetonero Luis Fonsi told *Rolling Stone*: “you think of us [Latinos], and you think movement. You think party. I like to be able to translate that into music” (Exposito). His statement speaks not only to the centrality of music and rhythm to Latin American and Caribbean cultural expression, but also to the acknowledgement and commercially driven harnessing of external imaginaries of the region as a site for indulgence and consumption (Sheller).

Reggaeton is the latest in a long line of Caribbean musics to dominate the increasingly popular “Latin” music market. It is generally thought that the style emerged in the underground music scene of 1990s Puerto Rico, when amateur DJs and emcees began mixing and versioning the newly audible sounds of Jamaican dancehall and rap from the United States.¹ This was a practice that took place in the *caseríos* of San Juan among poor, black populations who were—and largely continue to be—socio-spatially marginalized according to Puerto Rico's strict racial hierarchy. The combination of dancehall's heavy computerized basslines—known as dembow—and raw, often violent vocals became a popular form of cultural expression for these communities, circulating widely and rapidly through informal distribution networks. However, when the music first garnered recognition from an “above ground” record label in 1994, it was seen as a form of cultural contagion; given that black culture, poverty, and by extension crime were inextricably linked in white European ideology

1 Scholars have also noted the Dominican (Pacini Hernandez) and Panamanian (Twickel) influences that contributed to the early development of the genre.

(Hall, et al.), the emergence of reggaeton signified a “criminal” threat to national culture (Rivera). It was only through the release of Puerto Rican artist Daddy Yankee’s *Gasolina* in 2004, and the release of its music video on YouTube, that reggaeton became gradually—and reluctantly—accepted by the State thanks to its commercial success. Alongside artists’ movement from the street to the screen, reggaeton has been criticized for its increasingly whitened image. In what Wayne Marshall refers to as the shift from “música negra to reggaeton latino,” the importance of remaining “authentic” was supplanted by the commercial need to appeal to wider audiences.

The consumption and appropriation of Caribbean musics by Western—primarily North American—audiences predate the eminence of reggaeton in the Latin music market. From the international fascination with Cuban mambo and Trinidadian calypso in the 1950s (Waxer; Vogel) to the reggae music boom in the 1980s (Alleyne), Caribbean—and especially black Caribbean—cultural production has long been listened to and re-produced by non-Caribbean, non-black artists. Yet reggaeton’s uniqueness lies in the fact that its emergence coincided with an important change in the way we were consuming music. Music video, as the genre’s primary mode of circulation, has exposed the music and its artists to global hypervisibility. Owing to the intense flows of peoples, images, cultures, and capital in an age of advanced global capitalism, reggaeton is now also produced and disseminated across geographic and linguistic borders via crossovers and collaborations. While *Gasolina* marked the beginning of a truly global phase of reggaeton, the ubiquitous popularity of *Despacito* (2017) highlights a recent culmination of this international visibility; the subsequent re-make of the song with Canadian pop artist Justin Bieber is proof of and further fuel to reggaeton’s popularity amongst a new—and huge—English-speaking audience.

Bieber’s participation in the track and the resulting so-called “Despacito effect” certainly highlights the continuation and perpetuation of the cultural imperialism that has historically characterized the consumption and appropriation of Caribbean musics, whereby the Caribbean artist becomes the exotic “Other” (see Rivera-Rideau and Torres-Leschnik). As Shane Vogel suggests in his discussion of the 1950s calypso craze, by harnessing and reproducing the “inauthenticity” of the genre associated with external perceptions and depictions of the region, Caribbean artists shore up a (precarious) agency to gain or maintain commercial success. However, with the advanced technology now increasingly at reggaeton artists’ and music video directors’ disposition, there is something more critical to be explored in how collaborations between local and diasporic Caribbean—rather than local and international—identities can intervene in existing power relations.

Cuban duo Gente de Zona and Nuyorican Marc Anthony’s *La Gozadera* and Puerto Rican Luis Fonsi and UK-based Stefflon Don’s *Calypso* are reggaeton videos in which this collaborative element is particularly significant. Released in

2015 and 2018 respectively, *La Gozadera* and *Calypso* have had considerable commercial success in Latin America, North America, and Europe, entering into the top ten in Latin charts and gaining monumental numbers of YouTube views, shares, and downloads. Making (distinct) lyrical and aesthetic appeals to local, national, regional, diasporic, and global audiences through the strategic channeling of affective cinematographic and editing techniques, these are two contemporary productions that exemplify the diversifying ways in which reggaeton artists are addressing personal, political, and pragmatic agendas. As we will see, they begin to recuperate the “authenticity” of reggaeton that has been largely erased through international crossovers and processes of *blanqueamiento* while simultaneously, and paradoxically, recalling and reframing external perceptions to appeal to foreign tastes.

Adopting a lens of affect to emphasize the importance of the Caribbean’s sensory appeal in both local and global contexts, this article provides a contextually grounded comparative analysis of *Calypso* and *La Gozadera*. In a Spinozian understanding, affect refers to a type of *feeling* that is not just psychologically emotional, but also physically embodied (Deleuze). Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg effectively describe it as a movement or passage of “intensities” that circulate between “bodies and worlds” and “stick” to them (1), showing how affective relations are spread, shared, and inter-embodied. The “affective turn” in the twenty-first century has led to increased attention on the role of affect in the moving image, both on horizontal levels between subjects of the image and between the image and its viewer. The presence of affect in cinema has recently shifted into the study of Latin American and Caribbean film, and has been theorized as crucial in establishing strategic relations that extend from the screen to the body of the spectator (see, for example, Podalsky; Pérez Melgosa; Moraña and Sánchez Prado). It is this most recent framing of affect in terms of audiovisual phenomena with which this article engages. It explores how artists’ and music video directors’ affective reproduction, reinterpretation, and resignification of local, national, and regional Caribbean identities can act as a strategy for navigating the tensions between the changing tastes and demands of international markets and the need to appeal to and represent the experiences of local audiences. Specifically, it adapts Kay O’Halloran’s model for systemic functional-multimodal discourse analysis to investigate the multifarious oratorical, musical, performative, cinematographic, and editing strategies taken in the videos to make the local and regional universally comprehensible and appealing while simultaneously constructing an agentic image of Caribbeaness.

Drawing on Michèle Praeger’s notions of the “imaginary Caribbean” and the “Caribbean Imaginary,” it provides a two-part discussion to examine how these videos enlist and reframe external perceptions of the Caribbean to create such an agentic image. First, it analyzes the videos’ depictions of place and space to explore how external perceptions of the tropicalized Caribbean, and of

Cuba as a land frozen-in-time, are harnessed and reproduced in a commercial endeavor to meet the demands of foreign consumers. Second, borrowing from Matthew Edwards' discussion of *La Gozadera's* "mundo-aldea" (456-457), it considers how the videos' party scenes construct a space in which these external perceptions can be "played with" and "bent," to quote Praeger (4), as well as the extent to which they serve to trouble and/or rework power relations between the Caribbean and the "dominant culture."² In the case of *La Gozadera*, we will also see how the party has an added political dynamic in its reconfiguration of relationships among Latin American nations. Ultimately, it argues that these videos' mobilization of affect in the reproduction of hegemonic tropes associated with Caribbean peoples and places creates a space, albeit narrow, in which they can be reconfigured and revalorized through a strategic appeal to the senses.

Place and Space: Harnessing and Reproducing the Imaginary Caribbean

Calypso's video begins with a sequence of extreme long shots over crystal waters, exposing a small island on which Luis Fonsi stands alone and gazes out towards his surroundings. Its Puerto Rican location is revealed only by virtue of the on-screen text as the song begins. Underpinned by an aesthetic of natural, primitive beauty and anonymity, it evokes a sense of utopian unboundedness—a *u-topos*, or "no place," outside of time and civilization, much like Thomas More's own fictional island of Utopia. The mythologization of Latin American peoples and places—captured by Alejo Carpentier's concept of "lo real maravilloso"—has often assimilated the region with primitivism and barbarism, its seemingly fictitious or magical aspects symbolizing the threat and danger of the Other (see Beauchesne and Santos). Here, however, its utopian allegory is elicited by an exoticized remoteness. Enhanced hues of blues and yellows connoting a sun-sand-sea imagery and the use of toplighting to intensify the illusion of sunlight over the scene reproduce key tropes associated with Caribbean paradise. If it is primitive, then it is so in the sense of being untouched: a "premodern" space with symbolic charge as an icon of Edenism (Thompson 12).

Krista Thompson explains that visual icons of the Caribbean region have undergone a process of "tropicalization," in which generic, paradisiacal images of islands created through representational strategies have come to symbolize both distinct islands as well as the region as a whole. Such images, which have transcended linguistic and geographic boundaries through their appropriation

2 I use "dominant culture" throughout this article to stay true to Praeger's original use of the term when referring to the "white Western world" (4). Debates surrounding the "correct" use of terminology (Western/Eastern, Global North/Global South) in Latin American and Caribbean studies are ongoing. The collection of essays and responses in the edited volume *Critical Terms in Caribbean and Latin American Thought* (Martínez-San Miguel, et al.) provides a particularly comprehensive overview of these debates.

in literature, film, music, and visual art, construct particular ideals of the region in the Western mind's eye. The sounds, sights, and smells of the Caribbean as a Garden of Eden depicted through these works would trigger a centuries-long fascination of and yearning for sensory and bodily immersion in the landscape and among its peoples.

The exoticization of Fonsi's remote island mirrors such utopian fantasies, its embodiment of the Caribbean sublime extending to foreign senses through the audio-visual realm. However, it is also worth pointing out that the video's exotic imagery stands in stark contrast with the reality of Puerto Rican landscape at the time of its release in 2018, just one year after devastation was brought upon the island by Hurricane Maria. Such conspicuous contradictions, it seems, are crucial to securing the video's—and the artists'—commercial appeal. Palimpsestic reproductions of tropicalized tropes affirm and reinforce geographies of desire through the “explicit interaction between aesthetics and ideology” (Pratt 201), that is, the construction of an image according to what is perceived and expected in the mind's eye of viewers rather than what is “real.” The postcolonial desire for control and sensory immersion is appeased via the fictitious, somewhat compensatory utopia that masks any sign of dystopian spoilage. Particularly interesting in *Calypso*'s framing of this paradise is the use of extreme long shots from a bird's eye view; conjuring in the viewer what Mary Louise Pratt calls a “monarch-of-all-I-survey scene,” the landscape is hereby organized, mastered, and appropriated according to imperial ideology (205). In turn, the following lyrics “tu cuerpo frente al mar, mezclando arena con sal” effect a rhetoric of proximity—it is a paradise that we have mastered, and that we can now consume.

By using this ambiguous, tropicalized narrative setting as a backdrop for sensual pleasure and indulgence, and especially given the viewer's enhanced command and mastery of the scene, *Calypso*'s island reproduces fantasies associated with Praeger's “imaginary Caribbean.” In her study of French Caribbean literary and theoretical works, she theorizes the Caribbean region as an “imaginary cultural construction,” using the term “imaginary” to denote “not only the representation of minorities to themselves and to the dominant culture but also the way the dominant culture represents the Caribbean” (4). In other words, these representations are socially constructed through the interplay of internal representational strategies and external touristified imaginaries. Certainly, the cinematographic creation of this imperial gaze in *Calypso* can be seen to replicate the oft-conveyed exoticized imaginaries of the region summoned by popular discourse and touristic works. Drawing on the wealth of literature surrounding tourism's embeddedness in an ocularcentric culture (see Hollinshead, for example), we can consider the viewers of the music videos with which this article engages as kinds of “tourists” in themselves. After all, both the physical process of tourism and the images depicted by media forms

involve the continuous flow of peoples, cultures, and desires, and are important conductors in symbolic sensory circuits (Crouch et al. 12).

La Gozadera's music video presents a context in which an appeal to the senses of the viewer reflects that of real interventions in local landscapes on the part of Cuba's tourism industry. Across decades of socio-economic turbulence and cultural change, Cuba has been branded as an island frozen-in-time, alluring tourists with the promise of affective, otherly encounters (see Ogden, "Lonely Planet"). Namely, invitations to gaze upon Club Tropicana's *mulata rumbera*, to experience "real" Cubanness and cultural intimacy through a stay in a *casa particular*, and to taste traditional foods that "[juegan] con los sentidos" (La Guarida), have contributed to the construction of an imaginary Cuba rooted in the desire for nostalgic, authentic and, importantly, *sensual* experience. The video's framing of a more locally grounded depiction of Havana as an ostensibly authentic site of sensuality and cultural intimacy draws on and reanimates the aforementioned images associated with an imaginary Cuba. From its initial dolly shot, which exposes several *almendrones* queuing up to a junction before Gente de Zona's broken-down vehicle, the video's seemingly unposed scenes of day-to-day Cuban life reinforce palimpsestic tropes of Cuba associated with nostalgic longing for a simpler time. This "aesthetics of nostalgia," as Dunja Fehimović notes in her analyses of Cuban cinematic works, is symbolized by "gold-tinted images of decay and ruin" (181). Considering nostalgia as a kind of sentimental wistfulness, a longing for the past, we can recognize the role of sepia-imbued aesthetics in adding a sentimental value to *La Gozadera's* images of peeling paint, free-hanging electrical cables, and time worn walls, their prevalence bolstered by long shots giving visual priority to the narrative setting.

Similar shots are used to capture the perimeters of the street scenes: buildings of multiple levels with laundry hanging from balconies and windows covered by metal grates, elements which Alejo Carpentier considers "*constantes* que pueden ser considerados como específicamente cubanas" (61). These *constantes*—as emphatically Cuban aesthetic markers of antiquity, decay, and habitation—are crucial in turning what could be seen as cold, historical, and monumental into an intimate, living, and lived-in space. The lyrical narrative of "la cosa está bien dura, la cosa está divina" has a similar allegory, connoting as it does the shift from hardship to resolution associated with the "authentic" Cuban practice of *resolver*. Accordingly, the *constantes* depicted in *La Gozadera's* imbrication of public and private spaces can be gazed upon and mobilized in the mind's eye of the viewer as affective sites for intimate and authentic cultural encounters, each extending and emplacing a non-conscious—or, rather, not-fully-conscious—sense or sensation of Cubanness. I use not-fully-conscious because, while affect "does not so much reflect or think" as it does *act* (Seigworth and Gregg 2), directorial decisions can be made to channel it in certain ways in order to appeal to the senses of international consumers.

We might therefore consider such decisions as strategies to construct an (artificial) image of Cuba, into which the foreign viewer can step back in time and satisfy their desire for authentic, intimate cultural encounters. Indeed, in her discussion of the island's most recent tourism campaign, *Auténtica Cuba*, Rebecca Ogden argues that such choreographed depictions of authenticity can be considered as "strategic exploitation[s] of the island's status as a singular site of supposedly authentic, person-to-person connection in an inauthentic world" ("Living the Brand" 80). Similarly, then, by bridging a gap between public and private spaces and adapting to the post-modern tourist's quest for authentic and/or alternative cultures, *La Gozadera's* strategic channeling of affect could be seen as a commercial tactic to engage with international consumers' affective desires and expectations.

The conspicuous difference between open and intimate space in *Calypso* also provides an interesting example of how these videos' aesthetics can be staged in order to meet the demands of foreign audiences through the channeling of affect. While *La Gozadera's* narrative setting of urban Havana remains consistent throughout, *Calypso* uses cross-cutting techniques to redirect the viewer's attention to different places. We see a rather dramatic shift, for example, as the video moves from Fonsi's picturesque island to capture (mundane) activities at play in the homes of various residents. Here, a modification in the aesthetics of the *mise-en-scène* marks a rupture with the previous setting's depiction of a tropicalized Caribbean paradise. For example, the uses of color and lighting in the filming of everyday scenes, such as residents ironing and reading the newspaper, are appreciably more subtle than those used in the filming of the island. This evokes a more naturalistic indication of the Caribbean *quotidian*, contradicting and somewhat problematizing the paradisiacal connotations of Fonsi's tropical paradise.

The relative anonymity of these scenes equally infers a more *intimate* continuation of the generalized and anonymized Caribbean ideal represented by the island; while Fonsi's solitary presence reinforces the fantasy of the deserted and "exploitable" desert island—as Columbus said, "de [las islas] he tomado posesión...y no me fue contradicho" (qtd. in Ramos Pérez and González Quintana 133)—the video's depiction of private spaces in residents' homes reinserts a sense of personal and intimate connection. A notable example of the embodiment of intimacy is the video's recurrent image of an elderly man in the bathroom of his house, where the appeal to the senses is heightened through the use of *staccato* camerawork. In this instance, the camera is hand-held rather than attached to a dolly, crane, or similar, thus foregrounding the viewer's subjectivity and increasing the intimacy of their viewing experience (Kruger 237). Therefore, rather than publicizing private spaces to emphasize specific and individualized performances of cultural identity, as in *La Gozadera*, *Calypso's* juxtaposition of these spaces harnesses imaginaries of the generic Caribbean

picturesque and supplements it with intimacy, thus reinforcing and adding to the region's associated sensory appeal.

As thus far demonstrated, *Calypso* and *La Gozadera* utilize representational strategies to make use of and adapt hegemonic ideologies associated with Caribbean landscapes, peoples, and cultural identities. In their respective affect-mobilizing depictions of the imaginary Caribbean as a tropicalized region genericized by serendipity and of imaginary Cuba as a localized and sensualized embodiment of cultural intimacy, these videos construct a universally comprehensible version of the local that meets the expectations and fantasies of international—primarily North American and European, non-Spanish-speaking—audiences. Ultimately, the strategies taken to appeal to such demands allow a certain freedom to navigate commercial imperatives; but there is certainly an accompanying constraint in the reproduction of the imaginary Caribbean and its interpellation as a consumable stereotype.

Hosts of the Party: Reframing and Revalorizing Perceptions

Yet through the strategic channeling of affect in these videos, a space is simultaneously created in which the imaginary Caribbean encounters the Caribbean Imaginary. Whereas the former concept pertains to the realm of *representation*, the latter refers to the ways in which Caribbean subjects “bend” and “play with” such representations (Praeger 4). In going beyond mere representation, then, *La Gozadera* and *Calypso* can potentially carve out a space in which the Imaginary rather pertains to “the realm of possibilities and imagination,” of “freedom and invention” (2).

In Matthew Edwards' discussion of *La Gozadera*'s “stationary politics” (456), further connoting the land frozen-in-time, he draws on Rita Segato's notion of the “*mundo-aldea*.” As Segato explains, amidst the intense conditions of global capitalism and increasingly aggressive global markets, the *mundo-aldea* captures the elements of “traditional” community life and reconfigures them to assimilate and adapt to these new, often demanding circumstances (597). While Edwards insightfully suggests that the global interactions implied in *La Gozadera*'s uniting of different Caribbean and Latin American nations, cultures, and localities facilitates the establishment and sustainment of affective relationships (457), I argue that this culmination of local, regional, and global forces additionally facilitates the affective ability to harness, redress, and resignify hegemonic imaginaries of Caribbeanness within this “global village.” As is demonstrated by the following examples, while the channeling of affect in both *Calypso* and *La Gozadera* does not necessarily imply a complete *subversion* of key tropes associated with Praeger's imaginary Caribbean, the videos can nonetheless enlist them and revalorize them in the *mundo-aldea* to create a more powerful or agentic image of Caribbeanness by establishing the region as the “host” of the party.

We can apply this notion of the *mundo-aldea*—as a space in which the imaginary Caribbean can be bent and played with but not fully subverted—to *Calypso*'s party, where the residents depicted in the video's more intimate scenes of everyday life join Fonsi's *fiesta*. These scenes fuse the tropicalized connotations of the island with the paradoxically anonymous intimacy of the houses; the party's generic interior and unidentifiable location reiterate anonymity and mystery, while props such as inflatables and sunglasses reinforce hedonistic imaginaries associated with the region's tropicalized perceptions and sensory appeal. However, by bringing these tropes into this particular party/*mundo-aldea* which revolves around enjoyment and *insouciance*, the video establishes the Caribbean as the *host* of this hedonism, and the artists as agents with the prerogative to allow—or deny—the “dominant culture” entry. The gathering of young *and* elderly people in the party is a notable example of how the video bends these external perceptions; the spreading of affect between these bodies, separated by age but connected through intimate proximity in the *mundo-aldea*, creates a sense of both family and familiarity, almost humanizing the hedonism associated with the island. In this way, the stereotypes are not rejected, *per se*, but rather acknowledged and revalorized.

The affective dimensions of this pan-Caribbean multicultural collectivity become further apparent when examining *Calypso*'s musical components. It is interesting that calypso (as a music genre) has been considered an “audible entanglement,” reworking and reproducing articulations of nation and diaspora through its capacity to cohere social, cultural, and political relations and expressions (Guilbault 41). Contemporary reggaeton is also a hybrid music style; its socio-sonic roots and routes are plural, complex, and overlapping (Marshall et al.). Through *Calypso*'s superimposition of steel pan sounds and Afro-Caribbean rhythms onto reggaeton beats, this hybridity is multiplied and intensified. Albeit stylistically distinct, the heavy rhythms of these genres share the affective power to extend “beyond the ‘mind’ to the ‘body’” (Finnegan 340), engendering in the listener a haptic sensation of interwoven—rather than separated—Caribbean sounds. By bringing these pan-Caribbean musical and linguistic elements together in the *mundo-aldea*, where the styles, languages, and accents are unified and celebrated “al ritmo de amor y derroche,” *Calypso* constructs a space in which creative collective identifications come to signify closeness, affection, and solidarity.

Such musicalized and verbalized reproductions of pan-Caribbean connectedness and mobilization of affect are buttressed by one particular point of the video, at which Stefflon Don raises her head to meet the gaze of the camera upon a musical break. For Carol Vernallis, in an absence of music, the image has an increased ability to connect with us on an embodied level through a “flooding” of the senses (177). The viewer's attention is therefore centered on the (oppositional) gaze of the performer, with no musical cues to distract from

the gaze's affective power (see Mulvey; hooks). As María Cepeda identifies in her analysis of Shakira's *La Tortura*, a return of the gaze towards the camera can be considered an acknowledgement of voyeurism (245-246); it does not *free* the subject from the power of the imaginary Caribbean, but rather bends its representations to construct an image of Caribbeanness rooted in agency, individual defiance, and resistance. Don's (partial) absence from the party can also be seen to symbolize her position in the Caribbean diaspora, from the "outside looking in," which arguably represents her advantage of being able to manipulate the imaginary Caribbean fantasy. The video's affective musical and visual strategies are thus interlaced to convey the message that the world is welcome at the *fiesta*—but in this imaginary *mundo-aldea*, it is the Caribbean who hosts, making use of external perceptions in order to shore up a kind of precarious power and a position in the market.

In *La Gozadera's mundo-aldea*, it is significant that while the party unfolds in Havana, "la gozadera" itself is formed through a complex interplay of local, national, regional, and diasporic Latin American and Caribbean symbols and identities. The hitherto discussed aesthetic markers of Cuban cultural *constantes* appear as indicators of what Michael Billig calls "banal nationalism," the flagging of the nation through daily, mundane experience of nationness.³ Here, the fact that Cuba's status as host is indicated through the appeal to the banal denotes an important shift between ideology and affect. In the 1960s—at the beginning of the Revolution—Cuba was a kind of symbolic leader in the region. It was also seen as the origin of ideas about pan-Latin American solidarity, as expressed in José Martí's "Nuestra América." In *La Gozadera*, this solidarity is reconfigured not as an ideological project, but rather as a kind of affective, post-political union. Yet, it should be noted that such markers of banal nationalism or "homeland space" (Billig, *Banal Nationalism* 43) are not always recognizable to those for whom it is not a homeland. As previously discussed, *La Gozadera's* video can enlist and reproduce Cuba's external imaginaries associated with authenticity, nostalgia, and cultural intimacy to appeal to the modern tourist's—or viewer's—desire for such sensory experiences. Its role on the world stage has changed; it no longer has a political or ideological exceptionalism, but rather an *affective* exceptionalism. In order to have an impact on international audiences and exert influence over the foreign gaze, dominant perceptions of the island must be more dynamically harnessed, affectively channeled, and reconfigured in a way that is universally comprehensible.

Through the depiction of heat, and through the performances of flagged bodies who both physically and emotionally embody their own nation but unite

3 I adopt Rogers Brubaker's use of the term "nationness" to better understand nationalism as a mobile and contingent phenomenon, one that does not work simply within the boundaries of ascribed nationality but is rather a "changeable product of collective action" (Calhoun 59).

in performance, *La Gozadera* conveys a more explicit expression of nationness which seemingly moves away from the local and towards a pan-Latin experience. These more explicit performances of national identity are a form of what Billig originally termed “hot nationalism.” In contrast to “cold” or banal nationalism, hot nationalism signals a more explicit, often politically orientated expression of national identity and belonging in which greater “emotional energy” is invested in symbols of nationness (44). However, the distinction between hot and cold forms of nationalism has since been widely interrogated and reconfigured. The hot-cold dichotomy cannot sufficiently explain the motivations for different types of national reproduction; as Billig realizes in response to such arguments, we cannot assume that the history of nationalism can be generalized as having just one temperature (“Imagining of Politics” 314). Michael Skey rather suggests that the reproduction of nationness can “heat up” and “cool down” as a result of increasing global flows of people, culture, and capital. Considering the gradations of these temperatures in the context of *La Gozadera’s mundo-aldea* can aid us in forming a more nuanced understanding of the “force” or “forces of encounter” (Seigworth and Gregg 2) by which distinct and more generic cultural identities are enacted, reproduced, and resignified through embodied meaning-making foregrounding emotion and affect.

We might paradoxically consider the video’s depiction of heat to be at the cooler end of this spectrum, as it were, in that its reproduction of nationness is less *explicit* than it is *implicit*. For example, the warm colors of the sepia-tinted setting are further enhanced through the careful modification of lighting, ensuring that rays of sunlight fall on the street where the action takes place. This functions as a form of what Gustavo Pérez Firmat describes as “weak exoticism,” producing an atmosphere that is affective to the viewer on both a physical and imaginative level (Cruikshank 117). Such scenes are further intensified by the special effects used in the production of steam, which emerges from the engine of the broken-down vehicle and lingers among the performers in the *mundo-aldea*. Understanding warmth as a key trope of both Cuban *and* wider Caribbean sensory and sensual experience, the use of steam in the video can be seen as a visual manifestation of the spreading of affect. It is through such metaphorical depictions of heat, Cruikshank argues, that affect is “qualified with a variety of feelings and sensual encounters—both physical and imagined—that flow out of the desire to differentiate [the Caribbean’s] *atmósfera* from [one’s] own reality” (118). The sense of human warmth and lived-in-ness elicited in the video’s depiction of the Cuban *constantes* is hereby supplemented by a reinforcement of tropicalized tropes associated with a more generic image of Caribbeanness.

On the warmer end of the spectrum, I suggest that the flagged body in *La Gozadera* is less a form of *hot nationalism* than a strategic *heating up of nationness* in the affective enactment of a pan-Latin cultural identity. This is especially apparent when we consider the performance of the painted dancers as what Nicholas

Cook calls a “complementation” of the music, resulting from the manipulation of words, pictures, and music in a given context (105). For example, the shots in which the actors dance in unison coincide with lyrics referencing distinct national symbols such as Puerto Rico’s “arroz con habichuela,” as well as with those which embody cultural connectedness such as “del Caribe somos tú y yo.” These insinuations of cultural cohesion are reinforced as the velocity of the drumbeat increases and intensified continuity editing accelerates the rate of camera movement between the flagged bodies, thus heating up the lyrics’ articulation of a diverse yet united pan-Latin community.

However, while *La Gozadera*’s depiction of both heat and painted dancers incontestably contributes to the construction of a pan-Caribbean and/or pan-Latin community, I suggest that this reconfiguration of place and space is a strategic maneuver for both pragmatic and political ends. First, drawing on Skey’s argument that the heating up of nationness is a result of rapidly increasing global flows of people, culture, and capital, the construction of a more intelligible Latin image can be seen as a commercial imperative to meet the expectations of foreign audiences. In this way, the orchestration of a pan-Latin space facilitates the video’s and artists’ insertion into—and substantiates their position in—the aforementioned universalized “Latin music” market. Second, then, the creation of this *mundo-aldea* through the video’s pan-Latin cultural connotations opens up a more visible space in which it can revalorize Cuba as the host. Indeed, in the heated-up enactment of pan-Latin cultural identity, “el mundo se está sumando a la fiesta de los latinos”; but the region is “loqueando desde Cuba,” and it is from this particular *aldea* that “el mundo se entera.”

Its host status here is not associated with the country’s socialist internationalism project of the 1960s and 1970s; there is rather a shift towards a kind of nationalism that centers on the desire to take its place among equal or equivalent nations. The party bridges political divides that have arisen between Cuba and other nations since 1959, highlighted by the exclusion of Cuba from various Latin American and Caribbean political and economic organizations. In essence, it is a kind of redemptive celebration of pan-*latinidad* by which Cuba claims a new role in the region and, via the depiction of this shift through music video, on the world stage. The release in slow motion of the Cuban flag from a balcony, in particular, captures and sustains our attention and emotion on this specific place. Similarly, while the painted dancers collectively construct the image of a pan-Latin space, the dancer who wears the Cuban flag remains in the forefront and is the one who pivots to meet the gaze of the camera. Albeit in subtle ways, *La Gozadera*’s *mundo-aldea* is therefore used to bend and play with external perceptions of imaginary Cuba as a place that can be mastered, appropriated, and consumed by the foreign tourist or viewer. The video rather constructs an image of Cubanness that is more agentic, autonomous, and capable of troubling these power relations; not only is Cuba established as the host of a pan-Latin party

to which the world is invited, but it remains the most visible cultural identity of all its guests. We might therefore see it as a declaration of a new kind of presence that Cuba desires to have in the world, achieved through an affective reconfiguration of local, national, regional, diasporic, and global relationships.

Conclusion

In considering the confrontation between the imaginary Caribbean and the Caribbean Imaginary, Praeger says that “put most simply, a global ideology allows the individual more freedom than one emanating from a particular community” (171). Yet in the case of *Calypso* and *La Gozadera*, the “freedom” to negotiate uneven power relations and navigate the global music market rather emanates from the specific way in which this “global ideology” is affectively harnessed, reframed, and revalorized.

These videos’ aesthetic and musical harnessing of dominant external perceptions of the region can be viewed as strategic imitations of the imaginary Caribbean for commercial ends. Owing to their palimpsestic, staged, and affective reproductions of an anonymous, tropicalized utopia supplemented by the intimacy of the everyday and an authentic, nostalgic, and lived-in space grounded in local sensual experience, these videos captivate the viewer through an appeal to the senses. Furthermore, through *Calypso*’s creation of a generic Caribbean image and *La Gozadera*’s construction of a pan-Latin party to which the world is invited, the videos become universally comprehensible and appealing, facilitating their assimilation into an existing and increasingly popular “Latin music” market. And, crucially, the strategic incorporation of diasporic Caribbean artists enhances these videos’ potential to navigate the demands of diverse audiences.

I have argued that through the channeling of affect, these videos’ party scenes come to symbolize a *mundo-aldea* where hegemonic imaginaries of the region can be acknowledged, reinterpreted, and revalorized. *Calypso*’s humanization of hedonism in the party’s embodiment of familial and familiar interaction, the visual enactment of defiance and resistance epitomized by the musical break punctuating Stefflon Don’s gaze towards the camera, and the strategic placing of Cuba in the foreground of the pan-Latin community constructed through the heated up performance of nationness all demonstrate how the *mundo-aldea* becomes a site in which the Caribbean Imaginary can play with and bend the representations of the imaginary Caribbean. Through the strategies taken to establish the Caribbean and Cuba respectively as the hosts of the party, *Calypso* and *La Gozadera* construct a more agentic image of regional and local cultural identities, intervening in existing power relations between the Caribbean and the “dominant culture.”

The artists and directors of the videos with which this article has engaged are not so much “caught between” the universality of Latin music and the “regional particularities” of the actors, as Praeger suggests is the case with the Caribbean writers studied in her own work (175), but can rather straddle the two, using this in-between position as a tool to navigate between local and foreign ideologies and imaginaries. Extrapolating from the strategic potential to harness and revalorize external perceptions of the Caribbean in these videos’ aesthetic and musical channeling of affect to the wider—and expanding—repertoire of diasporic and trans-Caribbean reggaeton collaborations, these cultural products clearly provide a valuable example of how the tensions between the imaginary Caribbean and Caribbean Imaginary are differently dealt with, experienced, and negotiated through the audio-visual medium. I suggest, then, that the strategies taken to channel affect in audio-visual content are beneficial sites for future inquiry into how ideologies emanating from “particular communities” and localized cultural expression can, in fact, shore up more of a “freedom” to manipulate global ideologies and hierarchical power dynamics.

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El impacto del SMS en la literacidad y otras implicaciones

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Resumen: El uso ubicuo de textear y de textese (una nueva forma de lengua informal) ha generado preocupaciones sobre cómo se afecta la literacidad de los jóvenes. Algunos académicos han manifestado que los mensajes de texto (SMS) pueden correlacionarse negativamente con la lectura (Perea, Acha and Carreiras 2009; De Jonge and Kemp 2012) y la gramática y la ortografía (De Jonge and Kemp 2012; Cingel and Sundar 2012). Por otro lado, hay quienes que sugieren que el textear puede correlacionarse positivamente con la conciencia fonológica y el desarrollo fonético, así como la lectura y la ortografía (Plester, Wood and Joshi 2009; Plester, Wood and Bell 2008) y que el aumento de la exposición a la lectura y la escritura puede tener un impacto positivo en la literacidad (McSweeney 2017, 2018; Plester, Wood, Joshi 2009; Crystal 2006, 2008). Esta investigación explora el comportamiento de textear entre un grupo de 139 estudiantes universitarios para entender cómo la forma en que textean se refleja en las investigaciones previas y cómo abordan las preocupaciones. Se realizó una encuesta que analizó los mensajes de texto de los participantes, como la densidad de palabras y el uso de textismos, así como sus opiniones sobre su propio comportamiento de textear. Generalmente, los resultados recalcaron que este grupo textea con alta frecuencia, que su bajo uso de textismos refleja una conciencia de no comprometer el significado del mensaje y que ellos son conscientes de la importancia del registro lingüístico. Por consiguiente, este estudio no muestra evidencia sólida que sugiera correlaciones completamente negativas entre la frecuencia o el uso del SMS sobre la literacidad.

Palabras claves: SMS, textese, aprendizaje L2, literacidad, comunicación mediada por tecnología (CMT)

Introducción

El lenguaje está en evolución constante. Independientemente del motivo o del tipo de cambio lingüístico habrá personas a favor y en contra de este proceso. Una de las mayores controversias lingüísticas en los últimos treinta años es la percepción de la “interrupción digital” que incluye el teléfono celular y los mensajes de texto (SMS). Desde la primera vez que se envió una “u” (en inglés) en lugar de “you”, los medios de comunicación se han convertido en un torbellino de opiniones y discursos públicos sobre si el idioma utilizado dentro de los mensajes de texto es perjudicial a la literacidad de los usuarios. Lingüistas, académicos, periodistas, escritores de blogs, profesores y maestros han manifestado que el SMS está dañando la capacidad lingüística de nuestros jóvenes y destruyendo los idiomas en general. Sin embargo, a la misma vez, argumentan que el cambio lingüístico es normal y que los mensajes de texto aumentan la exposición a la lectura y la escritura, que también permite la creatividad lingüística y por ende potencialmente produciendo un crecimiento

en la literacidad.

Así, en un intento de comprender qué lado de esta polémica es más convincente, lo que se necesita es un análisis de los mensajes de los usuarios reales para conocer su comportamiento real de cómo textean y el lenguaje que utilizan dentro de sus mensajes, así como testimonios sobre sus propias opiniones sobre este fenómeno. Este trabajo examina exactamente eso. Primero, se presenta una historia breve de los mensajes de texto, y cómo llegó a ser la nueva forma de lengua, el textese. Segundo, se plantea una breve revisión literaria que examina algunos estudios que se han llevado a cabo en este marco. El objetivo de este trabajo es compartir la motivación, la metodología, los resultados y las conclusiones de un estudio que explora el comportamiento y las opiniones con respecto al SMS de un grupo de estudiantes universitarios bilingües. Más específicamente, se analiza el uso del textese en estos estudiantes universitarios, sus pensamientos sobre cómo el textese afecta su forma de hablar y escribir en otros registros, con el fin de proveer una panorámica general de los beneficios posibles pedagógicos para el aprendizaje de una L2 (segunda lengua) en el modo de SMS.

Una breve historia de los mensajes de texto y el textese

Textese: ¿Qué es? y ¿Cómo se usa?

El primer mensaje de texto entre usuarios privados fue enviado en 1992 (McSweeney 2018) y el primer móvil de producción en masa con capacidades de textear se hizo público en 1993 (Palasick 2014). Originalmente estos mensajes, llamados Short-Message Service (SMS), estaban limitados a 140 caracteres y luego aumentaron a 160. Al principio, el desarrollo de la popularidad del SMS fue muy lento porque los usuarios tuvieron que pagar por cada mensaje individual. Esto creó un método de facturación indeseable y, consecuentemente, que los usuarios se quejaron de que el proceso de textear era engorroso. Así, las compañías telefónicas trabajaron con diligencia para desarrollar la tecnología y mejorar la experiencia del usuario y, así eventualmente, los planes con mensajes de texto ilimitados se hicieron disponibles.

El primer intento de mejorar esta experiencia fue la invención del T9, un sistema predictivo de palabras. Aunque útil, el T9 no siempre seleccionaba la palabra correcta y los usuarios todavía tenían que pulsar muchas teclas o las mismas varias veces, así que empezaron a buscar maneras únicas de escribir utilizando cuantos menos caracteres posibles. Aún antes de la invención del T9, los usuarios se recurrieron a abreviar muchas frases y pasaron a usar otras técnicas lingüísticas para aligerar el esfuerzo requerido en el acto de textear.

Cuando llegó el teclado QWERTY al móvil en 1997 (Palasick 2014) se eliminó la necesidad de tener que pulsar la misma tecla varias veces para obtener una sola letra porque en el teclado QWERTY cada letra tiene su propia

tecla. Después de esta mejora, el acto de enviar mensajes de texto se hizo más conveniente y atrajo a más usuarios. Diez años después, en 2007, se estrenó el iPhone y el desarrollo de textear creció aún más. El exitoso teclado de QWERTY se integró en una pantalla táctil, creando así una experiencia de textear más simplificada. Además, el iPhone tenía su propia tecnología de autocorrección más avanzada que ayudaba al usuario con errores de deletrear y de gramática. Aunque la tecnología no es perfecta y a veces todavía se cometen errores al escribir, los mensajes de texto se han convertido en el modo de comunicación más popular (Lionbridge 2019).

Junto con la invención y el desarrollo de los mensajes de texto, también evolucionó el lenguaje utilizado dentro del SMS. Con el límite de 160 caracteres, los *texters* tenían que volverse eficientes y reflexivos en sus elecciones lingüísticas y se acostumbraron a acortar sus pensamientos y palabras. Al redactar los mensajes, los usuarios podían ser eficientes y a la vez emplear una amplia gama de prácticas lingüísticas, incluyendo un lenguaje abreviado y una ortografía y estética diversa y creativa.

Así es como nació el textese, el registro informal utilizado en aplicaciones de mensajería como el SMS, WhatsApp y Facebook Messenger, más prominente cuando el usuario está utilizando un aparato móvil. El textese puede incluir abreviaturas y ortografía fonética, palabras y frases de una combinación de letras, imágenes o logogramas como “s3” (“estrés” en español) y “c u l8r” (“see you later” en inglés). Así, el textese se caracteriza por su creatividad y eficiencia lingüística. La trayectoria del SMS y el textese ejemplifican que el lenguaje es algo vivo y un reflejo de la sociedad que a la misma vez cambia junto con la lengua.

El debate: ¿es textese dañino o útil?

Durante el pico de la anomalía del uso de los mensajes de texto, a principios del siglo XXI, una división creció entre dos grupos principales. Había personas que se oponían al textese opinando que los mensajes de texto perjudicaban las variedades estándar del lenguaje y hacían que los usuarios fueran más perezosos y menos competentes en sus habilidades del alfabetismo (Villarta and Taboada 2012; Thurlow 2006). También, había otras que, en lugar de preocupadas, estaban más desconcertadas y sentían curiosidad por este fenómeno lingüístico (Baron 2008; Perea et al. 2009; Aziz, Shamim, Aziz and Avais 2013; Plester, Wood and Bell 2008). Por otro lado, había aquellos que creían que el cambio lingüístico es inevitable y el SMS y el textese son divertidos, facilitando más oportunidades para leer y escribir y así mejorando la literacidad en lugar de disminuirla (Crystal 2001, 2008a 2011; Thurlow 2006; Wood, Kemp and Plester 2014; McSweeney 2017). Estas personas se sienten emocionadas por la

oportunidad que SMS otorga a los usuarios para ser creativos lingüísticamente y para adaptar el lenguaje a las demandas de entornos diversos.

Por lo tanto, esta polémica ha alimentado muchas investigaciones que se llevarán a cabo para averiguar exactamente si los mensajes de texto son perjudiciales. Basándome en una revisión de la literatura sobre el tema y profundizando en los hallazgos de esta investigación, argumento que los mensajes de texto tienen más beneficios que efectos dañinos, específicamente con respecto a la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros.

Revisión literaria

Esta innovación lingüística y las controversias que la rodean han impulsado a que una variedad de investigaciones se centre en cómo el uso del SMS afecta a aspectos socioculturales y varios subtemas de la literacidad, como la lectura, la escritura y la ortografía. Por ejemplo, muchos estudiosos han explorado el aspecto sociolingüístico del comportamiento del SMS (Tagliamonte 2016; Androutsopoulos 2006), un coste potencial en la lectura (Perea et al. 2009) y cómo puede afectar la escritura académica y la alfabetización de niños, estudiantes de secundaria, estudiantes universitarios y adultos mayores (De Jong and Kemp 2012; Drouin and Davis 2009; Waldron, Kemp, Plester and Wood 2015). Otros estudios han analizado el SMS y el textese como un registro informal y la conciencia, la capacidad y la voluntad de los usuarios a cambiar entre registros formales e informales (Aziz et al. 2013; Van Dijk, Van Witteloostuijn, Vasić, Avrutin and Blom 2016). Hasta ahora, los estudios presentan una mezcla de resultados y, en general, no sugieren completamente que los mensajes de texto tengan un impacto negativo en la literacidad de los usuarios ni su uso del lenguaje estándar. De hecho, hay varios argumentos que proponen efectos positivos, que incluyen una mayor motivación a participar en las habilidades de literacidad que se encuentran en los mensajes de texto y la tecnología (Cingel and Sundar 2012), más exposición a la lectura y la escritura (McSweeney 2018), un aumento potencial en la conciencia fonética (Waldron et al. 2015; Wood et al. 2014) y un posible fortalecimiento de las funciones cognitivas ejecutivas (Van Dijk et al. 2016). Habiendo aclarado esto, debido a su profunda conexión con lo propuesto aquí, este trabajo usa principalmente los siguientes trabajos para guiar la hipótesis, las predicciones, la metodología y la forma de analizar e interpretar los datos, así como comprender los resultados y proponer futuras investigaciones.

Primero, el libro de Wood et al. (2014) provee una discusión y resumen de la evidencia académica que admite posibles correlaciones positivas y negativas del uso del SMS, así como la idea de usar los teléfonos celulares para apoyar actividades de alfabetización. Las autoras aportan parte de la historia del aumento del uso de los teléfonos móviles y los mensajes de texto, y discuten

en términos generales la reacción de los medios. El libro tiene como objetivo sintetizar datos e inferencias de múltiples estudios que se han llevado a cabo examinando elementos como los vínculos entre la ortografía, la lectura y los mensajes de texto de los niños, facilitando el desarrollo de la alfabetización en adolescentes y adultos jóvenes, y cómo los mensajes de texto pueden afectar la gramática y la alfabetización. Además, las investigadoras dedican un capítulo a la metodología empleada en los diversos estudios y cierran el libro discutiendo sus conclusiones e inferencias sobre el futuro de los mensajes de texto.

Con respecto a su discusión sobre el grupo de edad relevante para este estudio, las metodologías empleadas y los hallazgos son variados. En cuanto a la ortografía no estándar del textese, Wood et al. aportan que si los adultos están expuestos a formas mal escritas de palabras, esto puede tener un impacto negativo en su propia ortografía de esas palabras, aunque, por otro lado, la exposición a palabras correctamente escritas puede mejorar el rendimiento de la ortografía. El medio de exposición no importa, lo importante es la exposición a la ortografía correcta. Asimismo, las autoras expresan que el uso de textismos parece estar asociado con la capacidad de lectura y ortografía debido a sus vínculos comunes con la conciencia fonológica y las capacidades de procesamiento fonológico rápido. Aunque este último resultado sugiere que podría ser más beneficioso para los niños y adolescentes, ya que ellos todavía están desarrollando sus habilidades fonéticas y puede ser más difícil romper los hábitos en los adultos.

Asimismo, las investigadoras resumen que el acto de crear una ortografía incorrecta “inventada” no afecta la capacidad de los adultos de aprender la ortografía correcta de las palabras. Igualmente, la comprensión de la gramática convencional no está claramente asociada con la tendencia a cometer errores gramaticales al enviar mensajes de texto. Asimismo, los resultados de los estudios que han analizado las habilidades de literacidad y el SMS en muestras de adolescentes y adultos son aún más variados. Esto probablemente sea el resultado de diferencias metodológicas y los diferentes tipos de uso del SMS por parte de los participantes en estos estudios (92-93). En general, las autoras concluyen que hay algunas asociaciones entre las habilidades de alfabetización convencionales y el uso de textismos entre adolescentes y adultos jóvenes, pero los vínculos no son claros. Ellas cierran el libro identificando la necesidad de más investigaciones con el fin de entender estos vínculos.

Segundo, el estudio de Aziz et al. (2013) ofrece una revisión literaria extensa que brinda cobertura a varios ensayos de opinión que expresan preocupaciones sobre el uso de mensajes de texto y la literacidad, así como investigaciones empíricas que ofrecen varios resultados, destacando específicamente las correlaciones positivas entre el SMS y la literacidad. Este equipo de investigadores también recalca las sugerencias pedagógicas de mensajes de texto hechas por David Crystal que basa sus ideas en el hecho de que la mayoría de los estudios no muestran correlaciones negativas entre el SMS y la alfabetización y se enfoca

más en las fuerzas del lenguaje utilizado dentro del SMS y su potencialidad creativa (12885-12886). Por lo tanto, motivado por la preocupación de que la ortografía tradicional se sustituye por el uso de su versión en textese, Aziz et al. (2013) investigaron la presencia o ausencia de rasgos de textese en la redacción académica de los participantes, quienes fueron 50 estudiantes universitarios entre las edades de 19 y 25. La triangulación se utilizó para la colección de los datos, incluyendo cuestionarios y muestras de trabajos escritos en inglés de los estudiantes. Se examinó el trabajo escrito para las características de SMS como, por ejemplo, la omisión de signos de puntuación y abreviaturas, para que los alumnos desempeñaran su trabajo de la manera más natural y realista posible. Considerando que una de las características más populares del lenguaje de SMS es la ortografía única, como escribir fonéticamente, los investigadores examinaron los ensayos sólo por rasgos de la ortografía única y fonética. Contrariamente a lo esperado, no hubo evidencias significativas de estas características en las muestras. Además, los alumnos parecen ser competentes a la hora de usar formas estándar, son conscientes del contexto lingüístico y pueden cambiar al registro o estilo apropiado al escribir formalmente. En conclusión, los autores sugieren que las preocupaciones sobre el impacto del SMS en la escritura académica y sobre un efecto negativo en el lenguaje estándar de estudiantes universitarios han sido exageraciones y, en este grupo de participantes, los datos no apoyan estas afirmaciones.

En tercer lugar, considerar el trabajo de McSweeney (2017) es especialmente útil porque apoya no solo en el hecho de que los mensajes de texto no son necesariamente dañinos a un idioma, sino que los mensajes de texto y los teléfonos móviles pueden conllevar beneficios pedagógicos, particularmente en el ámbito del aprendizaje de segundas lenguas. Este artículo explora la relación entre textear en una L2 y la literacidad académica de tres maneras principales. Primero, la investigadora analiza la cantidad de mensajes enviados en inglés (es decir, el *target language*, TL), comparados con la literacidad inglés de los participantes, la densidad léxica de esos mensajes y también el lenguaje de las redes sociales en el que están integrados los estudiantes. Su proyecto está basado en la teoría que los *smartphones* sirven como herramienta para la adquisición de segundas lenguas (ASL) y también pueden proporcionar una oportunidad única para la práctica naturalista de un TL en un entorno digital. Los 15 participantes tenían edades de entre 18 y 21 y completaron un cuestionario comprensivo demográfico que incluía preguntas de sus experiencias lingüísticas, su educación y su comportamiento de textear. Utilizando una variedad de tareas, las habilidades del lenguaje de los participantes fueron analizadas en tres modalidades diferentes: escrita, auditiva y digital. Esta metodología pudo proveer una imagen holística de las habilidades de literacidad de los estudiantes. También se tomaron en cuenta las puntuaciones de la parte que constaba del lenguaje inglés en el *Test of Adult Basic Education*. Se hizo un promedio de las notas de estas cuatro evaluaciones

para crear un nivel de lenguaje académico total que se alinee con el sistema de notas americano para cada estudiante. Gracias a estas medidas, combinadas con un análisis de más de 44.000 mensajes de texto, la investigadora concluyó que los bilingües emergentes que envían más mensajes en inglés y eligen el inglés para la configuración de sus teléfonos móviles tienden a tener mayores habilidades académicas en inglés.

Por consiguiente, los marcos teóricos, las motivaciones y las partes del diseño estructural mencionados en estudios previos motivan el presente estudio. Este estudio presenta datos tanto cuantitativos como cualitativos sobre el comportamiento de textear y las opiniones del SMS de usuarios reales. De esta forma, este proyecto intenta responder a las siguientes preguntas de investigación:

1. ¿Qué muestra el comportamiento de los mensajes de texto de este grupo sobre su uso de textismos? ¿Qué porcentaje de textismos están presentes en este corpus de mensajes de texto en relación con el conteo real de palabras? ¿Cuál es la conciencia y la capacidad de los usuarios de usar textismos, sin comprometer el significado del mensaje?
2. ¿Qué tan conscientes son los usuarios de los registros formales e informales, y cómo podrían acomodar su idioma dependiendo del registro?
3. ¿Piensan los participantes que su propio comportamiento de enviar mensajes de texto tiene correlaciones negativas, positivas o ninguna a su propia literacidad?
4. ¿Qué piensan los participantes sobre las implicaciones de la enseñanza y aprendizaje de una segunda lengua al utilizar los mensajes de texto?

Propongo las siguientes predicciones basándome en la revisión de la literatura, los resultados de un estudio piloto que llevé a cabo anteriormente y mi propio conocimiento sobre este tema:

1. Los mensajes de texto de estos usuarios no se llenarán con cantidades extremas del textese ni de palabras deletreadas fonéticamente, acrónimos y abreviaturas.
2. Los participantes serán conscientes de los diferentes registros lingüísticos que ellos mismos emplean y reportarán que no creen que los mensajes de texto afecten ni a su habla ni escritura de manera negativa en otros ambientes, ni en inglés ni español.
3. Los participantes estarán generalmente de acuerdo con que la forma en la que envían y reciben mensajes de texto no perjudica sus habilidades generales de alfabetización, su habla o su escritura en otros registros.
4. Estos participantes opinarán que comunicarse a través del SMS puede proveer más exposición a la lectura, la escritura y la creati-

vidad lingüística, fortaleciendo así la capacidad cognitiva y desarrollo de su literacidad, ya sea en su L1 o L2.

Metodología

Para reclutar participantes, se envió un correo electrónico con la información del estudio a todos los estudiantes y profesores de español en una pequeña universidad jesuita católica privada en el Medio Oeste, así como su campus hermano en el extranjero. En este correo se incluyó el enlace a una encuesta de autoinforme que obtenía información sobre el uso y las opiniones relacionadas con los mensajes de texto. La encuesta se envió a un total de 909 afiliados de la universidad dentro del Departamento de Lenguajes, Literaturas y Culturas. En el campus de los Estados Unidos, 722 estudiantes y 35 profesores recibieron la encuesta, y en el campus del extranjero, 152 estudiantes y 23 profesores la recibieron. La encuesta se abrió durante una semana y respondieron 139 participantes.

Participantes

Todos los participantes estaban afiliados a los dos campus de esta universidad y se clasificaron en una o más de las siguientes categorías: estaban inscritos actualmente en un curso de español; estaban registrados actualmente como estudiantes completando la especialidad de español o español como materia secundaria; eran profesores activos dentro del programa de español; eran hablantes nativos de español matriculados en el programa de español.

De los 139 participantes, 124 se identificaron como mujeres (89%) y 15 como hombres (11%), las cuales eran las dos únicas opciones disponibles. El 44% de los participantes tenía edad de entre 20-29 (Tabla 1). Se estima que 33 (23%) participantes se encontraba en el campus extranjero y 106 (76%) se encontraba en el campus de los EE.UU. Esta estimación se calculó mediante el seguimiento de latitud y longitud de la función de encuesta anónima en Qualtrics.

Tabla 1. Información demográfica

Género	Mujeres	124
	Hombres	15
Edad	18-19 años	75
	20-29 años	61
	30-39 años	3

Todos los participantes reportaron que usan un Smartphone. La edad promedio a la que adquirieron su primer teléfono móvil fue a los 12 años y recibieron el primer Smartphone a los 14. Los participantes han tenido su

Smartphone por un promedio de 6,5 años. Sólo 4 personas revelaron que habían tenido un Smartphone por más de 10 años. 71,9% de los participantes también reportaron que el motivo principal para usar mensajes de texto es social (mantenerse en contacto con amigos, familiares y conocidos) (Fig. 1).

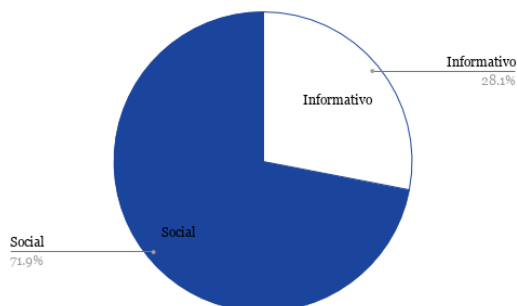


Fig. 1. Motivo principal de enviar los mensajes de texto

Encuesta

La encuesta constaba de treinta y seis preguntas cualitativas y cuantitativas para elicitación de información en cuatro categorías basadas en las características lingüísticas de los mensajes de texto: 1) demografía de los participantes, 2) información sobre sus dispositivos móviles, 3) su comportamiento y uso de textear y 4) sus opiniones personales sobre el SMS y el textese. Asimismo, se les pidió que hicieran un ejercicio de traducción y también que proporcionaran unos ejemplos de sus propios mensajes de texto. La encuesta fue administrada de forma anónima a través del programa Qualtrics. Todas las preguntas de la encuesta se encuentran en el Apéndice A.

Para entender su comportamiento y uso de SMS, esta metodología adoptó el proceso de explorar la densidad de palabras, haciendo un recuento total de palabras en comparación con el uso de textismos. Cada micro conversación se incluyó en el recuento total de palabras, así como la suma de textismos, y se calculó el porcentaje de textismos. En este estudio, una micro conversación se define como cada conversación individual proporcionada por el participante, como se ejemplifica en las conversaciones en Apéndice B.

Cada micro conversación fue codificada para las siguientes categorías del textese: abreviaturas, “clippings”,¹ ortografía fonética, ortografía no estándar y emoticonos. En este estudio, las reacciones de risa como “ha ha” y “ja ja” se incluyen en la cantidad de palabras como una sola entidad, pero no se consideraron un textismo. De igual modo, abreviaturas como *brb* y *tqm* se contaron como una sola palabra. El Apéndice C provee una lista más detallada de las categorías del textese.

1 Por ejemplo, cuando se elimina la “g” final de una palabra del gerundio en inglés, como cambiar “clipping” a “clippin”.

Resultados

Para presentar los datos de una manera simple y proveer un resumen sencillo, los datos fueron analizados utilizando estadísticas descriptivas.

Resultados generales

El recuento de textismos y la configuración de la densidad de palabras se implementó en todas las micro conversaciones. De las 157 muestras totales, 106 fueron en inglés, de las cuales 51 utilizaron español o *code-switching*. El objetivo era cuantificar el porcentaje de textismos que aparecían en los mensajes de texto reales y también comparar estos datos con la autoconciencia de los participantes sobre su propio uso de textismos. Según esta muestra, y como se ve en la Tabla 2, los datos revelan que el discurso público que está ocurriendo en los medios de comunicación sobre el uso excesivo y abundancia de las abreviaturas y ortografía fonética no es tan frecuente o grave como a menudo se describe. Por ejemplo, como muestra la Tabla 2, el porcentaje promedio de textismos utilizados es inferior al 7%.

Tabla 2. Uso de textismos en mensajes de texto en general

	Palabras	Textismos	Emoticonos	Textismos + Emoticonos	% de textismos usados
<i>Promedio</i>	40	1,78	0,38	2,15	6,97%

Autoinforme de datos sobre su uso

Aunque los datos recopilados en este estudio cubren una variedad de temas, como el cambio de código entre español e inglés, marcadores de discurso pragmáticos, ejercicios de traducción y emoticones más populares, este artículo enfatiza sólo los resultados de las abreviaturas y la ortografía fonética, así como los testimonios proporcionados por los participantes.

Análisis: Las abreviaturas

Se preguntó a los participantes sobre si usan abreviaturas en sus mensajes de texto y si escriben fonéticamente. En cuanto a las abreviaturas, el 85,6% informaron que sí utilizan abreviaturas. Para proveer un ejemplo de estas abreviaturas, a continuación presentamos las cinco abreviaturas principales reportados de este grupo: *lol* (*laughing out loud*), *lmao* (*laughing my ass off*) *omg* (*oh my god*) y *rn* (*right now*), *omw* (*on my way*), *brb* (*be right back*). Lo interesante es que, aunque la mayoría de los participantes dijeron que sí usan abreviaturas (Fig. 2), cuando se les preguntó cuántas enviaron, el promedio era muy bajo, como se muestra en la tabla 3. De esta muestra, la mayoría de los participantes, el 78%,

abrevian solo una palabra de cada seis palabras o no abrevian ninguna palabra. Esta aproximación fue autoinformada por los participantes. De esta forma, en este grupo hay una cantidad significativa de gente usando abreviaturas, pero al mismo tiempo están tomando una decisión muy consciente de no comprometer el significado al utilizar demasiadas abreviaturas.

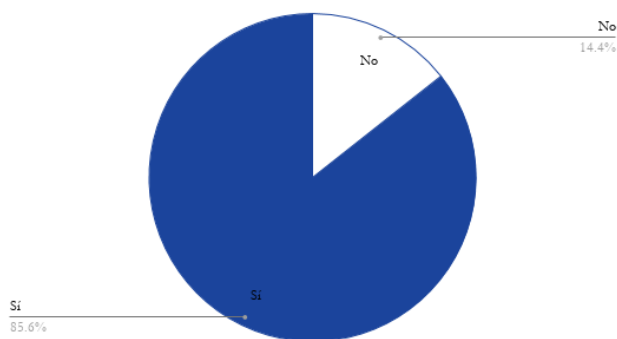


Fig. 2. Autoinforme: Uso de abreviaturas

Tabla 3. Autoinforme: Cantidad de abreviaturas dentro de un solo mensaje

Número de abreviaturas de cada seis palabras	Cantidad
0-1	108
2-3	30
4-5	1
6	0

Al comparar el autoinforme con el uso real de los textismos, se descubrió que el autoinforme era incluso mayor que el uso real. Este análisis se realizó en los textos proporcionados en inglés, lo cual sumó a un total de 4.233 palabras, con una cantidad de 152 abreviaturas. Así, aproximadamente, el autoinforme no solo es más bajo de lo esperado, con un 8,33% de los encuestados informando que sí usan abreviaturas, sino que la representación del uso real es aún más bajo, con un uso de textismos del 3,59%.

Análisis: La ortografía fonética

Los participantes también reportaron sobre si escriben palabras de manera fonética. La mayoría de este grupo de texters (55,4%) se informó que normalmente no escribe fonéticamente cuando se comunican utilizando el SMS. En el total de 4.233 palabras en los ejemplos de sus textos en inglés, solo hubo 22 casos de ortografía fonética, que vino de solo 20 participantes. Esto significa que solo el 14,39% de los participantes realmente usaban la ortografía fonética en estas

muestras. Esto se compara con el 62 casos (44,6%) de los que se informaron a sí mismos de escribir fonéticamente, que de nuevo muestra un autoinforme más bajo en comparación al uso real.

Para los propósitos de este artículo, este análisis solo se realizó en los textos en inglés, pero se pronostican resultados similares para los textos en inglés y español.

Opiniones sobre el comportamiento de textear

La quinta sección de la encuesta consistió en investigar las opiniones y percepciones de los participantes. Se les pidió expresar cuáles podrían ser las consecuencias potenciales entre su propio uso del SMS y cómo escriben en otros registros fuera del SMS como, por ejemplo, los reportes del trabajo o un correo electrónico con profesores. La mayoría de los participantes respondieron que, generalmente, no opinan que su uso de SMS afecte de manera negativa su forma de escribir en otros entornos. Aproximadamente el 50% de los participantes expresaron que no, el 22% afirmó que sí con excepciones, el 16% tenía sentimientos ambivalentes y las respuestas del resto (~10%) no incluyeron información suficiente para inferir una opinión fuerte.

De hecho, los participantes hicieron varios comentarios acerca del efecto positivo que el SMS está teniendo en la escritura de su L2 (en este caso, el español). Por ejemplo, “it just exposes me more to the language so that I feel more comfortable writing a paper due to extra practice”. Efectivamente, hubo un gran número de encuestados que hicieron comentarios sobre estar al tanto de los registros lingüísticos y poder navegar fácilmente entre los registros formales e informales. Por ejemplo, algunos proveyeron comentarios como “I haven’t ever had any problems switching from formal to informal writing”, y “I do not think that the way I write in text messages affects the way I write in classes for essays or written assignments in general. I understand the separate environments when I am expected to write professionally, or when I can let loose and not be super professional”.

Sin embargo, en cuanto a cómo los mensajes de texto podrían tener un impacto negativo en la escritura, muchos participantes expresaron que a menudo la *autocorrección* hace que sea difícil recordar la ortografía correcta cuando se escribe en un entorno donde la autocorrección no está disponible, como apuntaron anteriormente Waldron et al. (2015) y Wood et al. (2014). En otro comentario curioso que se refiere a los emoticonos y cómo debido a la frecuencia con que se utilizan en el SMS y en los correos electrónicos informales, un participante expresó tener dificultades para dejar de usarlos en comunicación más formal.

Después, se les hizo una pregunta similar, pero esta vez trataba de si los participantes pensaban que los mensajes de texto afectaban negativamente a su habla, como en clase o en el trabajo. Aproximadamente el 32% respondió

que no, el 40% que sí, el 15% dio una respuesta mezclada. Aunque el resto de las respuestas proporcionadas, que fueron de naturaleza cualitativa, no arrojaron una evidencia clara de una opinión fuerte de si afecta su habla o no. Un comentario común entre muchos participantes era que ellos han comenzado a incorporar algunos textismos abreviados escritos en su discurso hablado como, por ejemplo, “I end up saying the SMS abbreviations in everyday life (very casually of course). For instance, I often say lol (el oh el), brb (bee are bee), or omg (oh em gee)”. La mayoría de ellos expresaron que este comportamiento sólo se aplica a cuando están en una situación informal, como con amigos. De las 135 respuestas cualitativas proporcionadas para esta pregunta, surgieron dos temas prominentes. Primero, todos expresaron una conciencia, y a menudo una voluntad, de la necesidad de cambiar entre registros lingüísticos distintos. Segundo, varios participantes revelaron que son conscientes de que les está ayudando a aprender su L2 al brindar más exposición y más oportunidades de practicar su L2 como expresa este comentario: “Texting in Spanish allows me to practice my Spanish every single day and not just for 1 hour in class”.

Asimismo, con el fin de comprender mejor las opiniones de este grupo de texters se les preguntó hasta qué punto están de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con seis declaraciones. Parece que hay un acuerdo relativamente fuerte compartido por la mayoría de ellos con respecto a que el SMS es más útil que dañino para la alfabetización y, además, están también de acuerdo con que proporciona un contexto para mejorar una L2. En cuanto a su reacción sobre qué dicen los medios de comunicación sobre el SMS y los posibles efectos negativos a largo plazo que puedan tener en la ortografía y puntuación (la tercera declaración C en la pregunta 18 como se encuentra en Apéndice A), los resultados parecen más equilibrados. El hecho de que esta pregunta sea más equilibrada, en lugar de favorecer más fuertemente una sola respuesta como muestran muchas otras preguntas en la escala Likert, sugiere un tema interesante sobre cuán influyentes pueden ser los medios y la prensa cuando se trata del uso y análisis del discurso. El gráfico completo y las preguntas se encuentran en el Apéndice D.

Ejercicio de traducción e información variada

La penúltima sección consistía en cuatro ejercicios de traducción. Se les pidió a los encuestados que tradujeran una frase del inglés estándar al textese y viceversa. También se les pidió que tradujeran una frase del español estándar al textese español y viceversa. Las frases del textese fueron creadas usando una sobre abundancia de textismos: 1) Traduzca la siguiente expresión en textese del inglés al inglés estándar, “that article wuz a cwot. I didnt undrstand nething. #homibhabha. hopefully prof will clear it ^, g2g 2 klass. Ttyl!”, y 2) Traduzca la siguiente expresión en textese del español al español estándar: “tbmn, qnd llegas, mándame un txt, xfa”.

Los ejercicios de traducción se modelaron de manera similar a como se llevó a cabo este procedimiento de traducción en De Jonge and Kemp (2012). Fueron diseñados siendo fieles a cómo los medios de comunicación han estado asumiendo que las personas escriben en el SMS, utilizando una cantidad extrema de abreviaturas, ortografía fonética, etc. Estos ejemplos se escribieron de esta manera y se colocaron estratégicamente junto a la pregunta solicitando comentarios abiertos para ver si los encuestados comentaban sobre el estilo o tipo del lenguaje utilizado dentro de los modelos.

Hubo una opinión compartida entre los encuestados de que la abundancia del textese utilizado en los ejemplos no es lo normal que experimentan en la vida real; y muchos expresaron comentarios similares como, por ejemplo, “I honestly have never texted with someone who uses textese to the extent that these examples show in either language” y “We use complete sentences and maybe a few abbreviations. Adults seem to think that we abbreviate everything, when in reality most of us get really confused if that many abbreviations are being used in one text”. Además, la mayoría comentó que en general los mensajes de texto no son tan incomprensibles y llenos de textismos como parecen estar en los medios de comunicación. Esto presenta incluso una pequeña cantidad de datos que refutan cómo los medios a menudo representan a los usuarios de SMS como superfluos e incomprensibles en sus mensajes. Estos datos cualitativos, combinados con el análisis de textismos de sus propios datos, muestran que si bien los que envían mensajes de texto pueden usar textismos, los que envían estos mensajes no comprometen el significado al utilizar demasiados textos cortos.

También, cabe señalar que muchos de estos participantes, aprendices de español como una L2, indican que se dan cuenta de que hay posibles beneficios pedagógicos al aprovechar del SMS como una herramienta del aprendizaje. Por ejemplo, en la escala Likert, que se encuentra en el Apéndice D, la declaración seis afirmó “Como un aprendiz del idioma español, a través de mensajes de texto con hablantes nativos u otros estudiantes, puedo aprender más sobre la comunicación informal en español y las culturas hispanas”. El 73% indicaron que estaban “totalmente de acuerdo” o “de acuerdo”. Asimismo, estos estudiantes contribuyeron citas como “...by keeping in touch with my host family from Argentina, [texting] it has helped me to use common phrases in spanish more casually in conversation during spanish class”, y “Texting with native speakers does give me more opportunities to recognize cultural slang and expand upon casual vocabulary”.

Discusión

Este estudio recalca tres conclusiones generales: este grupo de texters no representa los estereotipos presentados en la escena pública; es más probable que el discurso hablado experimente efectos causados por el SMS en lugar de

la escritura; y que existe una autoconciencia sobre el comportamiento y efectos de los mensajes de texto, con la voluntad de alterar el lenguaje en función del contexto. Además, los resultados de este estudio han aportado al campo de tres maneras principales. Primero, la encuesta facilitó la visibilidad de las opiniones y percepciones de las personas que realmente están enviando mensajes de texto y con mucha frecuencia en el mundo actual. Segundo, este estudio ha permitido capturar un corpus de muestras reales de mensajes de texto de una manera mezclada: la combinación de datos cualitativos con cuantitativos brinda la oportunidad de obtener conclusiones más únicas. Tercero, ha analizado el comportamiento de los mensajes de texto entre los bilingües, así como las opiniones sobre el rol potencial que el SMS podría tener en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del español como L2. Esto nos lleva a preguntarnos, ¿Qué tiene que ver todo esto con la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de idiomas?

Basándonos en los datos recopilados en este estudio pertenecientes a este grupo específico de participantes, entendemos que los estudiantes textean con alta frecuencia, que el bajo uso de textismos refleja una conciencia de no comprometer el significado del mensaje, que los usuarios son conscientes de la importancia del registro lingüístico según el contexto y que no hay evidencia sólida que sugiera correlaciones completamente negativas entre la frecuencia o el uso de los mensajes de texto en la literacidad. Todo esto, más las respuestas de este grupo centradas en el aprendizaje del español como segundo idioma, sugieren que existen muchas implicaciones para el valor pedagógico en los mensajes de texto.

Por consiguiente, basándome en las conclusiones anteriores y mi inclinación como educadora de español como una L2, las investigaciones futuras deben investigar el papel de la comunicación mediada por tecnología (CMT) en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del español como una lengua extranjera, específicamente con respecto a las aplicaciones de mensajería. Por ejemplo, académicos de ASL han prestado mucha atención a la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras a través de CMT (Arnold and Ducate 2019; Lafford and Lafford 2005) y se han realizado varios estudios sobre la enseñanza del inglés como segundo idioma a través de mensajes de texto y Whatsapp (Ahmad Alsaleem 2013; Ahmed Almekhlafy and Falah Alzubi, 2016; Li and Cummins 2019). Sin embargo, mi trabajo puede contribuir a la brecha que indica la falta de un extenso cuerpo de investigación que explore la enseñanza de los idiomas extranjeros, específicamente el español, utilizando el SMS u otras aplicaciones de mensajería.

Con el apoyo de ASL y la pedagogía de lenguas extranjeras a usar las aplicaciones de mensajería como herramienta se pueden llevar a cabo investigaciones como las siguientes: explorar si los beneficios propuestos de la Teoría Bilingüe también están en juego aquí entre el cambio de código entre el textese y las variaciones estándar de lenguaje; replicar el estudio de McSweeney (2017), cambiando los idiomas para analizar si un mayor uso en español del teléfono

móvil de los usuarios aumentaría sus habilidades avanzadas de alfabetización en español; investigar el *turn-taking* y la negociación de significado en las conversaciones del SMS producidas en la L2; investigar cómo la mayor exposición al TL a través de SMS cambiando el lenguaje del teléfono para examinar si el del TL afecta las competencias de la L2; entender cómo textear puede aumentar la conciencia fonológica; e indagar cómo se pueden utilizar los emojis para enseñar vocabulario de la L2, apoyar el *digital storytelling* y corregir las rupturas en la comunicación (como se sugiere en Jones 2019).

Con respecto a las limitaciones de este estudio, es importante tener en cuenta que el lenguaje usado en los mensajes de texto es el resultado de cada lengua materna individual. Por tanto, los diferentes dialectos regionales y sociales, así como las distintas comunidades de práctica, impactan los patrones del registro usado en estos mensajes, así como los símbolos, abreviaturas y ortografía. Los ejemplos aportados en este proyecto están fuertemente orientados hacia participantes en un campus universitario estadounidense. También cabe señalar que este grupo de participantes es un grupo educado de adultos jóvenes que están completando su educación superior. Los resultados del comportamiento y las opiniones de los mensajes de texto pueden ser diferentes dependiendo del nivel de educación del encuestado, así como su competencia en la literacidad digital.

Asimismo, es importante apuntar que una gran parte de los participantes (89%) eran mujeres. Es importante considerarlo al revisar los datos, especialmente los elementos como el historial de teléfonos celulares, uso de textismos, y las opiniones sobre si el textese afecta la literacidad y qué puede significar textear en la pedagogía para las segundas lenguas. También falta en este estudio una clara distinción entre hablantes nativos (NSS) y no nativos (NS). Si bien los participantes enviaron información sobre su nivel de español (de acuerdo con las pautas de competencia en español de ACTFL, como se muestra en el Apéndice A, pregunta 5), esta no es información suficiente para inferir cuáles participantes eran hablantes nativos, no nativos o incluso hablantes de herencia. Sin embargo, se asume que la mayoría de ellos no eran hablantes nativos. Si se avanza en este estudio en el futuro, se incluirían un cuestionario biográfico para abordar estas preguntas de lengua (NS v. NNS), así como analizar los datos centrándose en cualquier distinción que revelara entre género.

Conclusión

Con todos los avances del Smartphone y el SMS ha surgido una manera de comunicarse muy distinta de cualquier otra en el pasado. Igualmente, la introducción a los emoticonos, la eliminación del límite de caracteres y los planes ilimitados de mensajes de texto han avivado una manera de comunicar innovadora, creativa y multimodal. Basándome en la literatura de estudios previos y en los datos de esta encuesta, he llegado a creer que los mensajes de

texto, en general, no son perjudiciales para la literacidad de adultos jóvenes, pero en realidad podrían apoyar el crecimiento de la alfabetización, así como el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua.

El registro del SMS nunca se declaró una variedad idiomática, por tanto es injusto juzgarlo según las mismas normas del lenguaje estándar. La tendencia histórica de preocuparse por las interrupciones sociales, ya sean digitales o no, y a culpar a los jóvenes no es una nueva forma de reaccionar ante un cambio. Y los usuarios frecuentes de mensajes de texto, como este grupo de encuestados, rechazan los ataques a sus habilidades de alfabetización diciendo que “I feel like a lot of people think the younger generations are stupid and we can’t tell when to use text speech or when not to. But I feel like a large majority of us know when to use text speech or not”. El teléfono móvil y los mensajes de texto no son las primeras interrupciones tecnológicas que el mundo haya visto ni serán las últimas.

En conclusión, los idiomas evolucionan constantemente. Con el tiempo, es inevitable que adopten y reflejen su ambiente del momento y, por lo tanto, se espera que haya cambios lingüísticos. Más aún, los jóvenes están siempre a la vanguardia de adoptar y dar forma a nuevas tendencias. Casi con certeza, estos jóvenes se enfrentan a aquellos tradicionalistas que intentan mantener el *status quo* y no es justo culparlos de este fenómeno. Finalmente, es importante tener en cuenta que el SMS de hoy en día no es lo que será en cinco o diez años y no sabemos qué nos deparará la tecnología en el futuro. Por este motivo, nuestras mentes siempre deben permanecer abiertas a ideologías y cambios nuevos.

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Apéndice A. Encuesta completa de Qualtrics.

Demographic Background

1. Gender: Male, Female, Other, Prefer not to answer
2. Age:
 - a. 18-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+
3. What is your highest level of education?
 - a. Doctorate, PhD
 - b. Graduate Degree
 - c. Currently enrolled in Graduate program
 - d. Bachelor's Degree
 - e. Currently enrolled in Bachelor's program
4. Highest level of Spanish series taken / or series in which you are currently enrolled:
 - a. Span 1000
 - b. Span 2000
 - c. Span 3000
 - d. Span 4000
 - e. Span 5000
 - f. I am faculty with a Master's degree
 - g. I am faculty with a PhD
5. (Self-report) Spanish Proficiency Level according to ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) guidelines (rate separately for speaking, writing, listening, and reading)
 - Distinguished
 - Superior

Advanced
Intermediate
Novice

Mobile Phone Background Information

1. At what age did you receive your first mobile phone? _____
2. Was your first mobile phone a Smartphone? If not, at what age did you receive your first Smartphone? _____
3. For how long have you been using a Smartphone? _____
4. What is your Smartphone Operating System?

- a. iPhone
- b. Android
- c. Specify model/year

Feel free to put NA if this information is unknown.

Texting Behavior: Usage and Frequency

5. Approximately, how many messages do you send on a typical weekday?

- a. 0-5
- b. 6-10
- c. 11-20
- d. 30-40
- e. 40+

6. Approximately, how many messages do you send on a weekend (Saturday or Sunday)?

- a. 0-5
- b. 6-10
- c. 11-20
- d. 30-40
- e. 40+

7. Do you use predictive text? (both with English or Spanish)

- a. Yes/No

8. What would you say is the main purpose/intention of your texting?

- a. Informative (information gathering) seeking times of events, what to bring to a party, etc.

- b. Social: keeping in contact with friends and family “letting people know you’re there,” general check-ins

- c. Business: setting up meetings, reminders of dentist appointments, etc.

Texting Behavior: Language

9. Between English and Spanish, in which language do you text with more frequency?

- a. Spanish / English

10. What % of the messages that you send and receive have Spanish components? (either written entirely in Spanish or include Spanish words, phrases, or abbreviations).

11. Do you ever send bilingual texts, using a mix of English and Spanish or even include code-switching? If so, can you provide an example?

Example, “hqr” (“ay que funny”), or “it’s embarrassing, but cosas de la vida,”

- a. Yes / No
- b. Blank for example:

12. Do you use abbreviations when texting? (both in English and Spanish)

For example, English: lol, brb, brrt | Spanish: x (por), xfa (por favor), t2 (todos)

- a. Yes / No
- b. Can you provide example(s) of your most highly used abbreviation?

13. About how many abbreviations appear within one individual message that you send?

- a. 0-1 (0 or 1 in 6 words are abbreviated)
- b. 2-3 (2 or 3 in 6 words are abbreviated)
- c. 4-5 (4 or 5 in 6 words are abbreviated)
- d. 6 (all 6 words are abbreviated)

14. Do you spell things phonetically (in both English and Spanish)?

For example: English: “luv u,” “ne” (any), “shud” (should) | Spanish: +tíkr (masticar), ke?,

- a. Yes - Only in English
- b. Yes - Only in Spanish
- c. Yes - in both languages
- d. No
- e. Feel free to include examples: *optional*

15. What is your most used emoji?

- a. _Fill in the blank_

Texting Behavior: Opinions

16. How do you think the language that you use in text messages affects how you **WRITE** in environments outside the SMS register? For example, in written class assignments, in written reports at work, emailing with professors, etc? Give examples.

17. How do you think the language that you use in text messages affects how you **SPEAK** in environments outside the SMS register? For example, in class, at work, during presentations, speaking with professors, etc? Give examples.

18. To what extent do agree with the following statements: Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

a. Communicating through the medium of SMS provides more exposure to and opportunity for reading and writing, therefore it is probable that it would aid, rather than hinder literacy.

b. Textese is a register which allows for users to practice linguistic creativity and language play, encouraging more writing and reading, therefore it is probable that it would aid, rather than hinder literacy.

c. The media hype that textese is harming the standard varieties of languages is an exaggeration based mostly on opinion of elite scholars.

d. Texters can easily differentiate between informal and formal registers (such as between texting with a friend and emailing a boss); therefore communicate in whichever register is most appropriate given the context.

e. The abbreviations and phonetic spelling often used in textese can cause harm to users' spelling and punctuation in other registers, such as emails or academic papers.

f. As a Spanish language learner, through texting with either native speakers or other learners, I am able to learn more about informal Spanish communication and Hispanic cultures.

Texting Behavior: Examples

19. Please provide an example any of your most recent text messages. Either Spanish or English. If possible, please try to include at least 3-4 turns per texter. Remember that all of your answers are anonymous, but if you do not feel comfortable filling this out, no pasa nada!

Template:

Texter 1: > line of text

Texter 2: > line of text

*Optional.

20. Please provide an example of a text message which involved code-switching with a bilingual (learner or native speaker) recipient. Please feel free to leave blank if this does not apply to you.

Example: “se me olvidó poner tu desk together!”

Texting Translation Exercise

21. Please perform the following translation exercises:

a) Standard English sentence: “Do you want to meet up tonight? I don’t know when, but later after I finish my homework.” to Textese (English): _____

b) Textese (English): “that article wuz a cwot. I didnt undrstand nething. #homibhabha. hopefully prof will clear it ^, g2g 2 klass. Ttyl! ” > Standard English: _____

c) Standard Spanish sentence: “¿Qué quieres comer esta noche? Yo tengo ganas de comer más de ese queso buenísimo de ese lugar en la calle Cherokee” to Textese (Spanish): _____

d) Textese (Spanish): “tbmn, qnd llegas, mándame un txt, xfa” > Standard Spanish sentence: _____

Miscellaneous

22. Anything else you would like to add or express about the use of textese and the text messages in general?

Apéndice B. Las microconversaciones

Micro conversación utilizando la alternancia de código entre español e inglés

A: **lol** gossip girl
it’s so good
and how’s everything?
going

B: Ya **ikr** so dramatic okay termine español cinco hoy! **Hbu**

A: oh por dios
jajajaja

dang i keep forgetting jajajaja is not a thing in English
well, I’m still a teacher I got a job at the pretty colorful streets, in February I’ll be done with High school and I’m done with French 6 **lol**

B: **Lol** dang in Spanish I got this sticker that said jajajaja and it always reminds me of you

A: jajaja is like... all I text

Micro conversación utilizando sólo inglés

(FRIEND): also did you take my computer charger ln???
cause i need that like **asap**
(ME): shoot yes i did **lmao** i legit thought it was mine when i was leaving
it's in my backpack
(FRIEND): okay will **u** be in the **lib** at 2?
(ME): yuh
segundo piso
(FRIEND): kk
(ME): gonna be a lil late had to talk to the lady im gonna nanny for
u there?
(FRIEND): okay please be back **bc** i need to do **hw** and my laptop is almost
dead so
yes first floor!
(ME): schwing be there in .2

Apéndice C. Diversas Formas de Categorizar los Textismos

Esta lista es una combinación de mis propios ejemplos y los de las investigaciones y publicaciones de Crystal 2008; Plester et al. 2009; De Jonge y Kemp 2012.

Categoría	Definición	Ejemplo español	Ejemplo inglés
Acortamientos (<i>shortenings; clippings</i>)	Letras omitidas del comienzo o terminación de una palabra	porfa, ntonces	bro, sis, tues; hav, wil, couldn
Contracciones (<i>contractions</i>)	Letras (normalmente vocales) omitidas dentro de una palabra	nd, problm, txt, jf	txt, plz, hmwrk
<i>G-clippings</i>	En inglés, cuando se omite el <g> desde el final del gerundio (-ing)	N/A	swimmin, goin, comin
Omisiones (p. ej. <i>omissions, like apostrophes or capitalizations</i>)	Un apóstrofe (en inglés) o una letra mayúscula se omite de manera errónea	que (sin acento sobre la última letra para ‘qué’), x g “que haces?”	cant, wont, dads

Acrónimos (<i>acronyms</i>)	Una abreviatura formada por las letras iniciales de otras palabras y pronunciada como una palabra	PTI	BBC, UK, ASAP, AWOL
Inicialismos (<i>initialisms</i>)	Una frase o palabra representada por la palabra inicial de cada palabra o morfema	tq, tb, xa, xfa, bs, xg	ttn, lol, rn, tbh, idk
Símbolos, pictogramas y logogramas (<i>symbols, pictograms or logograms</i>)	Los grafemas o símbolos usados para palabras, acciones o emociones	+tikr, me da =, chic@s	(@, & ,:-o
Homófonos (letras y números); (<i>letter/number homophones</i>)	Combinaciones compuestas de número(s) o letra(s) para representar palabras completas y/o fonemas	sl2, s3, re100	2moro, l8r, wuu2
Falta de ortografía (<i>misspellings</i>)	Errores ortográficos y tipográficos	Quero, beyeza	comming, are [for our], bolinase
Ortografía no tradicional (<i>non-conventional spellings</i>)	Ortografía no convencional, generalmente fonética	avejas, kiero, vergenca	fone, rite, skool
Estilización del acento (<i>accent stylization</i>)	Jerga o coloquialismos	Kyat!, te vez, ola	wiv, elp [help], anuva

Apéndice D. La escala de Likert, pregunta 36 de la encuesta.

¿Hasta qué punto están de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con las siguientes 6 declaraciones?

P1. La comunicación a través del *SMS* proporciona una mayor exposición y oportunidad para leer y escribir, por lo que es probable que ayude, en lugar de obstaculizar la alfabetización.

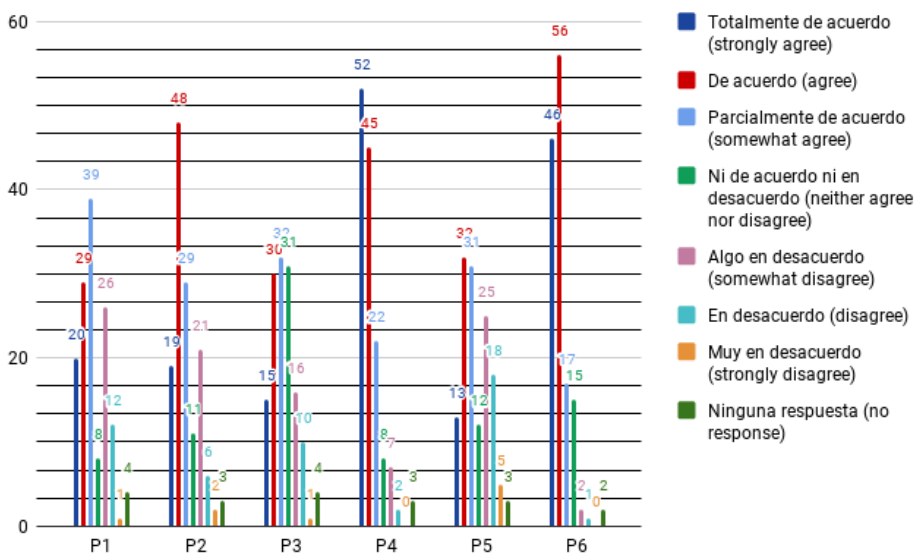
P2. *Textese* es un registro que permite a los usuarios practicar la creatividad lingüística y *Language Play*, fomentando más la escritura y la lectura, por lo que es probable que ayude, en lugar de obstaculizar la alfabetización.

P3. La extremosidad de los medios de que el *textese* está dañando las variedades estándar de idiomas es una exageración basada principalmente en la opinión de los académicos de élite.

P4. Los usuarios de texto pueden diferenciar fácilmente entre registros informales y formales (como entre enviar mensajes de texto con un amigo y enviar un correo electrónico a un jefe); por lo tanto, comunicarse en el registro que sea más apropiado dado el contexto.

P5. Las abreviaturas y la ortografía fonética que se usan a menudo en *textese* pueden dañar la ortografía y puntuación de los usuarios en otros registros, como correos electrónicos o artículos académicos.

P6. Como un aprendiz del idioma español, a través de mensajes de texto con hablantes nativos u otros estudiantes, puedo aprender más sobre la comunicación informal en español y las culturas hispanas.



Liberatory Queer Performance and the Coloniality of Gender in Melibea Obono's *La Bastarda*

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Abstract: Although Afro-Hispanic literature has a lot to offer the field of Hispanic studies, it has been largely ignored in the academy. In this essay, I consider one of these pieces of literature and highlight its importance to the modern era. Trifonia Melibea Obono's *La Bastarda* (2016) emerges as a particularly subversive novel, celebrating the queer subject in Africa. Basing this work upon the conceptualizations of Judith Butler, Omise'cke Natasha Tinsley, and María Lugones surrounding queer theory and the coloniality of gender, I analyze how Melibea Obono uses the queer subject as a site of resistance in postcolonial Equatorial Guinea, and in postcolonial Fang society especially. Queer performativity is presented as a useful site of resistance against the coloniality of gender and sexuality in postcolonial Fang society, and through it, the queer woman of color, repressed as she is by Eurocentric, patriarchal norms, can find her liberation.

Keywords: *La Bastarda*, Trifonia Melibea Obono, homophobia, misogyny, queer theory

Equatorial Guinean literature is a rich site for continuing and future research. Although it had long been colonized by Spain before achieving its independence, it does not receive the attention it is due in the field of Hispanic studies. This is a gap that this article will seek to address, as Equatorial Guinean literature attends to many important contemporary issues, among which is the continued subalternization of women of color and of queer people. In this article, I will demonstrate this through an engagement with Trifonia Melibea Obono's *La Bastarda* (2016), which focuses on Okomo, a young, Fang, lesbian woman trapped within heteropatriarchal social norms who defies these limitations by rejecting societal expectations and forming a new queer community apart from it. Engaging with queer theory and postcolonial theory, and especially with the theories of Judith Butler, Omise'cke Natasha Tinsley, and Maria Lugones, this article will show that Okomo's deliberate performance of her queerness in spite of social norms challenges male exploitation of women's bodies and advocates for the liberation of women and queer folk in Equatorial Guinean and Fang culture. In so doing, Melibea Obono demonstrates that queer performativity is a useful site of resistance against the coloniality of gender and sexuality in postcolonial Fang society. Through it, the queer African woman, repressed by Eurocentric, patriarchal norms even after independence from Europe, can find her liberation. A centering of considerations of this work and others is necessary to bring the marginalized voices represented in Equatorial Guinean literature into the forefront of conversations in literary and Hispanic studies.

Melibea Obono's *La Bastarda* finds its context in a nation that has experienced much turmoil since its independence from Spain in 1968, and a brief

engagement with this history and the literary works that have emerged from it will help inform my analysis. Consisting predominantly of the Fang and Bubi peoples, among other groups, Equatorial Guinea has experienced two authoritarian regimes since gaining its independence in 1968. The first dictatorship followed independence and was under Francisco Macías Nguema, and the second was under Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo following Nguema's overthrow in 1969 and is still ongoing (Aixela Cabre 10). This is a legacy of Spanish colonialism. As Rosa Medina-Doménech has described, the Spanish metropole would routinely impose Spanish nationality and Spanish national identity upon the people of Equatorial Guinea. This was especially true during the Franco dictatorship, which would make Equatorial Guinea the focus of an attempt to rebuild Spanish national identity through "Hispanicization" and "detribalization" (Medina-Doménech 81, 86). This included Francoist patriarchal values. The violence and policies of the Francoist regime in Spain (which lasted from 1939 until Franco's death in 1975) would inspire both dictatorships that Equatorial Guinea experienced post-independence, promoting the emphasis on and institutionalization of a small, male, family elite. As a result, the wealthiest 5% of the population would benefit most from the large oil windfall that would put the country on the global scene. Meanwhile, the majority of the populace has been placed on the outskirts of the national project (Wood 554, 560-61) with the Bubi peoples in particular suffering human rights abuses (Baynham 28).

Importantly, several significant literary works and in-depth analysis of them have emerged from this historical, political, and social climate that, like *La Bastarda*, focus on the silenced voices of the subaltern communities of postcolonial Equatorial Guinea. Elisa Rizo, for example, notes the lasting mark that Spanish colonization has left on Equatorial Guinea since the 18th century and examines the body of work that has arisen in recent decades from the authoritarianism and oil boom in that country. Analyzing specifically what she refers to as *petro-teatro*, a term that she hopes will encapsulate this particular historical moment in which Equatorial Guinea finds itself, these works (such as Juan Tomás Ávila Laurel's *El fracaso de las sombras* and Recaredo S. Boturu's *É Bilabba*) emerge in contrast to works that support the authoritarian government¹ and analyze the Equatorial Guinean national reality from the point of view of the oppressed (Rizo 66-67). She especially highlights local epistemologies in order to critique the injustices experienced by sub-Saharan African women (75-76). However, Rizo notes that the fact that these works are written predominantly by men highlights the inequality in education and resources that persists as an obstacle to African women. Mendigo Minsongui Dieudonné, however, takes note of

1 These literatures in support of authoritarian regimes have taken various forms since the days of Spanish colonialism, but one of the most prominent, according to Mbare Gnom, was children's literature. Colonial powers would use this literature in order to indoctrinate and Europeanize the children of Equatorial Guinea (Ngom 59-60).

one important novel that is related to this article's consideration of Melibea Obono's *La Bastarda. Ekomo*, a novel by the late María Nsúé Angüe, comments not only on the subalternization of Equatorial Guinean and sub-Saharan African women, but also of the subaltern position of Fang women in particular. Noting that postcolonial Fang culture remains very patriarchal,² Minsongui Dieudonné observes that the titular character of this novel presents a feminist discourse by continually resisting societal and patriarchal expectations placed upon her, including through the resistance to an arranged marriage (Minsongui Dieudonné 212). Overall, Nsúé Angüe emerged as a feminist author, respecting Fang tradition while simultaneously lobbying for the equality of women (218). *La Bastarda* thus emerges in context with well-established and important work previously undertaken by authors such as Nsúé Angüe.

In addition, my analysis of *La Bastarda* is done in conversation with a previous academic study of the novel itself by Beatriz Celaya Carrillo, who highlights the importance of the feminist and queer discourse both here and in Melibea Obono's other novels. According to Celaya Carrillo, these works find power in their female protagonists' persistence, putting themselves at risk in order to actively defy social norms and seek out a better life and better treatment for themselves. She explains that:

De forma general, las mujeres guineoecuatorianas que refleja la autora aparecen altamente determinadas por su función sexual normativa, siendo fuertemente presionadas para que su supervivencia dependa de la satisfacción de un hombre, con su trabajo en la casa y los hijos, y su permanente disponibilidad sexual. (Celaya Carrillo 64)

This emerges in a country whose authoritarian and patriarchal system is a direct result of Spanish colonization, descended from Francoism's brand of Christianity (72). In *La Bastarda* specifically, Celaya Carrillo notes that Melibea Obono confronts this by building a space in which queer folk can exist within Equatorial Guinea through a depiction of feminine and queer escape made reality. Ultimately *La Bastarda* affirms the rights of African women, creating new symbolic spaces for gender equality and sexual liberty in the nation. She notes that sexual rights, the right to education, and personal autonomy are paramount in the structuring of this discourse (73-74).

2 Indeed, as Yolanda Aixela Cabre reports, postcolonial Fang society remains very androcentric, and many women have turned to matricentrism (that is, embracing the role of motherhood) as a way to gain a certain amount of power within the androcentric system (Aixela Cabre 20). She reports that those who leave Equatorial Guinea and return often have difficulties readjusting to the extreme androcentrism of postcolonial Equatorial Guinean society (26).

Hubert Edzodzomo Ondo's considerations of *La Bastarda* agree with those of Celaya Carrillo. He notes that not only does Melibea Obono successfully challenge queer marginalization in Equatorial Guinea, but also does so in a cross-border narrative. He highlights the importance of the neighboring nation of Gabón as well as Equatorial Guinea, as Okomo's experiences include interacting with the Fang people in that country as well as her own. The coloniality of gender and sexuality is as active there as it is in Equatorial Guinea (Edzodzomo Ondo 305).

In conversation with Celaya Carrillo's and Edzodzomo Ondo's analyses, this article seeks to expand an understanding of Melibea Obono's literary technique in building these symbolic spaces for queer folk in Equatorial Guinea by highlighting the importance of performativity in *La bastarda's* characters. The protagonist Okomo's story not only challenges patriarchal norms, but also develops queer performativity specifically as a site of resistance against the coloniality of gender and sexuality, as well as the subaltern position of African women. The concepts of gender and gender identity are central to this discourse of radical queerness.³ As Judith Butler notes, while societal norms often seek to define gender as what is "appropriately" masculine or feminine (Butler, "Gender Regulations" 41), gender itself is purely performative (Butler, "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire" 33). Identity, therefore, cannot be rigidly controlled by societal gender norms, and we see this actively represented in the novel. Okomo rejects the heteropatriarchal social norms placed upon her by embracing and "performing" her own conception of what it means to be a queer African woman. When put in context with issues of the coloniality of gender and of race, this performativity becomes a powerful liberating discourse.

Indeed, a consideration of race and the coloniality of gender and sexuality is integral to the analysis of this novel, as Okomo's identity as a lesbian Fang woman and her status as a subject in a formerly colonized nation cannot be separated. María Lugones describes the coloniality of gender in her work, detailing how European colonialism introduced gender differentials to the colonized subject as a subjugating force. Colonists would enlist the aid of the colonized man in order to subjugate women and dismantle gender systems that did not comply with Eurocentric understandings of gender and sexuality (Lugones 7). Lugones refers to this and its legacy as the "modern/colonial gender system";

3 Butler provides us with a starting point for an understanding of queerness in her article "Critically Queer." As a reclaimed word, "queer" is a manifestation of the performative and derives its power from the citation of repressive social norms and the manipulation of them in order to achieve a more progressive end (Butler, "Critically Queer" 17-19). She also notes various important moves within queer theory, one of which is especially relevant to this analysis: a move that seeks to argue that gender is not reducible to heterosexual norms, seeking to show the possibilities for gender beyond hegemonic heterosexuality (Butler, "Gender Regulations" 54)

as a result, heterosexuality becomes mythically constructed and compulsory (11, 15).

Therefore, the coloniality of gender is important to understand as it directly influences Okomo's experiences and sites of resistance. But Okomo's queer performativity troubles colonial conceptualizations of race as much as gender and sexuality. Sexuality is always racially marked, as sexuality and race are not separate factors of subjectivity; indeed, Ian Barnard observes that modern queer theory has failed to take this into account. The concept of race is as much a societal construction as is sexuality, and still has profound social, cultural, and political meanings (Barnard 206).

In this light, it is therefore necessary to prioritize the African dimension in regard to queer studies and what queer resistance means in the African context, as this is at the heart of Melibea Obono's work. For this I cite Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley's "Black Atlantic, Queer Atlantic" (2008). Here, Tinsley highlights how intimately queer bonds are linked with being African, especially as it relates to brutal colonial and enslavement tactics of the European colonialism in Africa and the Caribbean Atlantic. Queer resistance rose from this cruelty:

Yet regardless of whether intimate sexual contact took place between enslaved Africans in the Atlantic or after landing, relationships between shipmates read as queer relationships. *Queer* not in the sense of a "gay" or same-sex loving identity waiting to be excavated from the ocean floor but as a praxis of resistance. *Queer* in the sense of marking disruption to the violence of normative order and powerfully so: connecting in ways that commodified flesh was never supposed to, loving your own kind when your kind was supposed to cease to exist, forging interpersonal connections that counteract imperial desires for Africans' living death. (Tinsley 199)

This perspective is key to developing an understanding of Okomo's performative queer resistance. Though Okomo's narrative does indeed involve same-sex loving identity, colonialist violence (especially through the coloniality of gender) is constantly enacted upon Okomo and her queer network. *La Bastarda* crafts a queer performative space that, as Tinsley describes, is a praxis of resistance against heteropatriarchal normative structures in postcolonial Fang society.

It is this understanding of gender, queer performance, and race that informs my analysis of Trifonia Melibea Obono's *La Bastarda*. Okomo's queer performativity resists not only the exploitation of women's bodies in postcolonial Fang society but also the coloniality of gender that remains embedded in it as well. Rejecting Fang heteropatriarchal expectations, the protagonist Okomo "performs" her own queer, liberated version of her identity as an African queer woman. Okomo is a *bastarda*, her mother having died in childbirth and her

father absent and labeled a scoundrel by the community. Okomo is told only that her father pursued her mother but never paid the bride price for her. The subalternization of women in postcolonial Equatorial Guinean society is made clear here, as blame is put on Okomo's mother as much as her father for this predicament. "I don't want you to make the same mistake as your mother," Okomo's grandmother tells her. "She never learned a woman's place in Fang tradition. She lived much too freely" (Melinea Obono 3). It is made clear to Okomo that a woman is not free. She lives in the oppressive household of her grandfather, Osá, the family patriarch and a Fang hero from the time of the Spanish occupation. Okomo is forced to listen to Osá's tales of her male Fang forebears and is constantly reminded that it is a woman's duty to bear children and marry in order to support the family. The very patriarch to which she must answer promises nothing but continued ownership.

Not all the male figures in her life follow this restrictive binary, however. One member in particular empowers her to resist through queer liberation. This man, Okomo's uncle Marcelo, lives at the margin of society because he is considered a "man-woman." He is revealed to be gay and becomes a foundational figure for Okomo's queer community building. He is ridiculed for his failure to consummate the marriages that had previously been arranged for him and for refusing to impregnate the wife of his evidently sterile brother. For this, he is ostracized. Because of his perceived perversions, the village blames its woes on Marcelo, including crop failure and illness. Eventually the community tries to murder him by setting fire to his home, but he escapes into the forest. For daring to exist outside of Fang patriarchal norms, he is faced with the ultimate punishment: death. Only by existing on the periphery can he hope to survive.

Okomo, meanwhile, becomes very close with three young women—Linda, Pilar, and Dina—who will also empower her queer performativity, although her grandmother (Osá's first wife) adamantly demands she avoid them. Through them, she experiences a sexual awakening. The four of them make love in the forest, and Okomo is inaugurated as a member of their secret "Indecency Club." This is a defining moment for Okomo, as she explains: "I was enjoying it, and, for the first time in my life, I felt sexually free" (Melibea Obono 36). After years of being burdened with the guilt of desiring the bodily autonomy previously denied to her, she experiences her first taste of queer sexual liberation. This Indecency Club's community is strengthened with Marcelo's support. He and the young women keep each other's confidence; Marcelo himself is in love with another man, who like him was labelled a "man-woman" and ostracized by his community. In direct rejection of society's expectation of them, this queer community embraces an identity that affirms the love they share and their true identities.

Over time Okomo falls in love with Dina, although her grandmother has deep misgivings about their closeness. She is deeply suspicious that Dina has

not yet married and insists that Okomo herself must do so as soon as possible in order to uphold tradition and support the family. Okomo and Dina, however, continue to meet in secret. They confess their love for one another and break the Indecency Club's pact to only make love as a group:

We embraced and walked toward the House of the Word without making a sound. There we made love in the beds of the Council of Elders, interrupted only by the bleating of the sheep that fought to find a spot to spend the night, huddling up against the nearest houses. We women, women who love other women, are the sheep of society, I thought. (44)

Okomo has begun to come into her own. Not only does she fully embrace her subversive identity and own this performativity of gender and sexuality that makes her whole, she does so in a traditionally masculine and heteropatriarchal space.

Shortly after, however, Okomo's grandmother sends her away to the town of Ebian to carry a message to Okomo's aunt, demanding 50,000 francs to help pay a *curandera* to lure Osá back to their marriage bed. He had abandoned her for a younger wife some years prior. Okomo's aunt informs her that she will be expected to work to earn money towards this sum; yet again, Okomo is expected to allow her family to appropriate her body and labor in accordance with institutionalized coloniality of gender. It is another way in which she, like so many other women, is considered a commodity to be bought, sold, and used. She crosses the border into Gabón and sees how the people there—despite also being Fang—treat her as an outsider. This calls into question for her the supposed unity of the Fang people, another apparent fallacy in the patriarchal hegemony that her grandfather upholds. This speaks to the cross-border narrative that Edzodzomo Ondo identifies within the text, discussed above. The Fang peoples have been divided and separated by colonial forces.

After Okomo returns home, she and Dina visit her uncle Marcelo in the forest and meet his long-term romantic partner Jesúsín. They discuss the concept of identity, and how there does not seem to be an equivalent to “man-woman” for Okomo and Dina in Fang society: “‘There isn’t a word for it. It’s like you don’t exist,’ my uncle said bluntly. ‘You and Dina love each other, right? That’s what matters’” (67). This passage reveals the erasure that Fang lesbian women face, as they are offered no means to be seen nor heard. It is for this reason that queer performance is so subversive and liberating for Okomo; it defies her erasure in postcolonial Fang society. The love that Okomo and Dina share is itself a praxis of resistance, as Tinsley describes it. The two are manipulating the gender norms of their community to forge their own liberation from the coloniality of gender.

However, the Indecency Club soon faces punishment for transgressing the binary gender norms of their community. Linda and Pilar become jealous of Okomo and Dina's love and are angry with them for breaking the Indecency Club's pact. As a result, they out them to their families. The resulting uproar and inquisition reveal the truth about all four women, and they are each punished in turn. Linda is sold into marriage to cover a debt. Dina is also forced into an unwanted marriage. Pilar is locked in at home, where she is sexually assaulted and impregnated by her father. Okomo is kept under constant surveillance and eventually sent off to live with an uncle in a nearby city.

After her forced relocation, Okomo eventually encounters Linda again, who informs her that all the girls of the Indecency Club had escaped and fled to the forest to build a new community with Marcelo. She invites Okomo to join them. Before doing so, however, Okomo seeks out her father who lives nearby. Looking for the truth of the man who had abandoned her, she meets his new family and asks why he has never sent for her. Here she is met, yet again, with rejection. He says that because he never paid the bride price for her mother, common law says that she is not his daughter. He rejects her for being a *bastarda*. As a result, Okomo's disillusionment with the patriarchal expectations fully manifests:

So, I escaped to the forest to live with my uncle Marcelo, the man-woman, and the other three indecent girls from my village, the only family that life had given me... The forest was the only refuge for those who had no place in Fang tradition, like me. I'm a *bastarda*, a Fang woman; I'm a *bastarda*, daughter of an unmarried Fang woman; I'm a *bastarda*, a lesbian. (87)

Postcolonial Fang society, Okomo comes to realize, will never accept her embracing and freely "performing" her queer identity. She, Marcelo, and the rest of the Indecency Club refuse to be subjugated by heteropatriarchal expectations and form their own community in the forest, one where they are safe to be who they are. Importantly, it must be noted how Okomo becomes conscious of the inextricable nature of her various facets of identities in this moment. Her status as a Fang woman, a subject of a colonized nation, is inextricably linked with her lesbian identity, and it is through an embracing of queer performativity and community that she resists the patriarchal coloniality of gender and achieves a form of freedom.

It would be perhaps obvious to indicate that the text sharply critiques homophobia and misogyny in postcolonial Fang culture and Equatorial Guinea at large. At issue here are the larger implications. This novel demonstrates how queer performance specifically is a powerful praxis of resistance against the patriarchal coloniality of gender that feeds off the subordination of women. An examination of these patriarchal hierarchies themselves is a perfect starting

point for this consideration, precisely because Okomo's village is an incarnation of them. Gender is defined in this society by means of strict subordination of women through binary considerations, as described by Butler and Lugones. Women are expected to marry, earn a good bride price, conceive children, and sell their labor. Their families and husbands expect to be able to benefit from every facet of their existence. "It's time you find a man who might support the family at last," Okomo's grandmother tells her at one point in the novel. "Especially now that you're getting your monthlies!" (63). Okomo's own bodily autonomy becomes the ultimate price for her family's welfare.

In Okomo's grandmother we find a persistent reminder of how oppressive this binary, patriarchal hierarchy is. She represents the misery of those women who fall victim to it, the household being a microcosm of society at large. Despite being Osá's first wife, Okomo's grandmother has been placed on the margins of the household by a younger, second wife and is now met with scorn and derision from both her and Osá himself. As a result, she must continually fight with the younger wife for dominance and try to find ways to lure Osá back to their marriage bed. Okomo gets caught up in this endeavor, as previously mentioned. It is from this social dynamic that the inherent misogyny and homophobia arises. Husband and family cannot exploit the liberated queer body in the same way that it can the heteronormative body, and therefore they have no place for the queer subject. Yet it is through an embracing of queer ontology that Okomo manages to find liberation.

The existence of this subversive queer subject within *La Bastarda* is certainly not in doubt. The citation (and subsequent "queering") of the social norms surrounding gender and sexuality is visible in many places in the text and gives rise to a progressive and subversive discourse within the novel. As Judith Butler describes, queerness itself is a performance that denies postcolonial, heteropatriarchal norms. Okomo herself is perhaps the quintessential representation of this. We can take as an example Okomo's discomfort with almost every aspect of traditionally feminine performativity, especially when it is forced upon her by her grandmother or other family members. Her family members are always trying to get her to wear makeup, style her hair in certain ways, and wear dresses so that she attracts a man to support the family financially. Okomo, however, hates this. For Okomo, compulsory colonial gender performativity is not true to her own understanding of herself and her identity. She only feels at home in a queer performative expression of her gender and sexuality.

Okomo's love for Dina is similarly important. Postcolonial Fang society reserves love and sexual intimacy with women to men and men only, attempting to define gender norms by means of sexual subordination. Okomo's performativity, however, denies this exploitation. As has been already demonstrated, making love with the Indecency Club and falling in love with Dina is a moment of rebirth for her. Everything grows from this moment, and the story fully culminates

in her living her truth. In leaving postcolonial Fang society to live with their newfound queer community, she is committing the ultimate act of resistance: permanently denying patriarchal society (itself built upon the coloniality of gender) the ability to exploit her and her body. As she embraces a subversive performativity of sex, gender, and race, Okomo is not existing outside of social norms, but rather is citing and queering those norms to make them her own and achieve her own liberation. This is the way in which Melibea Obono develops a powerful subversive discourse.

For truly, Okomo's queer performativity is a subversive act. Firstly, we see a radical transformation in Okomo herself. Let us consider two moments in the text, the first of which occurs just after Okomo makes love with the Indecency Club for the first time: "That feeling had always made me ashamed of myself. I am sick, I thought often, sick with sin, embarrassed that I couldn't tear my eyes away from her feminine curves" (36). Here, Okomo is reeling from her first taste of freedom, still putting her newly embraced queerness in context with the shame that society had instilled in her. Later, however, Okomo and Dina confess their love for one another in the space of the Council of Elders, an inherently masculine environment, and are intimate there. This act is doubly transgressive; as the two women make love here, they take back a space that would be denied to them based on their gender. They assert their right to exist not only at the margins, but at the center as well. These passages reveal how powerfully Okomo is transformed by her embracing of her own queerness.

Marcelo's transgressive queerness is similarly important. Marcelo's resistance stems from a rejection and queering of colonial and patriarchal norms that might otherwise privilege him. For the act of giving his love to another man he is branded a "man-woman" and nearly killed. However, Marcelo's subversive performativity of gender and sexuality also lends its weight behind Melibea Obono's challenging of the coloniality of gender. He refuses to engage in the sexual subjection of Fang women by repeatedly resisting arranged marriages that would have brought him back into the fold. Marcelo's partner Jesúsín also expresses his disdain for society's disrespect for women: "Besides, the offensive label man-woman implies disdain toward women. It reduces them to passive sexual objects that never act on their own desires" (68). He and Marcelo encourage and empower Okomo and Dina to live the truth of their love together.

Ultimately, the subversive power of queer performativity is demonstrated upon the novel's conclusion. At the climax of the novel, Okomo, Dina, Pilar, and Linda have been outed and punished for daring to transgress against heterosexual, patriarchal hierarchies. Nevertheless, they each manage to find their way to sanctuary, successfully escaping their forced submission. Though they seem to have been relegated to the periphery of society, they have in fact managed to persevere and create a world in their own image, a world in which they can forge a type of queer refuge. This serves as the novel's final strike against

the norms that seek to exploit women's bodies for their own benefit, and the misogyny and homophobia that arise from them. The subversive queer subject will not bow to oppression.

The importance of this discourse cannot be overstated, especially given the colonial history of Equatorial Guinea, and the violent authoritarian states that such colonialism has inspired.⁴ Western colonialism, as previously demonstrated, has left a lasting mark on Equatorial Guinean society, and as such the colonized (and neo-colonized) state of women such as Okomo is inextricable from their gender and sexuality. The coloniality of gender means that these are forces with which the postcolonial subject must continue to grapple for their liberation. Thus, queer theory and postcolonial theory are likewise inextricable from my analysis of *La Bastarda*. Okomo's queer performance not only troubles notions of gender and sexuality in her society (and in the world at large), but also of race and of the colonial/national subject. Ian Barnard notes that "queer" can apply to race just as much as it can to gender and sexuality, and queer relationships as praxis of resistance have deep roots in Africa, as Tinsley describes. The separation of these concepts would be deeply problematic and a capitulation with predominantly Western patriarchal norms. Melibea Obono's novel is the perfect example of necessary subversive queerness and as such warrants in-depth consideration in cultural and literary studies.

What I have demonstrated in this essay, therefore, is that Trifonia Melibea Obono's novel *La Bastarda* (2016) goes beyond a mere call for the liberation of women and queer folk. As I examine in context with the theories of Butler, Lugones, and Tinsley, Melibea Obono demonstrates in her writing that queer performativity is a useful and necessary site of resistance against the Western/Eurocentric coloniality of gender, sexuality, and race. In essence, the colonized and oppressed queer subject finds liberation through queer performativity, juxtaposed with compulsory colonial gender performativity. This discourse demonstrates the need to include the narratives and the voices of African women in the canons of literary, Hispanic, and cultural studies to facilitate the work that remains to be done on the world stage toward this project of liberation. For these narratives to be marginalized would mark a continued capitulation with these very same colonial norms.

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4 As previously stated, it has been difficult to extricate the Spanish nation from Equatorial Guinea; indeed, the Spanish metropolitan subject has routinely redefined the Guinean subject in the interest of the metropole and placed them at the periphery (Medina-Doménech 104).

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Formulaic Sequences and Writing Development in Portuguese as a Second Language

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Abstract: Formulaic sequences are an important aspect of writing development. Studies of language processing have shown that multiword units are processed as a single unit by native speakers. Little research, however, has been conducted on formulaic sequences in Portuguese (Sardinha, Teixeira, and Ferreira 2014; Ferreira 2014), and none of those have described the development of the use of formulaic sequences across learners of Portuguese. This study examines the use of lexical bundles, sequences of three or more words that frequently occur in a corpus, in written texts across five proficiency levels (N=572). Three-word bundles were identified based on their dispersion in each subcorpora. The extracted bundles occurred in at least 4% of the texts in the corpus. These bundles were then classified based on their structure in noun, verb, preposition, adverb, clause, and pronoun-based bundles. The results of this study indicate that lower-level learners tend to use fewer bundle types but more bundle tokens. In addition, pronoun-based bundles are more frequent in lower-level texts, while clausal and adverb-based bundles are more frequent in advanced levels. The results can be used to inform the teaching and material development of Portuguese as a second language.

Keywords: Formulaic sequences, learner development, lexical bundles, Portuguese as a second language, second language writing

Introduction

A significant part of linguistic fluency depends on correctly understanding and producing multiword expressions, such as clusters, collocations, and lexical bundles. Research on multiword processing has shown that native speakers of a language process these expressions as a single element. Ellis (1996), for instance, argues that multiword sequences are processed by working memory the same way as single words are processed. Sinclair (1991) also said that formulaic units of language are a “single choice, even though they might appear to be analyzable into segments” (110). In recent years, several researchers have explored how these formulaic sequences develop in learners’ language, identifying the patterns of language use associated with each proficiency level (see Goulart 2019 for a review of studies of collocational patterns). This paper addresses the use of a specific type of formulaic sequences, lexical bundles, across different levels of Portuguese learners.

Lexical bundles are sequences of three or more words that occur more frequently than expected by chance in a corpus (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, and Finegan 1999). Several studies have explored the use of lexical bundles across learners’ developmental levels (e.g., Chen and Baker 2016; Staples et al. 2013) or compared learners to native speakers (Ädel and Erman 2012). The

results of these studies reveal different patterns of language development. In Chen and Baker (2016), lower-level learners used more bundles associated with spoken discourse, while higher-level learners used more bundles associated with written discourse. In Staples et al. (2013), lower-level learners used bundles more frequently than learners at more advanced levels; nevertheless, most of these bundles appeared in the writing prompt. These studies on formulaic language across levels of development can be used to inform teaching and assessment of learners' language. Most of this research, however, has examined learner development in texts written in English. The study presented here investigates the use of lexical bundles across five levels of development in a language other than English, specifically Portuguese.

Previous research studies investigating lexical bundles in Portuguese have examined the use of lexical bundles in textbooks (Ferreira 2014) and across different registers (Sardinha, Teixeira, and Ferreira 2014). The results of the first study have shown that textbook language is more formulaic than naturally occurring language, and the results of the second study have shown that academic registers have fewer bundles than political speeches and other routinized registers. Even though these studies contribute to our understanding of the language students will encounter when learning and reading in Portuguese, they do not help us understand the language learners produce. Therefore, this research aims to examine the frequency and structure of lexical bundles across proficiency levels.

Lexical Bundles

Biber et al. (1999: 990) defined lexical bundles as “recurrent expressions that do not have idiomatic meaning or a specific grammatical function.” Lexical bundles are identified based on their frequency in a corpus. In other words, these sequences of words are markedly more frequent in a specific corpus. Biber and Conrad (1999: 188) mention that, even though lexical bundles do not have grammatical functions, they have strong structural correlates. This correlation allows researchers to categorize bundles according to structural patterns, such as prepositional, phrasal, and clausal bundles. These classifications can, in turn, inform a systematic comparison between bundles in two or more corpora (Pan, Reppen and Biber 2016).

Biber et al. (1999: 996) classified their bundles based on the first element of each sequence. This initial classification revealed linguistic patterns that characterized the registers investigated. For instance, bundles containing pronouns only occurred in conversations, and bundles starting with noun-phrases were more common in academic discourse. This approach proved to be useful for research comparing groups of text varieties; therefore, several studies have

continued to use structural classification as part of their bundle analysis (i.e., Cortes 2008; Sardinha et al. 2014).

To date, most of the research on lexical bundles has focused on English. A few exceptions are Cortes (2008), who compared bundles in English and Spanish writing in history articles; Tracy-Ventura, Cortes, and Biber's study (2007), which contrasted the use of bundles in Spanish conversation and academic prose; Kim's research (2009) on the use of bundles in Korean academic prose and conversation; Granger (2014), who investigated the differences in French and English stem bundles in parliamentary debates and newspaper editorials; and the previously mentioned studies with Portuguese bundles (Sardinha et al. 2014; Ferreira 2014). These studies revealed some challenges for formulaic research in languages other than English, such as the length of bundle size and the limitations of cross-language comparisons. Thus, further studies in Romance languages are needed in order to further our understanding of how these structures work in languages other than English.

This study focuses on examining language variation through lexical bundle types and tokens across proficiency levels in Portuguese. Token counts represent the overall number of lexical bundles found in the corpus, while type counts represent the number of bundles found in the corpus. Therefore, in the sentence, *eu gosto de todos os meus amigos, porque os meus amigos gostam de dançar* (I like my friends because my friends like to dance), there are three bundle tokens and two bundle types (*os meus amigos* and *eu gosto de*). It is hoped that the results of this study will give us an insight into language development. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What differences, if any, are there in the number of types and tokens of lexical bundles across proficiency levels?
2. What differences, if any, are there in the structural types of lexical bundles across proficiency levels?

Method

PEAPL Corpus

In order to answer these research questions, the University of Coimbra subcorpus of the Written Productions of Portuguese as a Second Language corpus (PEAPL) was used. This subcorpus contains 624 texts written by 458 international students enrolled in the Portuguese for Foreigners Program at the University of Coimbra. These students came from 50 different countries and had 39 different first languages (see Martins, Ferreira, Siteo, Abrantes, Janssen, Fernandes, Silva, Lopes, Pereira, and Santos 2019 for a comprehensive description of the corpus). These students were enrolled in classes that represented levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR):

beginner (A1), elementary (A2), intermediate (B1), upper-intermediate (B2), and advanced (C1). Table 1 presents the number of texts and words in each subcorpora.

Table 1. PEAPL Subcorpora

Level	N of Texts	N of Words	Min	Max	Mean Length
A1	81	14,752	107	324	182.12
A2	100	20,252	100	475	202.52
B1	247	70,360	104	669	264.80
B2	89	27,905	124	519	313.50
C1	55	14,595	131	456	265.30
<i>Total</i>	<i>572</i>	<i>147,864</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>669</i>	<i>258.50</i>

As we can see from Table 1, the corpus reflects the population of students enrolled in the Portuguese for Foreigners Program at UC; thus, it is not balanced by level of proficiency. We can also see that the total number of texts in the table does not match the number of texts in the whole corpus. The reason for this is that texts with less than 100 words were excluded from this analysis.

The texts included in the corpus were a response to nine stimuli presented in Appendix A. These stimuli emerged from three broad topics: the self (i.e., talk about your likes and dislikes), society (i.e., talk about your culture), and the environment (i.e., talk about your neighborhood). Students in all five levels have responded to the three topics. Table 2 illustrates how these topics are distributed in the corpus.

Table 2. Written Topics

Levels	Self (N of texts)	Society (N of texts)	Environment (N of texts)
A1	67	4	10
A2	61	4	35
B1	125	42	80
B2	33	18	38
C1	20	15	20
<i>Total</i>	<i>306</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>183</i>

Table 2 shows that the most common topic in the three initial levels was related to the self. More advanced levels write more texts dealing with the topic of the environment. Overall, prompts related to the individual's opinions are the most common across the five different levels. In this section, the corpus and subcorpora used for the analysis were described. In the following section, the method for bundle identification and classification will be presented in detail.

Bundle Identification and Classification

In lexical bundle research in Romance languages, different bundle sizes have been explored. Even though these previous studies have discussed the results of extracting 3-, 4-, or 5-word bundles (Cortes, 2008; Granger 2014), none of them have proposed a definite bundle size for Portuguese or any other Romance language. In previous research centered on Portuguese (Ferreira, 2004; Sardinha et al. 2004), both 3- and 4-word bundles have been adopted. Therefore, both bundle sizes were piloted at the initial stages of this research. After this preliminary analysis, the researcher decided that a 3-word bundle would be more informative for this study. First, 3-word bundles were more frequent than 4-word bundles in this corpus. Second, when extracting 4-word bundles, several 3-word bundles that contained relevant grammatical information were excluded from the bundle list. Third, 4-word bundles contained repetitions of the same 3-word bundles but with variables slots (i.e., *eu gosto de **); hence, analyzing 3-word bundles resulted in obtaining the same grammatical information as 4-word bundles. Finally, the researcher found that analyzing 4-word bundles in short texts as these would limit the number of bundles extracted from each text.

After considering bundle size, frequency and range were examined. Tracy-Ventura et al. (2007: 219) emphasize that lexical bundles are identified empirically based on both their frequency and their dispersion in the corpus. Considering frequency, previous research on lexical bundles has adopted cut-off points varying from 10 to 40 occurrences per million. Nevertheless, in a small corpus such as PEAPL, establishing a high threshold would result in a list of fewer than 10 bundles. This would not provide much information about developmental patterns found in learners of Portuguese. Therefore, instead of setting a frequency threshold, the main criteria for bundle extraction was range, as each bundle had to occur in at least 4% of the texts in the corpus. This guarantees that the bundles extracted are not representative of one author's idiolect. In addition, care was taken to guarantee that bundles did not cross sentence boundaries.

In order to answer research question two, the bundles were also classified structurally. For this classification, the categorization scheme used in previous studies (e.g., Cortes 2008; Pan et al. 2016) was adapted to match learners' language. One of the main modifications made in this scheme is that aside from the first element, the second element is also examined in the case of clausal bundles. Table 3 describes the coding scheme and provides examples from the corpus.

Table 3. Structural Classification

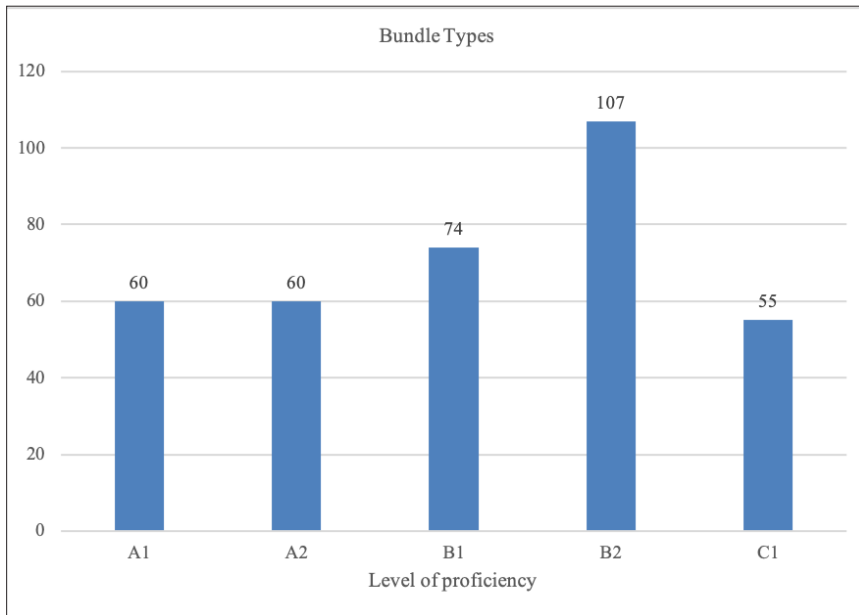
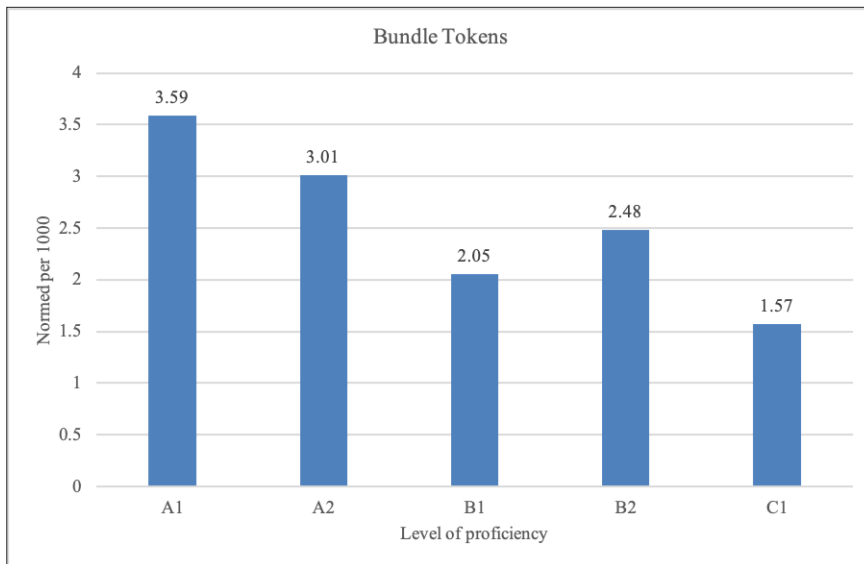
Classification	Definition	Examples
Pro	Bundle starts with a personal pronoun	eu gosto de

Adv	Bundle starts with an adverb	aqui em Portugal
VP	Bundle starts with a verb, or a negator followed by a verb	moro em Coimbra, não gosto de
NP	Bundle starts with a noun, article followed by a noun phrase, a coordinator at the phrase level, or infinite verbs	casa da minha, as ruas de, e meus amigos, viver no campo
PP	Bundle starts with a preposition	para as minhas
Clausal	Bundle contains a subordinator or coordinator at the clausal level in the first or second position	porque gosto de, e quero estar, caminhar porque quero

In addition to modifying the way bundles were classified, categories were added to this scheme (Adv and Pro). Most studies of lexical bundles have investigated academic language where pronouns were not common, therefore, they did not include this category. The same occurs for adverbs which frequently appear in learners' texts. These categories were included upon an initial piloting of the classification. Finally, bundles were classified upon examination of their concordance lines. Special attention was paid to bundles with "e" as these could be used in phrasal or clausal bundles. After bundle extraction and classification, bundle frequency was normed per 1,000 words. Antconc (Anthony 2019) was used to conduct bundle extraction and classification. Antconc is a freely available software used for corpus analysis. It has many functionalities, including word-lists, concordancers, keywords, and n-grams that can be used for linguistics research, as well as classroom activities.

Results and Discussion

A total of 356 bundles were extracted from the corpus. The upper-intermediate subcorpus contained the highest number of bundles (N=107), followed by intermediate students (N=74), beginners (N=60), and elementary (N=60). The complete list of bundles is presented in Appendix B. Overlapping bundles, such as "eu gosto de" and "de viver no" were not combined because none of the bundles extracted had a 100% overlap. In other words, "viver no campo" could also be combined with "gosto muito de." Therefore, merging overlapping bundles would exclude important structural information from the analysis. Figure 1 depicts the number of bundles of different bundle forms used in each subcorpora (types) and Figure 2 depicts the overall frequency of bundles in each subcorpora (tokens) normalized per 1,000.

**Figure 1. Lexical Bundle Types****Figure 2. Lexical Bundle Tokens**

Figures 1 and 2 show that upper-intermediate students use more bundle types, but beginner and elementary students use more bundle tokens. This indicates that beginner and elementary learners tend to repeat the same bundle form several times in their writing, as Excerpt 1 exemplifies. In this short excerpt, we can see that the student uses “os meus amigos” twice, avoiding the use of referential devices, such as personal pronouns.

Excerpt 1: Compro sapatos e visito *os meus amigos*. Eu gosto de dançar com *os meus amigos*. (turco.a1.50.33.1j)¹

It is worth noting that we find the opposite pattern in upper and intermediate learners. In these cases, the number of bundle types is high, but the normalized token count is low. This suggests that students at these levels have a greater repertoire of bundles; thus, avoiding unnecessary repetitions of the same bundle. Excerpt 2 exemplifies this pattern. In this excerpt, the student uses two synonyms, *morar* and *viver*, in order to avoid repetition.

Excerpt 2: Desde 1988, ano que os meus olhos viram a luz por vez primeira, sempre *morei na cidade*...Poderia afirmar que sim, gosto muito de *viver na cidade*. (espanholgalego.b2.72.69.3q)

While this analysis of token/types occurrences across levels already reveals patterns of variation, a detailed analysis of bundle structures at each level will provide a more comprehensive account of learners' development.

Structural Patterns of Lexical Bundles in Beginner Writing

Beginner learners of Portuguese used 60 different bundle types, and these bundles are mainly noun phrase-based (N=19) and prepositional phrase-based (N=16). These are also the most frequent bundle tokens found in the beginners' corpus. See Figures 3 and 4 for a graphic representation of the structural patterns found in this subcorpus.

Not surprisingly, most of the noun and preposition-based bundles refer to concrete objects, people, and places that are related to the topic of the writing (i.e., *meus amigos*, *minha família*, or *em Portugal*). The following excerpts exemplify these patterns:

Excerpt 3: mas no último *fim-de-semana* nós fomos para a praia a *Figueira da Foz* (alemao.a1.37.1.1a)

Excerpt 4: Agora eu estudo em Portugal mas moro na Turquia com *a minha família*. Tenho duas irmãs. A irmã mais velha é casada. (turco.a1.24.1.1a)

1 Filenames are given for all excerpts. These represent speakers first language, followed by CERF level, ID number, and prompt number.

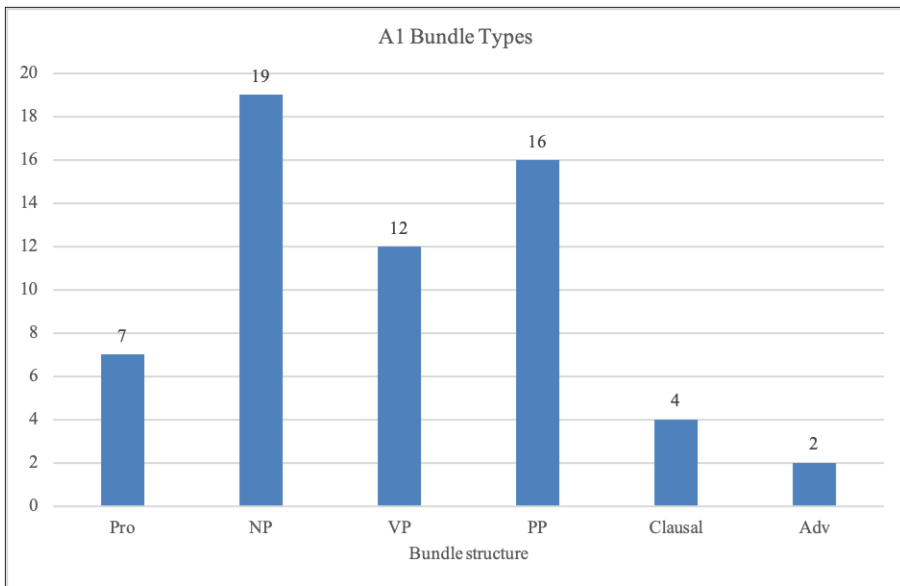


Figure 3. Lexical Bundle Types for Beginner Levels

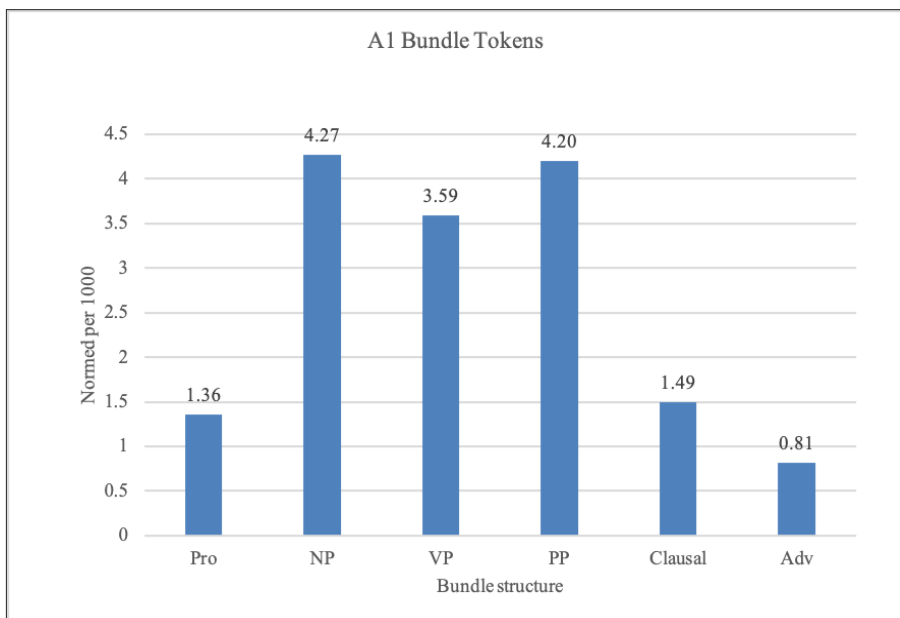


Figure 4. Lexical Bundle Tokens for Beginner Levels

It is also worth noting that verb-based bundles are somewhat frequent in beginner writing. As we can see, this type of bundle represents 3 out of the 10 most frequent bundle types in beginner writing. The verb based-bundles in Table 4 also show that *gostar* is a prolific bundle at this beginner stage, as it is part of 5 of the 10 most frequent bundles.

Table 4. Top 10 Bundles in Beginner Writing

Frequency	Range	Bundle	Structure
31	24	eu gosto muito	Pro
30	23	gosto muito de	VP
28	20	eu gosto de	Pro
19	16	os meus amigos	NP
16	14	a minha família	NP
15	11	com os meus	PP
14	12	a minha mãe	NP
14	11	fim de semana	NP
13	13	moro em Coimbra	VP
13	8	gosto de fazer	VP

Finally, even though pronoun-based bundles are not the most frequent structure at beginner levels of writing, they are more frequent than in other levels. In this subcorpus, 7 out of the 60 bundles identified contained pronouns, and all of them were first-person pronouns (see excerpts 5 and 6 for examples). This indicates that at beginner levels students are not confident with pronoun omission. The fact that students do not omit the first-person pronoun might also relate to how their first languages set the null subject parameter. Nevertheless, such an investigation is out of the scope of the present paper.

Excerpt 5: No fim-de-semana *eu gosto muito* de apanhar o autocarro para ir nas pequenas cidades do Portugal. (italiano.a1.59.33.j1)

Excerpt 6: *Eu gosto muito* de nadar. (polaco.a1.46.33.1j)

The excerpts presented in this section not only reflect the major language patterns found in this subcorpus, but also a trend in the type of sentences used. We can see from these excerpts that students use simple sentences, without subordinate or coordinate devices, opting for several simple sentences (see Excerpt 4) instead of elaborated sentences.

Structural Patterns of Lexical Bundles in Elementary Writing

In total, 60 bundles were extracted from the elementary corpus. Most of these bundles were noun-based (N=20), followed by prepositional bundles (N=11). Interestingly, even though the number of prepositional bundle types is

almost half the number of noun-based bundles, their token count is almost the same. Figure 5 presents the number of bundle types and Figure 6 presents the number of bundle tokens at this level of development.

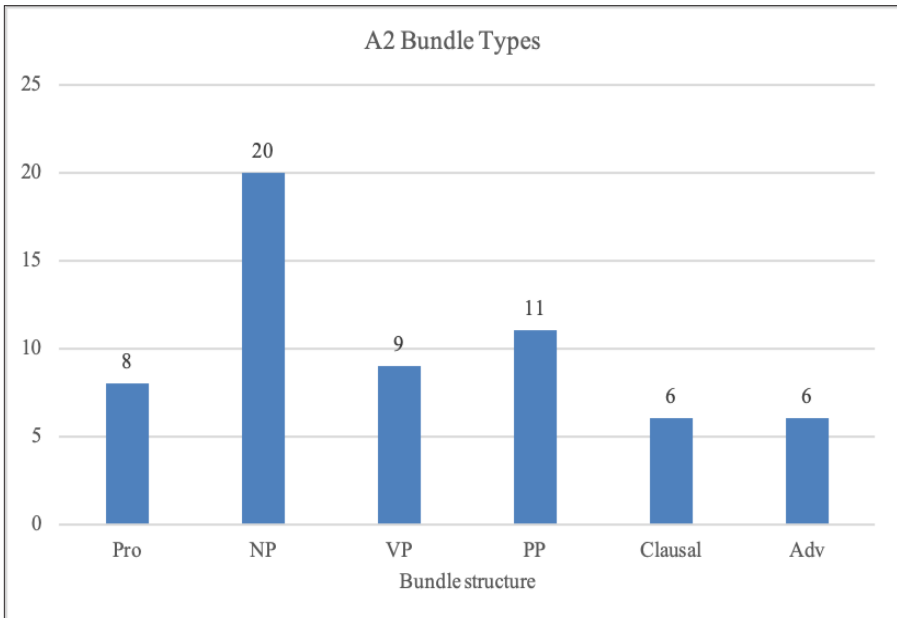


Figure 5. Lexical Bundle Types for Elementary Levels

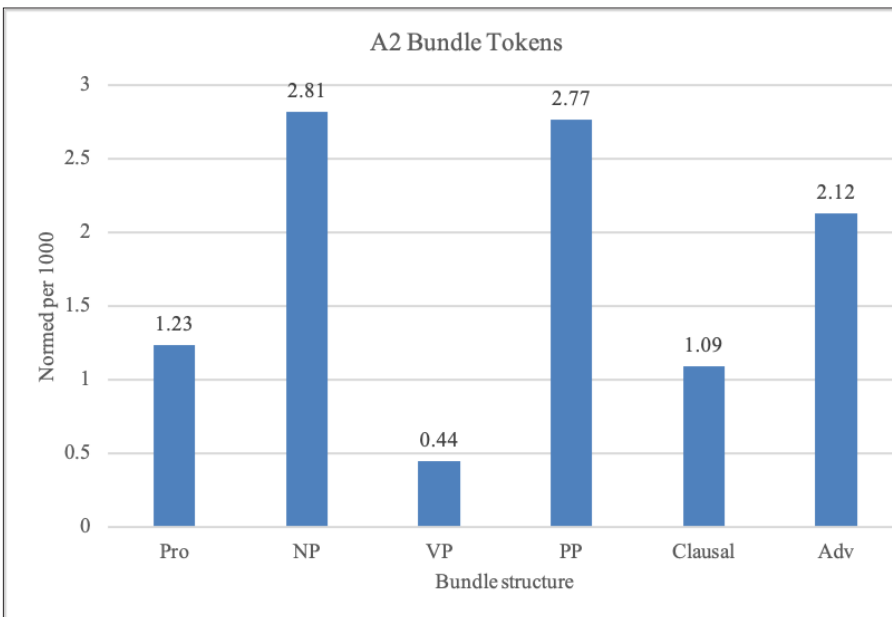


Figure 6. Lexical Bundle Tokens for Elementary Levels

Figure 5 shows that both prepositional and verb-based bundles have few types, i.e., forms, that are repeated frequently in these texts. The reason for this is that “gosto muito de” is overwhelmingly more frequent (39 out of 95) than other verb-based bundles, and the same happens with the preposition-based bundle “com os meus” (35 out of 72). Excerpt 7 presents this repetition of “gosto muito de” in the same text, while Excerpt 8 illustrates how these two bundles co-occur in several texts at this level.

Excerpt 7: Gosto de vestir saias e vestidos pois não *gosto muito de* calças, que acho incômodos. Eu *gosto muito de* desportos, aproveito quase todos os invernos para fazer snowboarding. (alemão.a2.34.1.1a)

Excerpt 8: *Gosto muito de* passar tempo com *os meus amigos*. (alemao. A2.37.1.1a)

As we can see from Table 5, bundles related to likes and dislikes are still the most frequent ones at an elementary level. Nevertheless, noun-based bundles are the majority of bundle types among the top 10 bundles, indicating a move from verb-based bundles.

Table 5. Top 10 Bundles in Elementary Writing

Frequency	Range	Bundle	Structure
39	26	gosto muito de	VP
36	27	eu gosto de	Pro
35	29	com os meus	PP
28	23	eu gosto muito	Pro
25	18	os meus amigos	NP
24	19	a minha família	NP
23	19	os meus pais	NP
16	12	com a minha	PP
15	9	meios de transporte	NP
14	12	a minha mãe	NP

Structural Patterns of Lexical Bundles in Intermediate Writing

There were 74 bundle types in the intermediate corpus: most of them were noun-based bundles (N=21), preposition-based bundles (N=15), and verb-based bundles (N=14). At the intermediate level, these noun and prepositional bundles show more variation in their topic, with more bundles referring to time (i.e.,

fim de semana and *no meu tempo*) in conjunction with the bundles associated with family and likes seen in previous levels. This could be a reflection of learners' increase in vocabulary size at this proficiency level.

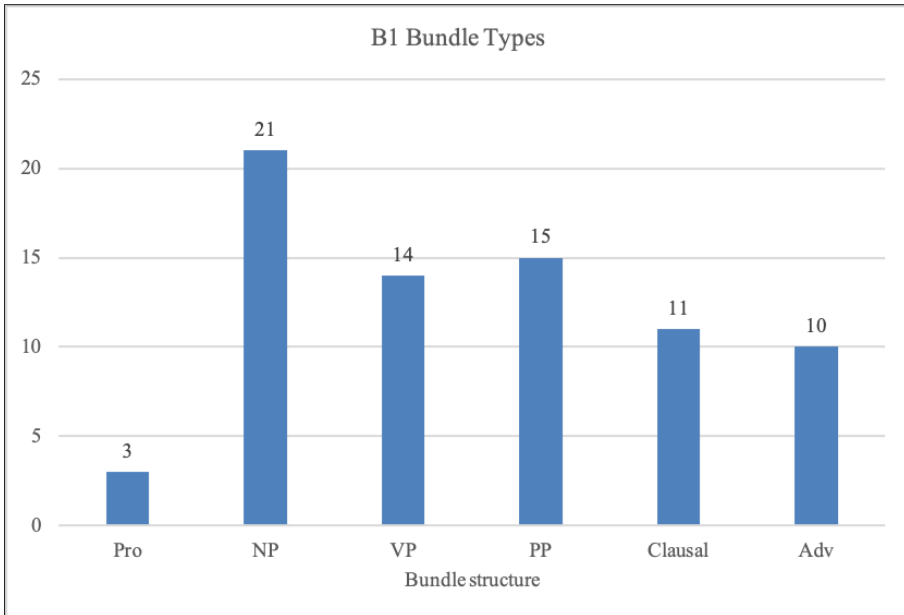


Figure 7. Lexical Bundle Types for Intermediate Levels

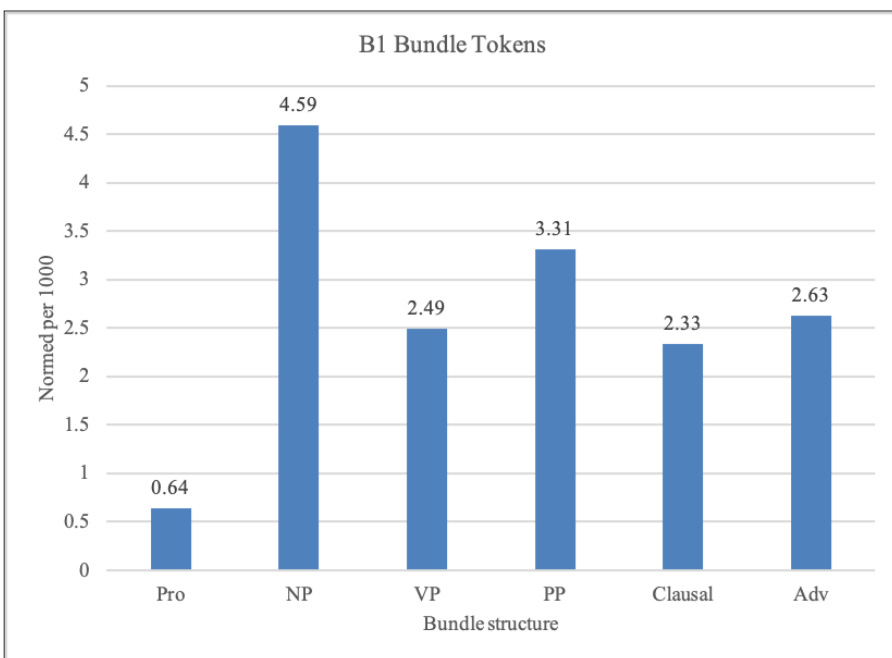


Figure 8. Lexical Bundle Tokens for Intermediate Levels

Figures 7 and 8 depict the number of bundle types and tokens, respectively, for each structure in the intermediate corpus. Based on these figures, we can

see a decline in the number of pronoun-based bundles and an increase in the number of clausal- and adverbial-based bundles when compared to the beginner and elementary levels.

The decline in the number of pronoun-based bundles and the increase and verb-based bundles can be explained by the omission of first-person pronouns in these texts (Excerpt 9) and by the occurrence of impersonal structures (Excerpt 10). In Excerpt 9, it is evident that this student not only omits the pronoun but also develops the sentence using a *that*-clause, very differently from the excerpts seen at the beginner level.

Excerpt 9: Todos os países têm suas particularidades. No caso de Chile, *acho que a* sua geografia é muito curiosa. (espanhol.b1.51.50.21)

Excerpt 10: Então, uma coisa que se podia fazer para que fosse mais agradável viver lá, era aumentar o número dos policiais. *É verdade que* não é um dos bairros piores de Coimbra... (alemao.b1.16.33.1j)

Among the top 10 most frequent bundles, we see a greater variety of structures, with the first clausal bundle appearing among the most frequent bundles. Bundles with the verb *gostar* are still abundant, yet this is likely a result of the number of texts with topics related to self and preferences.

Table 6. *Top 10 Bundles in Intermediate Writing*

Frequency	Range	Bundle	Structure
85	58	gosto muito de	VP
54	40	gosto de fazer	VP
51	35	os meus amigos	NP
46	32	meu tempo livre	NP
42	37	eu gosto muito	Pro
41	31	com os meus	PP
32	28	aqui em Coimbra	Adv
31	17	eu gosto de	Pro
30	27	e por isso	Clausal
30	21	viver no campo	NP

Structural Patterns of Lexical Bundles in Upper-Intermediate Writing

In the upper-intermediate level, 107 bundles were extracted. This is the highest number of bundles at any level in this corpus. Most of these are prepositions and noun-based bundles. Differently from previous levels, however, prepositional bundles are more frequent in both the number of types and tokens. Figures 9 and 10 also show an extension of the pattern found in intermediate bundles; that is, there is a decline in pronoun bundles and an increase in verb- and adverb-based bundles.

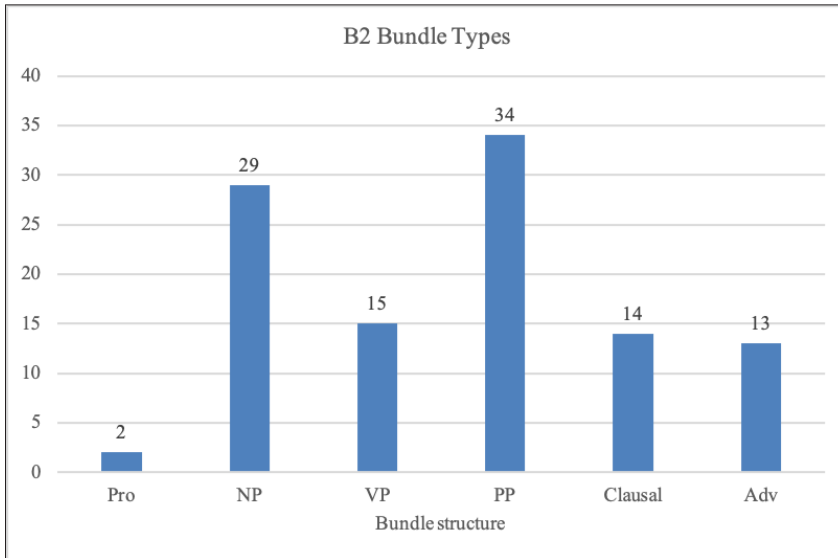


Figure 9. Lexical Bundle Types for Upper-Intermediate Levels

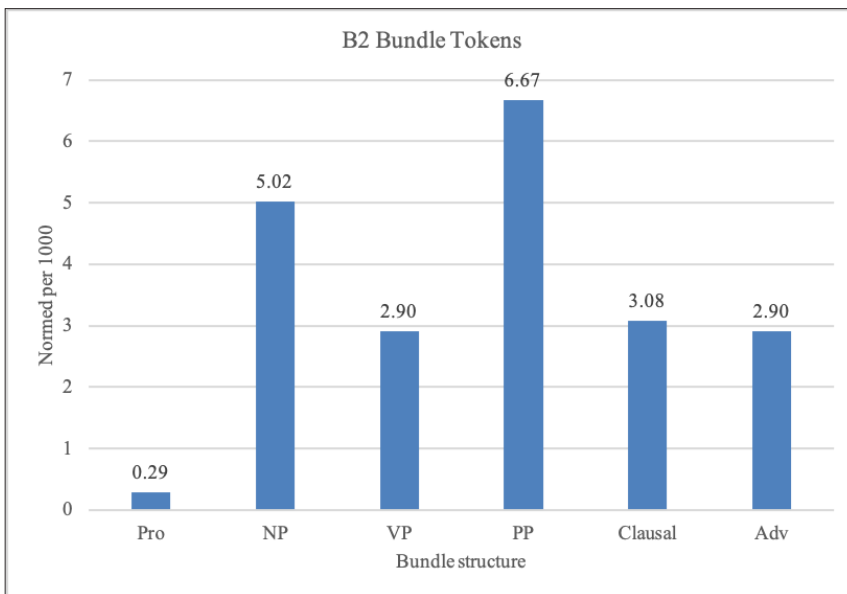


Figure 10. Lexical Bundle Tokens for Upper-Intermediate Levels

It is worth highlighting that we see the highest number of types and tokens of clausal bundles at this level. Nevertheless, in at least one instance, this is due to a fixed expression, which can be seen in Excerpt 11 where all bundles with “que esteja” are part of the construction “espero que esteja bem.”

Excerpt 11: *Espero que esteja tudo bem contigo e que os exames corram bem.* (eslovaco.b2.12.6.1b)

At this level, we also see an increase in the number of infinitive verb forms, as Table 7 exemplifies in the first and third row. Excerpt 12 illustrates the use of infinitive construction in these upper-intermediate texts. It is worth contrasting this excerpt to the ones at lower levels. Where we would find sentences composed of a subject, one verb, and a simple complement at the beginner level, here we find dependent clauses and elaborated verb-phrase constructions.

Excerpt 12: Eu prefiro *viver na cidade* e ir descansar no campo quando tenho férias o no [*sic*] fim-de-semana. Quando tiver mais idade, acho que vou *viver no campo*. (lituano.b2.8.69.3q)

Table 7. Top 10 Bundles in Upper-Intermediate Writing

Frequency	Range	Bundle	Structure
31	20	viver na cidade	NP
24	18	vida no campo	NP
24	17	viver no campo	NP
18	17	a vida no	NP
15	11	é um país	VP
14	13	há muito tempo	VP
13	12	muito tempo que	Adv
11	11	tudo bem contigo	Adv
11	10	tempo que não	Clausal
10	9	e por isso	Clausal

Structural Patterns of Lexical Bundles in Advanced Writing

The advanced level in the corpus contained 55 bundles. These bundles were mainly noun and preposition-based bundles. As figures 11 and 12 illustrate, we see a decline in the number of types and tokens of verb-, clausal-, and adverbial-based bundles. Nevertheless, results associated with the advanced level should

be taken with caution, since this subcorpus was considerably smaller than the previous ones.

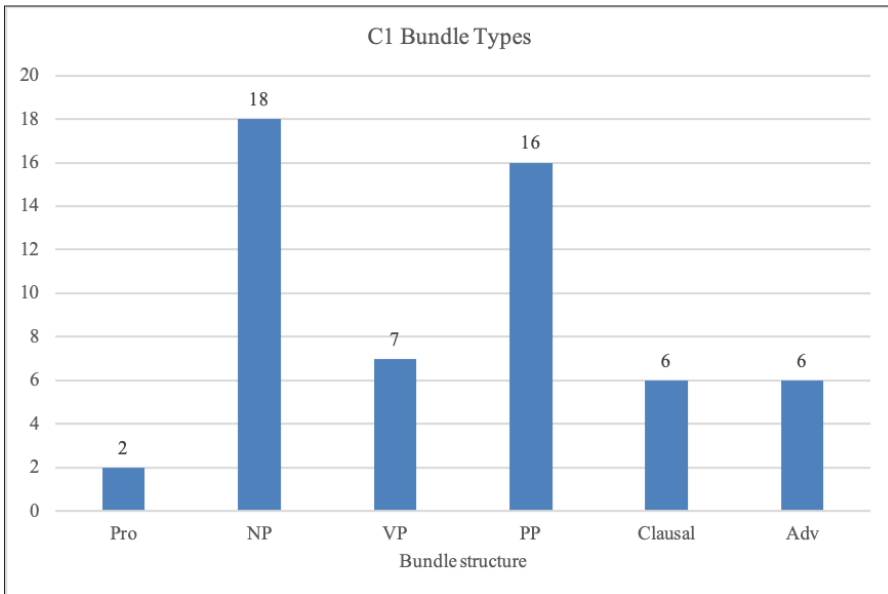


Figure 11. Lexical Bundle Types for Advanced Levels

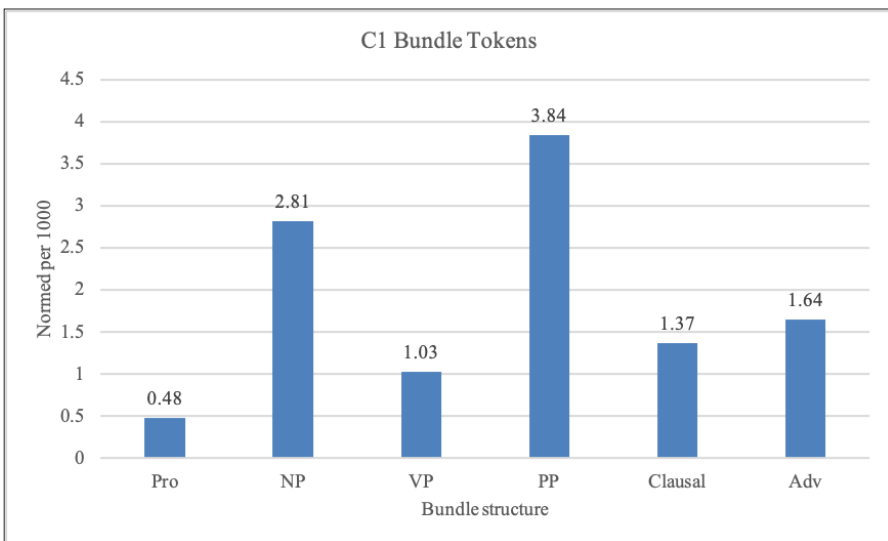


Figure 12. Lexical Bundle Tokens for Advanced Levels

Among the top 10 bundles used in advanced writing, we find fewer instances of *gostar*-related bundles and more diverse structures that had already appeared at the intermediate and upper-intermediate levels (*viver no campo*, *viver na cidade*). At this level, we also see learners using references to places (*aqui em Portugal*).

Table 8. Top 10 Bundles in Advanced Writing

Frequency	Range	Bundle	Structure
12	9	gosto muito de	VP
10	6	viver no campo	NP
7	5	a minha vida	NP
7	4	de viver no	PP
7	5	gosto de viver	VP
6	4	vida no campo	NP
6	5	viver na cidade	NP
6	6	é um país	VP
5	4	a minha casa	NP
5	4	aqui em Portugal	Adv

Structural Patterns of Lexical Bundles Across Levels

This detailed analysis of frequency and structural patterns of lexical bundles across proficiency levels revealed some patterns of language acquisition. First, the number of bundles increases with proficiency levels, with the exception of the advanced level. Nevertheless, the pattern found in the advanced level might simply be a result of a small sample size. Second, patterns of structural development include a decline in the use of pronoun-based bundles in advanced writing and an increase in the use of clausal-, adverb-, and verb-based bundles. This suggests that at lower levels students use fewer instances of dependent clauses and noun-modification resources. Along the same lines, it is worth noting the increase in the use of preposition-based bundles, as these also indicate noun-modification structures.

Finally, by examining the example sentences, we can see that lower-level learners of Portuguese tend to have simpler sentences in beginner levels (A1 and A2) and more elaborate sentences at intermediate levels (B1 and B2). However, further research on this topic is still needed before deducing that these sentences are more complex. Figure 13 summarizes the development patterns found in these lexical bundles.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine learner development in Portuguese writing across five levels of proficiency: beginner, elementary, intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced. The results of this study have shown that there are substantial differences in the use of lexical bundles across levels. These patterns

of development were summarized in Figure 13. The results of this study, though limited by the corpus size, could inform the teaching of Portuguese as a second language. Teachers could use these as a resource to develop materials based on the grammatical patterns found in this study, rather than focusing on the specific lexical choices, since these are closely related to the topic of the writings. As an example, teachers can create activities where the students have to fill in the gap by selecting synonym verbs to avoid the repetition of *gostar*. Advanced students could also examine the texts and identify bundles associated with the genre structure.

	Fewer bundles		More bundles	
Lower levels	Repetition of the same bundles	↔	Varied bundle types	Advanced levels
	More pronoun-based bundles		More clause-based bundles	
	No infinitive bundles		More infinitive bundles	

Figure 13. Summary of Findings

This research is not without its limitations—the main one being the effect of the topic in the bundles extracted. Future studies should, if possible, have students write the same prompt across levels, or collect texts on varied topics, so that topic would not play such a large role in the bundles extracted. Future studies could also replicate this study in larger corpora. This is necessary to determine if the patterns found in the PEAPL corpus can be extrapolated for other samples of Portuguese learners. In addition, this paper aimed to take into account language background as a variable, so future studies should control for learner's L1 whenever possible. For instance, the use of personal pronouns might relate to students' first language, and that could be further explored in a study controlling for L1. This study also looked solely into the structural patterns found in lexical bundles. However, future research could examine the functional patterns of learner writing and correlate them to the structural patterns found in this study.

Finally, the researcher hopes that this exploratory study can motivate future endeavors describing the language produced by learners of Portuguese as a second language, as studies such as these are extremely helpful when producing teaching materials and planning Portuguese classes.

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Appendix A

Estímulo

O indivíduo

Escreva um texto em que se apresente, em que fale das suas características físicas, da sua vida familiar, da sua casa, dos seus gostos e dos seus desejos. Se não quiser falar de si, pode inventar! (1.1A)

Write a text where you introduce yourself, speak about your physical characteristics, your family life, your house, your likes and wishes. If you do not want to talk about yourself, you can make it up!

Escreva uma carta a um amigo que não vê há muito tempo. Recorde momentos passados em conjunto e fale-lhe da sua vida pessoal e profissional actuais. (6.1B)

Write a letter to a friend who you have not talked to in a long time. Remind him of past moments that you experienced together and tell him about your personal and professional life right now.

Fale daquilo que gosta de fazer nos tempos livres. (33.1J)

Talk about things you like to do in your free time.

A sociedade

Todos os países são diferentes a nível cultural e geográfico. Descreva o seu país, observando as particularidades das suas regiões, os principais monumentos e saliente alguns dos hábitos mais frequentes da sua cultura. (50.2L)

Each country has a different culture and geography. Describe your country, noting the peculiarities of each region, the main monuments and highlight some of the most frequent habits of your culture.

Certamente, já teve oportunidade de contactar com pessoas de cultura diferente da sua. Fale de um episódio que lhe recorde esse momento, das dificuldades sentidas, das diferenças e semelhanças encontradas entre as duas culturas e das experiências que partilharam. (52.2L)

Certainly, you already had an opportunity to connect with people from cultures different than yours. Talk about an episode that you remember, the difficulties you felt, the differences and similarities between both cultures and the experience you shared.

Há, certamente, comidas de que gosta muito e há outras que detesta. Fale disto e daquilo que pensam os seus familiares e amigos sobre o assunto. (55.2M)

There is, certainly, meals that you like very much and others that you hate. Talk about this and what your family and friends think about this.

O meio ambiente

Gosta de viver na cidade? Acha que, se pudesse, gostaria mais de vir no campo? Pense em vantagens e desvantagens de viver na cidade ou no campo. Escreva sobre isso. (69.3Q)

Do you like to live in the city? Do you think that, if you could, you would like to live in the countryside? Think about the advantages and disadvantages of living in the city or in the countryside. Write about this.

Fale de meios de transporte. Fale daqueles em que já viajou e daqueles em que gostaria de viajar. Se quiser, pode contar uma viagem que tenha feito. (75.3S)

Talk about means of transportation. Talk about the ones you have already used, and the ones you would like to travel on. If you want, you can talk about a trip you have done.

Fale do bairro onde mora. Diga se gosta dele e se acha que há coisas que podiam mudar para que fosse mais agradável lá viver. (77.3T)

Talk about the neighborhood where you live. Mention if you like it and if you think that there are things that could be changed to make it more pleasant to live there.

Appendix B

Bundle	Level				
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1
a minha família	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1
aqui em Portugal	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1
com a minha	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1
fim de semana	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1
a minha mãe	A1	A2	B1	B2	
com os meus	A1	A2	B1	B2	
os meus amigos	A1	A2	B1	B2	
todos os dias	A1	A2	B1	B2	
gosto muito de	A1	A2	B1		C1
eu gosto de	A1	A2	B1		C1
nos tempos livres	A1	A2	B1		C1
com o meu	A1	A2	B1		
eu acho que	A1	A2	B1		
eu gosto muito	A1	A2	B1		
gosto de fazer	A1	A2	B1		

Bundle	Level				
e a minha	A1	A2			
e o meu	A1	A2		B2	
com meus amigos	A1	A2			
em Coimbra e	A1	A2			
eu chamo me	A1	A2			
figueira da foz	A1	A2			
meus amigos e	A1	A2			
o meu pai	A1	A2			
a minha vida	A1		B1	B2	C1
é uma cidade	A1		B1	B2	C1
há muito tempo	A1		B1	B2	C1
estou a estudar	A1		B1	B2	
com os amigos	A1		B1		
ir ao cinema	A1		B1		
a minha casa	A1				C1
e gosto muito	A1				C1
minha casa é	A1				C1
na semana passada	A1				C1
a língua portuguesa	A1				
agora estou em	A1				
ao fim de	A1				
beijinhos e até	A1				
casa de banho	A1				
de Coimbra e	A1				
e até breve	A1				
é muito bom	A1				
e os meus	A1				
em casa de	A1				
em Portugal porque	A1				
estou em Coimbra	A1				
eu e o	A1				
eu moro em	A1				

Bundle	Level				
eu tenho de	A1				
gosto de ir	A1				
gosto de ver	A1				
ir à praia	A1				
moro em Coimbra	A1				
na faculdade de	A1				
na universidade de	A1				
o meu marido	A1				
para a praia	A1				
peessoas da rua	A1				
por aqui estou	A1				
porque é muito	A1				
Universidade de Coimbra	A1				
aqui em Coimbra		A2	B1	B2	C1
para mim é		A2	B1	B2	C1
mais ou menos		A2	B1	B2	
os meus pais		A2	B1	B2	
acho que é		A2	B1		C1
meu tempo livre		A2	B1		
não gosto de		A2	B1		
que eu gosto		A2	B1		
também gosto de		A2	B1		
eu não gosto		A2			C1
meio de transporte		A2			C1
a minha irmã		A2			
ano e sou		A2			
da minha família		A2			
e acho que		A2			
é um pouco		A2			
em Portugal eu		A2			
eu sou um		A2			
eu sou uma		A2			

Bundle	Level				
eu tenho uma		A2			
mas eu não		A2			
meios de transporte		A2			
meus pais e		A2			
não é muito		A2			
no fim de		A2			
o meu curso		A2			
o meu irmão		A2			
os meios de		A2			
os meus colegas		A2			
por isso eu		A2			
quase todos os		A2			
que é muito		A2			
que não é		A2			
sou uma pessoa		A2			
sou uma rapariga		A2			
tenho o cabelo		A2			
um pouco mais		A2			
de viver na			B1	B2	C1
de viver no			B1	B2	C1
e por isso			B1	B2	C1
é um país			B1	B2	C1
na minha opinião			B1	B2	C1
o que é			B1	B2	C1
viver na cidade			B1	B2	C1
viver no campo			B1	B2	C1
a possibilidade de			B1	B2	
acho que a			B1	B2	
ao mesmo tempo			B1	B2	
muito tempo que			B1	B2	
no campo é			B1	B2	
tempo que não			B1	B2	

Bundle	Level				
da minha vida			B1		C1
o que eu			B1		C1
as coisas que			B1		
coisa que eu			B1		
coisas que gosto			B1		
do meu bairro			B1		
é por isso			B1		
é verdade que			B1		
estou a fazer			B1		
fins de semana			B1		
gosto muito da			B1		
há muitas coisas			B1		
meus tempos livres			B1		
muito de fazer			B1		
muito de viver			B1		
no meu tempo			B1		
nos meus tempos			B1		
o bairro onde			B1		
o meu bairro			B1		
o meu tempo			B1		
outra coisa que			B1		
que as pessoas			B1		
que é uma			B1		
que gosto de			B1		
que gosto muito			B1		
que se chama			B1		
também gosto muito			B1		
tempo livre é			B1		
tudo o que			B1		
uma coisa que			B1		
dia a dia				B2	C1
hoje em dia				B2	C1

Bundle	Level				
na cidade é				B2	C1
na minha vida				B2	C1
vida no campo				B2	C1
a cidade e				B2	
a cidade é				B2	
a falta de				B2	
a maior parte				B2	
a última vez				B2	
a vida na				B2	
a vida no				B2	
as pessoas são				B2	
bem contigo e				B2	
centro da cidade				B2	
cidade é muito				B2	
cidade e o				B2	
cidade ou no				B2	
como por exemplo				B2	
da cidade e				B2	
da vida no				B2	
de todos os				B2	
do meu país				B2	
do que no				B2	
e colegas de				B2	
é muito mais				B2	
e o campo				B2	
em Portugal a				B2	
espero que esteja				B2	
está a correr				B2	
esteja tudo bem				B2	
estilo de vida				B2	
estou em Portugal				B2	
eu estou a				B2	

Bundle	Level				
eu sei que				B2	
milhões de habitantes				B2	
na cidade e				B2	
na cidade ou				B2	
na república checa				B2	
não nos vemos				B2	
nasci numa cidade				B2	
no campo a				B2	
no campo com				B2	
no campo e				B2	
no campo mas				B2	
no campo também				B2	
no centro da				B2	
no outro lado				B2	
numa cidade e				B2	
o meu país				B2	
os teus pais				B2	
ou no campo				B2	
para a minha				B2	
para o campo				B2	
perto da cidade				B2	
por causa de				B2	
por causa do				B2	
por outro lado				B2	
posso dizer que				B2	
quase todas as				B2	
que a vida				B2	
que é mais				B2	
que esteja tudo				B2	
que não nos				B2	
que no campo				B2	
que para mim				B2	

Bundle	Level				
queima das fitas				B2	
tenho a certeza				B2	
todo o mundo				B2	
tudo bem contigo				B2	
última vez que				B2	
vale a pena				B2	
vida na cidade				B2	
viver numa cidade				B2	
a maioria dos					C1
andar a pé					C1
às vezes é					C1
bem o que					C1
da minha casa					C1
de ti e					C1
do sul anos					C1
e a sua					C1
e gosto de					C1
equipa de basquetebol					C1
família e amigos					C1
gosto de viver					C1
muito grande e					C1
norte do país					C1
os colegas de					C1
os companheiros de					C1
ponto de vista					C1
por causa das					C1
português na minha					C1
que na cidade					C1
todas as noites					C1

El papel de la subjetivación en los procesos de gramaticalización

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Resumen: En este artículo, se valora el peso de la subjetivación en algunos de los procesos de gramaticalización. A tal efecto, se lleva a cabo un repaso de la literatura previa, con especial énfasis en las fuentes surgidas a lo largo de las dos últimas décadas. A esto se le añadirá una visión crítica, la cual se centrará sobre todo en abordar ciertos casos controvertidos. Traugott (2005) habla de la subjetivación como un movimiento de lo externo y objetivo hacia la esfera puramente (inter)personal y *subjetiva*. Como tal, la subjetivación se erige como mecanismo que puede iniciar, consumir o incidir en los procesos de gramaticalización. A pesar de que la falta de documentación histórica aboca la presencia de la subjetivación a una cierta opacidad, en los últimos años esta teoría parece haberse impuesto (Hopper & Traugott 2003, Torres Cacoullos & Schwenter 2006, Aaron & Torres Cacoullos 2005, Carretero & Maldonado 2018, Carretero et al. 2018, Fanego 2010, González Manzano 2013, González García 2007, Maldonado 2002, Rodríguez-Muñoz 2011). La teoría de la subjetivación parece explicar con más éxito casos de gramaticalización que pueden resultar en gran medida intangibles o abstractos, entre los cuales la incidencia de la metáfora o la metonimia en algún punto del *cline* de gramaticalización (Guarddon-Anelo 2011).

Palabras clave: gramaticalización, subjetivación, discursivización, lingüística histórica, diacronía

Introducción

En el presente artículo, se valora el peso de la subjetivación en algunos de los procesos de gramaticalización. Para ello, se repasa la literatura previa, a la que se añade un aporte crítico basado en una serie de ejemplos controvertidos. Traugott (2005) habla de la subjetivación como un movimiento de lo externo y objetivo hacia la esfera puramente (inter)personal y *subjetiva*. Como tal, la subjetivación se erige como mecanismo que puede iniciar, consumir o incidir en los procesos de gramaticalización. A pesar de que la falta de documentación histórica aboca la presencia de la subjetivación a una cierta opacidad, en los últimos años esta teoría parece haberse impuesto (Hopper & Traugott 2003, Torres Cacoullos & Schwenter 2006, Aaron & Torres Cacoullos 2005, Carretero & Maldonado 2018, Carretero et al. 2018, Fanego 2010, González Manzano 2013, González García 2007, Maldonado 2002, Rodríguez-Muñoz 2011). La teoría de la subjetivación parece explicar con más éxito casos de gramaticalización que pueden resultar en gran medida intangibles o abstractos, entre los cuales la incidencia de la metáfora o la metonimia en algún punto del *cline* de

la gramaticalización (Guarddon-Anelo 2011).

El fenómeno de la gramaticalización se ha estudiado desde diversos puntos de vista, los cuales en algunos casos pueden resultar mutuamente excluyentes, mientras que en otros pueden complementarse para contribuir a la construcción del marco teórico. La definición tradicional (Hopper & Traugott 2003) viene a afirmar que la gramaticalización es el proceso mediante el cual una unidad lingüística (habitualmente una palabra; o varias, que suelen aparecer de modo contiguo) va perdiendo su carga léxica (esto es, su significado referencial) para integrarse gradualmente en la gramática. Dado que se trata de un proceso paulatino (conocido en inglés como *path* o *cline*), es habitual estudiarlo en diacronía. Cuando la documentación histórica lo permite, resulta posible trazar esta evolución con exactitud. Sin embargo, en la mayoría de los casos encontramos huecos interpretativos que nos vemos obligados a rellenar con una hipótesis, en base a los casos que tenemos mejor documentados y, también, apoyándonos en la propia introspección.

El hecho de que sea posible cuantificar la variación explica que el estudio de la gramaticalización haya hecho fortuna en el ámbito de la sociolingüística variacionista, ya que este fenómeno “nos permite vislumbrar problemas en la equivalencia funcional de variables mucho mejor que la fonología” (Torres Cacoullos 2001: 443). Partiendo de constataciones formales (i.e., de tipo fonológico o sintáctico), el estudio de la gramaticalización identifica variables que contemplan la incidencia de elementos funcionales (p. ej., sociolingüísticos) en la consumación del proceso. A grandes rasgos, podemos identificar tres vertientes en la gramaticalización: (1) nuevas configuraciones lingüísticas, a menudo con una influencia decisiva de los ámbitos pragmático y sociolingüístico (Maldonado 2002, Elvira 2005, Rodríguez Arrizabalaga 2005, Howe 2011, Blas Arroyo & Vellón Lahoz 2015); (2) gramaticalizaciones en las cuales algún aspecto sociolingüístico se erige como decisivo en la consolidación del fenómeno (Torres Cacoullos 2001); (3) procesos específicos de gramaticalización que se pueden explicar recurriendo a criterios de tipo pragmático o metadiscursivo (Hopper & Traugott 2003, Mihatsch 2010).

De entrada, cabe señalar que el concepto de *gramaticalización* se ha tomado en ocasiones como un término inclusivo, lo cual indefectiblemente ha llevado a confusiones terminológicas. En esta línea, hallamos un uso más estricto del término (i.e., transición gradual de lo léxico a lo puramente gramatical) que convive con otro de alcance más general (i.e., transición de lo léxico a lo gramatical y/o metadiscursivo). En relación con esta última acepción, en ocasiones se ha empleado el término de *gramaticalización* para caracterizar casos en que una estructura léxica ha acabado perdiendo su significado originario, a pesar de que esta no haya pasado a integrarse en la gramática al final del *cline* (aun siendo esto posible en los estadios intermedios). A modo de ejemplo de este uso más amplio del término, González Manzano (2013) parte de la teoría de la

gramaticalización a la hora de analizar un total de ocho locuciones adverbiales y adverbios epistémicos (i.e., *verdaderamente, realmente, ciertamente, efectivamente; en verdad, en realidad, en efecto, por cierto, de verdad*), los cuales, con el tiempo, han llegado a expresar valores más pragmáticos y discursivos. Aquí adopto el sentido más estricto de gramaticalización, por lo que caracterizaré los casos anteriores como *discursivización* o *pragmaticalización*. Hoy en día, el estudio de la gramaticalización aún resulta extremadamente controvertido. Si bien es cierto que la mayor parte de los estudiosos parece aceptar su existencia, no es menos cierto que los ejemplos más paradigmáticos del fenómeno son escasos y habitualmente no extrapolables a otros casos.

A las discrepancias terminológicas que acabo de señalar, se suma en muchos casos la práctica inviabilidad de documentar exhaustivamente procesos de gramaticalización específicos en el eje diacrónico. Esta situación ha relegado a los estudiosos a confiar en la propia introspección, así como la comparación —más o menos implícita— con respecto a esos casos que se consideran paradigmáticos. Aquí partiré de la interpretación estrecha del fenómeno. Esta interpretación de la gramaticalización es la que se muestra, por ejemplo, en Amaral y Delicado Cantero (2018), quienes analizan la evolución sintáctico-semántica o proceso de reanálisis que siguió *sin embargo* entre los siglos XII y XVI, antes de que la expresión quedara fijada definitivamente como conector concesivo. En lugar de basarse en la metáfora, los autores hacen hincapié en las propiedades de subcategorización del sustantivo *embargo*, cuyo empleo ya se documenta en el siglo XV como parte integrante de la locución conjuntiva *embargo de que*.

Ahora que se han abordado brevemente los apriorismos terminológicos y metodológicos oportunos, me centraré en analizar el papel de la subjetivación en los procesos de gramaticalización. De entrada, cabe decir que la gramaticalización y la subjetivación son dos procesos independientes que pueden ocurrir —y frecuentemente ocurren— por separado. De este modo, puede existir gramaticalización sin subjetivación (que, por tanto, habrá que explicar en base a otros mecanismos subyacentes), o bien subjetivación sin gramaticalización. El uso del término *subjetivación* es más amplio (y también más reciente y controvertido) que el de *gramaticalización*. Mientras que en este último caso es posible adoptar una definición estrecha (frente a una más amplia), el alcance semántico de *subjetivación* es más vago e impreciso, y, dada su naturaleza misma, resulta difícil de concretar.

Estado de la cuestión y aporte crítico

Una de las definiciones más sucintas y aceptadas de la subjetivación la encontramos en Traugott (2005), que caracteriza dicho proceso como “un desplazamiento desde el ámbito externo, objetivo, referencial al ámbito interno,

personal o interpersonal”. Según esta definición, la subjetivación constituiría un proceso dinámico en el cual las valoraciones, los puntos de vista y las actitudes del hablante sobre un evento determinado (“significado subjetivo”), o bien su interacción socioafectiva y grado de proximidad con respecto al oyente (“significado intersubjetivo”), pueden ser codificados y adquirir, de este modo, un significado simbólico y considerablemente convencionalizado en la gramática de una lengua. La historia de la lengua nos constata que el filtro subjetivo del hablante puede llegar a ejercer un papel fundamental en la modificación —a corto o, incluso, largo plazo— de estructuras lingüísticas. Un ejemplo paradigmático de ello lo hallamos en la analogía entre el pretérito y los demás tiempos (en los cuales el morfema *-s* se identifica con la segunda persona del singular), lo que da lugar a formas como *tuvistes* (cf. *tienes, tenías*) que conviven con la etimológica (y normativizada) *tuviste* (del latín clásico HABUISTI). Asimismo, este papel del hablante en el modelado de la lengua se aprecia en la variación existente en paremiología (p. ej., *hablando del rey/Papa de Roma, por la puerta/calle asoma*). A pesar de que estos no se consideren propiamente casos de subjetivación, sí nos aportan una idea de cómo se inician estos procesos, en base a la plasticidad de las estructuras lingüísticas y la multiplicidad de filtros subjetivos que el hablante puede aportar, a menudo por debajo del umbral de la conciencia lingüística.

Según la definición de Traugott (2005) de la que se ha partido, sería ese filtrado netamente personal al que he aludido el que constituiría la esencia de la *subjetivación*. Sin embargo, para hablar propiamente de subjetivación, cabe añadir otros dos ingredientes clave: la fijación ulterior y, a partir de ahí, la extensión o popularización del uso —en términos pragmático-discursivos— de un elemento o estructura subjetivada. De este modo, la subjetivación sería un mecanismo que “se activa” en un momento determinado y, al consumarse el proceso, “se desactiva”, lo cual se salda con estructuras que ya no se perciben como subjetivadas desde el punto de vista sincrónico, pero sí cuando estudiamos las mismas en diacronía. Al mismo tiempo, cabe señalar que la *subjetividad* intrínseca a estos procesos dificulta enormemente establecer un diagnóstico único y, por ello, buena parte de los casos de subjetivación admite una etiología alternativa. Me he referido ya a la intuición o introspección del lingüista como herramienta clave a la hora de determinar la existencia de la subjetivación. En efecto, la presencia o ausencia de subjetivación no es fácil de establecer de un modo incontestable, como sí es posible, en muchas ocasiones, en el caso de fenómenos de alcance más reducido (p. ej., analogía).

Partiendo de la conceptualización de Traugott (2005) a la que se ha hecho referencia, Company Company (2008) toma como punto de partida los *clines* generales ‘gramática → discurso’, ‘discurso → gramática’ y ‘gramática ↔ discurso’ y, a partir de los mismos, examina tres direcciones de la gramaticalización basada en procesos de subjetivación: (1) gramática → gramática; (2) gramática → discurso; (3) gramática → discurso → gramática.

En la primera dirección (p. ej., [modalidad deóntica/externa] *puede escribir* → [modalidad epistémica/interna] *puede que esté enferma*), se produce una redistribución y aparecen propiedades sintáctico-semánticas diferentes. En la segunda (p. ej., [verbo de movimiento] *anda a la biblioteca* → [marcador discursivo] *¡ándale!*), se neutralizan las capacidades sintácticas y morfológicas del étimo y, a partir de ahí, se produce aislamiento sintáctico y una ampliación del ámbito de aplicación (en inglés, *widening of scope*), lo que se salda con la aparición de formas autónomas que funcionan a nivel pragmático-discursivo. Por último, a pesar de ser la menos estudiada, la tercera dirección constituye, a mi parecer, una pieza fundamental para obtener una imagen de conjunto del funcionamiento de los procesos de gramaticalización mediante la subjetivación. En este caso, la forma discursiva, tras pasar por el nivel discursivo, asume un nuevo papel gramatical, que, con todo, preserva el significado subjetivo de la segunda fase (p. ej., [verbo de movimiento] *vaya a la biblioteca a cancelar estos libros* → [marcador discursivo] *¡vaya!*, *no te sabía yo esos gustos* → [cuantificador nominal intensivo] *vaya cochazo que te compraste*). A mi modo de ver, esta tercera vía abre la puerta a considerar que, en realidad, es posible que el proceso de subjetivación —al menos en lo que respecta a la gramaticalización— se active y se consume o desactive indefinidamente en un eje diacrónico, en función del uso pragmático de la expresión subjetivada, así como las necesidades lingüísticas del momento. Retomando el ejemplo que se acaba de citar, cabría no descartar que, en el futuro, a partir de *vaya cochazo que te compraste*, *¡vaya!* pueda volver al discurso (es decir, desgramaticalizarse), con un significado similar a *¡qué grande* [o *caro*, etc.]; y esta “alternancia” entre gramática y discurso podría repetirse en una sucesión indefinida.

Es interesante notar que las gramaticalizaciones basadas en la subjetivación muestran un comportamiento que diferencia estas del resto de gramaticalizaciones. Así, las primeras suelen ser aditivas (también podríamos calificarlas de *recursivas*), mientras que en las últimas se acostumbra a apreciar una clara competición por imponerse en el uso. Si observamos los ejemplos anteriores, no tendría ningún fundamento debatir acerca de si *puede* resulta más frecuente en *puede escribir* o *puede que esté enferma*. En este caso, la forma no gramaticalizada convive con la gramaticalizada, si bien cada una de ellas ocupa una esfera de uso diferente. De hecho, parece poco probable que en algún momento en el futuro ambas formas puedan entrar en competición. En cambio, en un caso prototípico de gramaticalización sin subjetivación, como lo es *a pesar de que*, vemos que esta locución conjuntiva resulta claramente mucho más frecuente que el uso del sustantivo *pesar*, que, salvo en expresiones fijadas por el uso, resulta poco habitual en el español moderno de cualquier variedad (cf. *a pesar de que llovía, llegó puntual* vs. *tengo el pesar de que no jugué a ese número de la lotería*). De esta idea se desprende que la gramaticalización por subjetivación afecta a los elementos más esenciales de la lengua, los cuales presentan una frecuencia de aparición alta y constante, y, por consiguiente, cabe presuponer que no

acabarán cayendo en desuso (pensemos en los ejemplos anteriores de *andar*, *poder* e *ir*, todos ellos verbos de uso habitual, que permiten la acumulación de usos gramaticalizados sin que estos entren en competencia con los usos originarios o no gramaticalizados).

Company (2008) destaca que, en todos los *clines* anteriores (i.e., gramática → gramática; gramática → discurso; gramática → discurso → gramática), el proceso puede considerarse idéntico desde el punto de vista semántico. Por ello, parece más adecuado analizar la subjetivación, en toda su complejidad, como un proceso multidimensional, y no unidireccional. Aquí observamos una aproximación cualitativa a la cuestión de la subjetivación, con la cual se pretende aportar una clasificación exhaustiva de los contextos en los que pueden darse tales procesos. El análisis cualitativo permite, de este modo, conciliar los hallazgos de la literatura previa y simplificar así los procesos de subjetivación aplicados a la gramaticalización a tres direcciones primigenias, sin excluir la variabilidad inherente a cada caso específico. Así, para dar cuenta de los procesos de subjetivación (en cualquiera de sus fases) —a los cuales, en tanto que procesos, debe subyacer cierta sistematicidad— puede resultar de gran utilidad recurrir a este estudio cualitativo y usarlo a modo de marco teórico referencial —siempre desde una perspectiva integradora y sin excluir ocurrencias potenciales que no se ajusten al mismo.

Torres Cacoullos y Schwenter (2006) también abordan específicamente la cuestión de la subjetivación como uno de los mecanismos operativos que pueden llevar a la gramaticalización. Para ello, hacen referencia a Traugott y Dasher (2002) como unos de los autores principales que han estudiado el papel de la subjetivación, que la primera había definido previamente como un “fenómeno de gradación [*gradient*] en virtud del cual ciertas formas y construcciones que en principio expresaban significados concretos, léxicos y objetivos llegan a emplearse, en base a su uso reiterado, en contextos sintácticos locales para cumplir funciones cada vez más abstractas, pragmáticas, interpersonales y basadas en el hablante” (Traugott 1995: 32). Sin embargo, casi toda la investigación que se ha llevado a cabo acerca de la subjetivación no ha reflejado dicha gradación, sino que más bien parece tomar como base —una vez más— la intuición del investigador. En la misma línea, Rodríguez-Muñoz (2011) señala la subjetivación como una de las tres posibilidades que permiten interpretar las construcciones ‘*muy* + adjetivo diminutivo’, junto con la neutralización (igualación con respecto al grado positivo del adjetivo) y la remodelización (redistribución semántica de cantidad o polaridades). El autor viene a definir la subjetivación, también, como la interpretación de estas construcciones que lleva a cabo el individuo. En relación con esto último, cabe decir que no se documenta prácticamente ningún autor que aventure una hipótesis sobre cómo se produce esta transición entre dicha interpretación individual y su expansión dentro de una comunidad de hablantes, la cual en última instancia acaba incluyendo a

todos —o prácticamente todos— los hablantes de una lengua (o, al menos, una variedad específica). A mi modo de ver, esto demuestra la importancia de los factores pragmáticos, culturales e incluso antropológicos en la gestación, desarrollo y ulterior consolidación de un proceso de gramaticalización por subjetivación.

En múltiples ocasiones, la subjetivación se ha abordado de manera implícita, esto es, aludiendo a su existencia o presencia en determinadas construcciones sin citarla o etiquetarla como tal. En esta línea, Delbecque y Verbeccken (2014), pese a no abordar el fenómeno de manera explícita, parten de la constatación de que, en el estudio de la gramaticalización, existe un debate entre los partidarios del reanálisis y los partidarios de la analogía como motor de cambio. Entre los últimos, destacan quienes han postulado que las asociaciones sintagmáticas suelen preceder —y, hasta cierto punto, pueden llegar a desencadenar— el reanálisis estructural. Las autoras defienden este último posicionamiento, que no solo aplican al proceso de gramaticalización (esto es, en diacronía), sino también a la organización funcional (observable en sincronía) de cuantificadores binominales en español (p. ej., *un montón de*, *una pila de*, *un alud de*). Su análisis, basado en corpus, toma como base el estatus “híbrido” de los sustantivos cuantificadores (p. ej., *montón*, *pila*, *alud*) para luego pasar a analizar

características típicas de los sustantivos en usos funcionales. De este modo, las autoras demuestran que la variación en los patrones de coselección surge a partir de una interacción compleja de tres elementos: la persistencia conceptual, el mecanismo de la analogía y, en última instancia, la integración discursiva. La perspectiva de la analogía conceptual (en inglés, *conceptually-driven analogy*) nos muestra un fenómeno discursivo de doble vía y permite a las autoras explorar los motivos por los cuales algunos procesos de gramaticalización parecen haberse suspendido temporalmente. Finalmente, cabe observar que en Delbecque y Verbeccken (2014) —pese a que el estudio se estructura esencialmente en base a descripciones cualitativas— en algún momento se ha considerado necesario recurrir a la cuantificación.

En las investigaciones recientes, cada vez es más habitual hacer hincapié en el desarrollo de la gramaticalización desde una perspectiva más funcional, la cual suele poner de relieve la incidencia de la subjetivación. En esta línea, Amaral (2018) lleva a cabo una revisión crítica de literatura reciente sobre el cambio sintáctico-semántico en español. La autora identifica cuatro ejes temáticos, que comprenden los mecanismos del cambio sintáctico-semántico (p. ej., reanálisis, analogía, desgaste semántico), la relación entre el cambio sintáctico y la estructura informativa, la identificación de las unidades del cambio y, finalmente, la relación entre el cambio lingüístico y los procesos cognitivos relacionados con la producción. La autora aporta una perspectiva formal y funcional, que se complementan, al partir de consideraciones puramente gramaticales, así como el análisis de su evolución diacrónica (en *clines*) a la luz de situaciones comunicativas específicas. En el ámbito de la semántica, tampoco

faltan contribuciones puramente formales, que constituyen un complemento esencial al estudio de la gramaticalización por subjetivación. En este marco teórico, Eckardt (2006) se adentra en el estudio de los mecanismos semántico-pragmáticos que subyacen a la gramaticalización. La autora enfatiza el hecho de que el cambio lingüístico a menudo tiene en su base una reorganización estructural a diferentes niveles (i.e., fonológico, morfológico y sintáctico). Según la autora, los hablantes guardan un registro mental de los procesos de reanálisis que se saldan con dicha reestructuración. A fin de ilustrar esto, se citan algunos estudios de caso que aportan nuevas claves a la idea de pensamiento conceptual.

También desde un enfoque cualitativo, Carretero et al. (2018) analizan un valor evaluativo de *tampoco* típico del habla espontánea del español mexicano que parece alcanzarse como resultado de un proceso de subjetivación. En concreto, el valor adversativo, originario, de *tampoco* (*yo no vine, pero María tampoco*) convive con el mencionado valor evaluativo, el cual se usa para señalar diferentes niveles pragmáticos de inadecuación en relación con un enunciado previo que contradice el punto de vista del emisor. En base a un estudio de corpus, los autores logran identificar una serie de restricciones pragmático-discursivas que permiten calificar enunciados, actitudes o presuposiciones como inadecuadas, en la medida en que entran en conflicto con situaciones o marcos conceptuales establecidos.

Por otro lado, Gonzálvez García (2007) se centra en el análisis de la gramaticalización por subjetivación en cláusulas atributivas en inglés y en español. En concreto, aborda las construcciones *that's X for you*, en inglés, y *X es lo que tiene(n)* (p. ej., ingl. *that's love for you*, esp. *el amor es lo que tiene* = ‘eso es lo que implica enamorarse / estar enamorado/-a’), que parecen remitir a un estadio temprano de gramaticalización, caracterizado por una clara priorización de la importancia pragmática y la expresividad subjetiva. Esta visión de la gramaticalización converge con la de Traugott (2005), que otorga una importancia primordial al contexto y distingue dos subtipos de la misma que resultan mutuamente complementarios: por una parte, el fortalecimiento pragmático (en inglés, *pragmatic strengthening*), que permite el paso de la mera identificación a la caracterización positiva/negativa por parte del hablante; por otro lado, el hecho de que, a nivel textual, estas construcciones acaban comportándose funcionalmente como marcadores discursivos acumulativos (en inglés, *summative discourse markers*).

En Torres Cacoullos (2002) observamos un punto de inflexión en cuanto al enfoque, a caballo entre lo cuantitativo y lo cualitativo. En concreto, la autora parte de la constatación sincrónica del uso de *le* en el español mexicano como intensificador de la acción verbal (p. ej., *córrele*), en contraste con su función primigenia como pronombre de objeto (p. ej., *dale_i el lápiz [a tu hermano]_i*). Al adoptar una perspectiva diacrónica en el análisis del fenómeno, la autora concluye que el uso intensivo constituye el resultado de dos procesos de desgaste semántico (en inglés, *semantic bleaching*): por un lado, se debilita su condición de argumento (caracterizado con el caso dativo y el papel temático de destinatario)

y, además, se produce un debilitamiento de su propia condición de pronombre (hasta el punto de que, en la mayoría de las variedades del español, un enunciado sin replicación pronominal como *da el lápiz a tu hermano* —en lugar de *dale el lápiz a tu hermano*— se podría juzgar como cuasi-agramatical). El desarrollo de usos intensivos de *le* es interesante, en el sentido de que supone una ampliación de nuevos significados en contextos preexistentes, frente a la generalización hacia nuevos contextos en términos de incremento de frecuencia. Así pues, Torres Cacoullos (2002) nos muestra cómo el análisis cualitativo, a pesar de resultar indispensable para obtener un marco teórico sólido y una caracterización fidedigna de las ocurrencias, no acostumbra a ser autosuficiente, sino que requiere ser complementado con medidas cuantitativas que den cuenta de cómo surge y se desarrolla el proceso de subjetivación en términos de diacronía.

En este sentido, Aaron (2016) emprende su investigación destacando el hecho de que los modelos de lengua basados en el uso han propuesto un sistema dinámico y organizado basado en la analogía y que, a pesar de ello, no se suele abordar el propio papel de la analogía entre formas o construcciones similares. Dicho papel se ve mejor cuando se evalúa —tanto cuantitativa como cualitativamente— la relación entre construcciones, más que estudiándolas por separado. Con el objetivo de arrojar luz sobre esta brecha en la investigación, la autora lleva a cabo un estudio cuantitativo, diacrónico y basado en corpus de analogía de construcciones interna a la lengua. Para ello, toma como referencia cuatro formas del español: *altamente*, *enormemente*, *extraordinariamente* y *extremadamente*. Todas se encuentran en al menos dos construcciones básicas, en las que funcionan como modificadores de verbos y modificadores de otros modificadores. A partir de ahí, se propone una transferencia analógica de las rutas de cambio entre formas como un proceso entre lenguas (*cross-linguistic*) e interno a la lengua (*language-internal*), de lo cual se desprende que las formas no solo compiten entre sí, sino que en algunos casos incluso parecen tomar prestada la ruta que previamente ha adoptado otra forma.

Otro ejemplo de la importancia de integrar el análisis cuantitativo en el estudio de la gramaticalización por subjetivación hallamos en Aaron y Torres Cacoullos (2005). En este caso, las autoras se decantan por el método variacionista cuantitativo con el objetivo de detectar patrones de subjetivación del pronombre *se* en *salirse* en base a datos orales del español mexicano. Al confrontar el uso de diversas variables, las autoras hallan tendencias indicativas de que *salirse*, marcado como diátesis media por *-se*, acostumbra a ocurrir en contextos de primera persona del singular o bien de referentes próximos al emisor, además de con una polaridad positiva y tiempos verbales pertenecientes a la esfera del pasado. En última instancia, dicha subjetivación de *se* en *salirse*, como marcador de una realidad o resultado contrario al esperado, arraiga en una inferencia en términos de expectativa que cada vez se encuentra más íntimamente

vinculada al hablante¹ (p. ej., *se salía de la escuela* = ‘salía de la escuela (cuando lo esperado, socialmente y por el propio hablante, era que permaneciera en ella)’). En la misma línea (es decir, destacando la importancia del análisis cuantitativo), Torres Cacoullós (2006), partiendo de un corpus diacrónico formado por 24 textos, aborda la gramaticalización de *a pesar de* desde el siglo XII (p. ej., *a pesar del rey*) hasta el siglo XX. Su estudio apoya la visión de la gramaticalización como una evolución de colocaciones hacia unidades funcionales simples (*single units*).

En este punto, resulta esencial recordar que la subjetivación se da en ocasiones al lado de la gramaticalización, mientras que en otros casos hallamos subjetivación sin que exista gramaticalización. Al grupo de las construcciones en las que la subjetivación va de la mano de la gramaticalización corresponde la mayoría de los ejemplos que he citado en relación con los estudios mencionados. Buen ejemplo de la asociación intrínseca que se establece entre la subjetivación y la gramaticalización lo hallamos en los casos que cita Company Company (2008) en relación con las tres direcciones que adopta la gramaticalización por subjetivación. Esto se aprecia claramente en la tercera dirección (esto es, ‘gramática → discurso → gramática’), en la que la autora se centra al considerar que ha estado infrarrepresentada en estudios anteriores. Así, por ejemplo, vemos dicha transición si comparamos los enunciados (1) *dice que Juan ya salió*, (2) *dizque se sacó la lotería* y (3) *la dizque profesora quiere poner un examen complicado*. En el primer ejemplo, nos situamos plenamente en el terreno de la gramática. En (2), *dizque* se interpreta como partícula pragmática usada para expresar evidencialidad (cf. *aparentemente*). Finalmente, en (3) se regresa al terreno de la gramática, pero en este caso *dizque* se ha reanalizado como adjetivo (cf. *supuesta*, *presunta*).

Algunos enunciados que dan cuenta de la gramaticalización por subjetivación han sido escasamente estudiados. Comparemos ahora los ejemplos anteriores con el enunciado que se muestra en el siguiente intercambio entre dos hablantes:

H1: He estado viendo la tele y no he podido acabar mi tarea.

H2: ¡*Es lo que tiene* ver la tele!

La clave para operacionalizar la subjetivación como subproceso dentro de la gramaticalización podría encontrarse en ejemplos que, pese a gozar de una alta frecuencia de uso en algunas variedades, son aún insuficientemente estudiados. En el intercambio precedente, el enunciado que produce el segundo hablante nos aporta un buen ejemplo de este tipo de enunciados. En la expresión *es lo que tiene*, estudiada en detalle por González García (2007), parece haberse dado un aumento de la importancia pragmática y, paralelamente, la expresividad subjetiva. Si bien en este caso no parece adecuado hablar de gramaticalización en sentido estricto, este enunciado sí nos permite vislumbrar los entresijos de la

1 Las autoras concluyen que dicho cambio semántico parece ocurrir por absorción del significado contextual en la construcción habitual *salirse de*.

subjetivación. A mi modo de ver, quizá se debería tratar este enunciado como un caso de pragmaticalización por subjetivación (en otras palabras, *¿es lo que tiene ver la tele!* parece acercarnos a la idea de “**en mi opinión**, ver la tele es [p. ej., cansado, aburrido, una pérdida de tiempo]”). En todo caso, sea cual sea la etiqueta por la que optemos (i.e., *gramaticalización* vs. *pragmaticalización*), solo la subjetivación parece evidente. Por otro lado, podemos constatar que, a pesar de que el proceso aún no se haya completado de modo irreversible, sí existen indicios de que se halla en un estadio avanzado del *cline*. Por una parte, la expresión aparece “congelada” y restringida a contextos morfosintácticos muy específicos, al mostrar, por ejemplo, una clara tendencia a aparecer al inicio de un enunciado, mientras que el verbo solo puede aparecer en tercera persona del presente de indicativo. Al mismo tiempo, sin embargo, observamos que la concordancia entre *tiene* y su sujeto gramatical —al menos originariamente— aún resulta viable, lo cual explica que podamos oír, indistintamente, *es lo que tiene las series de televisión* y *es lo que tienen las series de televisión*.

Conclusión

El estudio de la subjetivación como mecanismo subyacente abre nuevos caminos y nos permite comprender mejor algunos procesos de gramaticalización. Como proceso atestiguado en buena parte de las lenguas del mundo, es esencial no escatimar en esfuerzos para procurar un marco teórico sólido a la explicación del fenómeno. La gramaticalización nos muestra, en efecto, un mecanismo potente que lleva al cambio lingüístico, concepto que aún origina ciertas suspicacias entre los investigadores. Del mismo modo que, desde el formalismo, se ha señalado tradicionalmente que las oraciones de una lengua cuentan con una “estructura profunda” y una “estructura superficial” (Chomsky 1964), sabemos que ciertas esferas de la lengua son más susceptibles que otras a la hora de admitir cambios lingüísticos estables y duraderos, como ocurre en el caso de la morfosintaxis (cf. léxico). Es precisamente este tipo de cambio lingüístico el que origina la gramaticalización. En la gramaticalización, como ya hemos visto, inciden diversos factores, los cuales ulteriormente —y siempre que la existencia de documentación lo permita— deben estudiarse en diacronía. El estudio de la subjetivación añade una pieza más a este rompecabezas, y revela el peso de valoraciones puramente intra- o interpersonales en la gestación, desarrollo y potencial consolidación de nuevos resultados lingüísticos. Lejos de constituir un fenómeno homogéneo, el estudio de la gramaticalización admite diversas posibilidades en términos etiológicos, en función de la unidad que se analice y la evidencia histórica de que se disponga en cada caso. En este mar de posibilidades, la subjetivación da cuenta de tan solo uno de los muchos modos en que puede ocurrir el cambio lingüístico por gramaticalización, y explica así

una gran variedad de casos que, de otro modo, parecen resistirse a admitir una explicación viable en el seno de la teoría de la gramaticalización.

Es interesante notar las implicaciones que se desprenden de un estudio pormenorizado de la teoría de la subjetivación. De entrada, este mecanismo nos da cuenta del poder de los propios hablantes para iniciar, desarrollar o consolidar un cambio lingüístico mediante la gramaticalización. En muchos casos, la escasez de documentación histórica nos fuerza a aventurar hipótesis, a menudo concebidas en base a la generalización y la introspección del propio investigador. Esto permite que dentro de la comunidad científica exista cierto consenso en cuanto a la existencia de subjetivación (o bien una explicación o designación como alternativas) y que, al mismo tiempo, resulte difícil crear un marco teórico transparente. Dicho de otro modo, muchos investigadores intuyen —o, directamente, saben a ciencia cierta— que existe la subjetivación como mecanismo habitualmente asociado a la gramaticalización; y, sin embargo, es difícil consolidar un marco teórico preciso de la subjetivación que pueda llegar a un público más amplio. A tal efecto, se hace necesario abocar más esfuerzos y recursos en la investigación de casos específicos de diferentes lenguas, ampliando y consolidando el marco teórico inductivamente en base a dicha casuística. Finalmente, también debe considerarse esencial ahondar en cómo opera específicamente la subjetivación en el interior del hablante y, además, cuáles son los mecanismos que permiten que ciertas ocurrencias se acaben haciendo extensivas a toda una comunidad de hablantes. Para ello, deviene sin duda necesaria la colaboración interdisciplinaria entre la esfera de la sociolingüística, la lingüística histórica, la psicolingüística e incluso la antropología.

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Macho y bicha: Fluidéz de género y espacios liminales en *Madame Satã*

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Resumen: Este artículo analiza el lenguaje visual de la película brasileña *Madame Satã*. El tratamiento de los espacios de tránsito como puertas, cortinas, el mar, etc., cumple una función simbólica al ponerse en relación con la identidad de género del protagonista, Madame Satã, célebre artista homosexual de Río de Janeiro cuya personalidad fluctúa constantemente. El personaje se mueve entre el comportamiento fuertemente masculinizado del macho y la feminidad de la categoría bicha que, aunque sea parcialmente, voluntariamente acepta.

Palabras claves: *Madame Satã*, travesti, espacio, macho, bicha

Introducción

El presente trabajo analiza las retóricas del espacio en relación con la fluidez en el ejercicio de una identidad de género en tanto posición política, artística y social en *Madame Satã*, película brasileña del 2002 dirigida por Karim Aïnouz. Fue una producción ciertamente exitosa, ya que se alzó con numerosos premios. Entre ellos se cuentan el *Gold Hugo* del Chicago International Film Festival (2002), el premio de la audiencia en el Inside Out Toronto LGBT Film Festival (2003), el galardón a mejor fotografía en el festival de cine independiente de Buenos Aires (2003), así como diversos reconocimientos a la labor de Lázaro Ramos, actor que protagoniza la película, y otros aspectos de la producción. La crítica especializada reconoció el mérito de una obra arriesgada donde convergen una técnica cuidada y una preocupación estética omnipresente con una temática y un tratamiento de la sexualidad que suscitó de inmediato el interés del ámbito académico.

La película, ambientada en la década de los treinta en Río de Janeiro, es un producto ficcional inspirado en la historia de João Francisco dos Santos (personaje interpretado por Lázaro Ramos), que nació en 1900 en el estado de Pernambuco y llegó a Río en circunstancias nada claras, siendo todavía un niño. Se crió en sus calles al amparo de las madamas y prostitutas del barrio de la Lapa, epicentro de la vida bohemia, y con el tiempo llegó a ser una figura de dimensiones legendarias en la historia del carnaval y del ambiente marginal de la ciudad. Este espacio es fundamental para entender la génesis del valor mítico de este individuo, un individuo en torno el cual se articula un discurso que desafía las tradicionales narrativas nacionales, con las cuales la obra de Aïnouz dialoga directamente. Es decir, el barrio de la Lapa era, para la heteronormatividad a cargo de la construcción oficial de la identidad brasileña, un reducto que

albergaba individuos al margen de las estructuras de pensamiento y las prácticas de carácter social y sexual que debían sostener el sistema de valores nacional. En conclusión, *Madame Satã* reconstruye la creación del mito a través de técnicas que ponderan las posibilidades de los espacios que transita su cuerpo.

La cárcel: La lucha por la representación

Lo anteriormente referido se hace patente en los instantes iniciales del filme, que abre con un plano en negro, aplausos y el sonido de la cámara fotográfica que retrata, se entiende, a la persona que acaba de ejecutar una performance artística. El sonido intradieгético de la cámara fotográfica sirve como enlace para un abrupto cambio de plano. Ahora, el encuadre se centra en la magullada cara del protagonista, de raza negra, sobre las paredes encaladas de la prisión. El contraste cromático enfatiza el componente racial de la subalternidad del personaje, otredad que, como señalara Stuart Hall, es “represented through sharply opposed, polarized, binary extremes—good/bad, civilized/primitive, ugly/excessively attractive, repelling-because-different/compelling-because-strange-and-exotic” (229).

João nos mira mientras una voz procede a la lectura de la ficha policial. En este caso también está siendo fotografiado, aunque por su condición de reo. Las fotografías en la prisión evocan el escrutinio cientificista y controlador de estudios como los de Leonídio Riberiro, director del Instituto de Identificación de la policía civil. En *Homossexualismo e endocrinologia*, publicado en 1938, Ribeiro, siguiendo a otros médicos como el español Gregorio Marañón, defiende la tesis de que ciertos desórdenes endocrinológicos son la razón de comportamientos de naturaleza homosexual. Su trabajo, como señala Gomes Junior, se publica tras el estudio de los presos homosexuales:

Ribeiro desenvolveu o seu trabalho sobre o “homossexualismo” inspirado nas formulações daquele cientista espanhol sobre sua origem endocrinológica. Em seu trabalho, escrito por Ribeiro após estudar 195 indivíduos declaradamente homossexuais interceptados pela polícia e enviados pelo delegado Dr. Dulcídio Gonçalves ao Laboratório de Antropologia Criminal fundado pelo próprio Ribeiro no Rio de Janeiro em 1932, no Instituto de Identificação (reforçando a existência das relações entre a polícia e a medicina), defende-se a tese de que a homossexualidade (ou o “homossexualismo”, como no termo na época) seria uma alteração biológica oriunda de um distúrbio das glândulas endócrinas, ou até mesmo resultado de fatores ambientais ou predisposições orgânicas. Portanto, através da atuação da medicina, passível de “tratamento e cura”, como ele alega na apresentação de exemplos, bem como uma de reabilitação pedagógica. (100)

En la película, sin ningún género de dudas, se remite implícitamente a estos estudios, aunque sin profundizar en ellos, ya que no se mencionan de manera directa. Sin embargo, son la puerta de entrada a una historia dominada por la tensión entre el ejercicio del poder institucional, médico, político y social sobre el cuerpo *queer* y, como veremos, la pulsión liberadora del arte, el baile y la performance. La escena, además, al situar al individuo como objeto pasivo al otro lado de la cámara, nos muestra el proceso de representación, que radica principalmente su fuerza en el ojo que mira. Como explica Peggy Phelan, “representation is almost always on the side of the one who looks and almost never on the side of the one who is seen” (15-26). En estos primeros planos, el encuadre de la cámara introduce al espectador en el espacio penal, lugar de exclusión, lugar donde se articula lo que no es más que una fantasía de homogeneización, represión, negación e higienización social (dada la relación entre la ciencia de la época y las políticas policiales).

Esta lucha por la representación (entre el ojo que mira y el individuo que busca liberarse) pone la identidad de género y la orientación sexual del personaje en el centro del asunto, algo que como veremos, es asunto complejo: “Classifying João Francisco by gender is virtually impossible” (Sepúlveda e Issa 2).

Género y espacio

Me gustaría, pues, introducir un breve marco teórico que sirva para presentar a los lectores una serie de paradigmas, parámetros, discursos y diálogos con los cuales negocio y en los cuales me apoyo.

Hay algunos hitos inexcusables al hablar de identidad y género. En primer lugar, y a la colación del carácter punitivo de espacio penal, es necesario mencionar el trabajo de Foucault. La prisión (institución), en conjunción con las estructuras heteronormativas, se configuran en un dispositivo de dominio.¹ La prisión se constituye en una continuación de otros espacios institucionales como la escuela militar, en la cual, como señala el propio Foucault, se intenta instaurar a nivel social el *imperativo de la moralidad*, fundamentado en la heterosexualidad, “prevent debauchery and homosexuality, the imperative of morality” (*Discipline and Punish* 172). Como podemos ver, existe en el análisis foucaultiano un componente espacial, a través del cual se funde el ámbito personal de la identidad (ya sea de raza, de género, o de orientación sexual) con el ámbito de lo político, lo punitivo, lo social. El presente artículo se inspira, pues, en esta íntima relación (no solo simbólica) entre espacio e identidad. El *solapamiento* identidad-espacio (a través de las consecuencias de la performance de un identidad) y las resistencias

1 El concepto de “dispositivo” es desarrollado en múltiples instancias por el pensador francés. Para una completa genealogía del término ver Callewaert (2017). Este dispositivo de dominio afecta a João de manera doble, por cuestiones raciales y por su orientación sexual, como demuestra el artículo al respecto de Piza et al. (2016).

del otro (espacio social),² en conexión con la fluidez entre macho-bicha del personaje, creo que permite referirnos a los espacios de naturaleza transitable que se mencionan en mi trabajo (la playa, los marcos de la puerta, el escenario, la calle durante el Carnaval) como heterotopías, ya que permiten la actualización en tanto “otro” (travesti liberado como artista de los dispositivos de dominio) de la obra de Madame Satã.

La heterotopía refiere, según Foucault, a un espacio de múltiples posibilidades, donde se acumulan otras (hetero-) realidades frente al espacio normativo (ese que permite las dinámicas de representación trabajadas por Phelan y las prácticas punitivo-institucionales descritas por el propio Foucault), frente al espacio utópico y frente a espacios distópicos. Al final de la película encontramos una escena en la que se mira al espejo mientras se nos relata la historia de la lucha entre un tiburón (macho) y la bella Jarmacy (bicha). Creo que el juego del espejo, al desdoblar el espacio en consonancia con la lucha mítica en el plano de lo discursivo a través de la leyenda, pero real en el plano de lo físico, ya que el personaje fluctúa y bascula entre comportamientos performativos que lo hacen bailar sobre los ejes de la identificación de género (el travestismo subraya esto en la escena). Sirve como ejemplo de esa habilidad para “juxtapose in a single real place several emplacements that are incompatible in themselves” (“Different Spaces” 181), de manera análoga a lo que sucede en el escenario del Danubio Azul: “the theater brings onto the rectangle of the stage a whole succession of places that are unrelated to one another” (“Different Spaces” 181).

Al referirnos a la fluidez de género, partimos de la base de que estamos hablando de una cuestión performativa y no binaria como explican los trabajos de Judith Butler, Jack Halberstam y otros autores que llevaron más allá las ideas ya apuntadas por Foucault en su *Historia de la sexualidad*:

If gender attributes and acts, the various ways in which a body shows or produces its cultural signification, are performative, then there is no pre-existing identity by which an act or attribute might be measured; there would be no true or false, real or distorted acts of gender, and the postulation of a true gender identity would be revealed as a regulatory fiction. That gender reality is created through sustained social performances means that the very notions of an essential sex and a true or abiding masculinity or femininity are also constituted as part of the strategy that conceals gender's performative character and the performative possibilities for proliferating gender configurations outside the restricting frames of masculinist domination and compulsory heterosexuality. (Butler 180)

2 *Espacio social* porque como señala Lefevre, “Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally populated with ideologies. There is an ideology of space. Why? Because space, which seems homogeneous, which appears given as a whole in its objectivity, in its pure form, such as we determine it, is a social product” (171).

El género se trataría, pues, según Butler, de un constructo social, que supera las constricciones biologicistas, “If the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps this construct called ‘sex’ is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all” (10). Se superan, además, constricciones del tipo binario o dual: “There is no reason to assume that gender also ought to remain as two. The presumption of a binary gender system implicitly retains the belief in a mimetic relation of gender to sex whereby gender mirrors sex or is otherwise restricted by it” (10).

En lo relativo al espacio, he apuntado ya la necesidad de tener en cuenta el concepto de heterotopía, ya que permite una función análoga a lo que la categoría de lo no-binario permite al hablar de género. Del mismo modo, hay que tener en cuenta la dimensión social del espacio, ya que como explicara Lefevre en su análisis a raíz de la doble dimensión productiva del espacio (de materiales y de ideas, ambos sometidos a las problemáticas políticas de control, dominio, regulación y convenciones), los sujetos habitamos lugares y emplazamientos sujetos a la exigencias y normas que la sociedad, a través del aparato normativo que la domina, ayuda a estructurar. João es, evidentemente, víctima de un espacio producido con una serie de limitaciones, de allí que en este trabajo se haga énfasis en los espacios simbólicos de naturaleza liminal que invitan a pensar una poética liberadora, transgresora desde el punto de vista metonímico-espacial. El carácter liminal de ciertos espacios representa pues, no solo metafóricamente, las posibilidades de tránsito, de transgresión, de abandono, retorno y liberación.

La liminalidad es un concepto de cierto peso en la tradición antropológica, que remite en última instancia a los ritos de paso o episodios en los que se abandona una etapa para entrar en otra. Según Arnold van Gennep, quien introduce el concepto, podemos hablar de “preliminal rites (rites of separation), liminal rites (rites of transition), and postliminal rites (rites of incorporation)” (11). Pero esto, dado que partimos de la base de que habitamos un espacio social (sujeto a normas y limitaciones políticas), resulta en que en el desafío subversivo de atravesar física y simbólicamente una serie de límites físicos (mar, dintel, calle, escenario, etc.) se está produciendo un nuevo tipo de espacio, liminal, de transición y trasgresión. Esto excede la materialidad de los ritos aludidos por van Gennep, y nos acercaría más a un espacio de naturaleza deleuziana: rizomático³ y en frontal desafío a las jerarquías institucionales de las cuales la prisión es, en la película, el principal ejemplo. La cárcel y el sambódromo (más precisamente la carroza en la que desfila Madama Satã) antagonizan desde el punto de vista de su esencia espacial. El uno es estático, fijado en el espacio y en el tiempo; mientras que el Carnaval, (tiempo y fenómeno recurrente pero no

3 “A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo” (Deleuze y Guattari 27).

permanente) dota de carácter transitorio al espacio, que acabada la celebración vuelve a su estado anterior, prosaico.

Mito, artista y malandro

La historia que nos propone *Madame Satã* nos habla del periodo que antecede al nacimiento de mito de João. Es decir, se centra en su proceso de transformación en Madame Satã, su alter ego artístico, más que en el recorrido que esta figura tiene en el imaginario colectivo del universo carnavalesco de la ciudad de Rio: “Ainouz understands how Satã’s persona in fact became a myth that exceeded the actual public figure. The film, then, plays with both the history and the myth and João dos Santos’s story” (Nemi Neto 158). El João al que accedemos es un individuo que se debate entre la rabia interna que lo atormenta y la búsqueda de una felicidad que no puede ser de otra manera que imperfecta. Felicidad imperfecta en la búsqueda de la reafirmación ontológica del sujeto *queer*, felicidad apegada al ámbito del amor y la voluntad, al ámbito del deseo. En esta búsqueda, el protagonista proyecta su compleja y fluida personalidad en diversos ámbitos, ya sea en el contexto del Carnaval o en el espacio escénico, donde la celebración, la performance y el travestismo, representan momentos puntuales de catarsis a la vez que representan la posibilidad de subvertir las estructuras de género, raza y clase, que imposibilitan al personaje de João completarse a través de su arte. Es decir, los hitos performativos articulan un proyecto vital de larga duración más que la búsqueda instantánea de una recompensa o reacción.

Sujeto plural y complejo, bisexual, negro, partícipe de las dinámicas criminales del espacio marginal, João es, sobre todo, un artista. Aunque este trabajo no se centra en cuestiones raciales y no explora en profundidad la negritud del personaje, es evidente que se trata de otro aspecto de su poliédrica identidad que lo convierte en objeto de abuso por parte de la sociedad racista de la época (como también lo es su clase económico-social). Como demuestra Rodrigues Fontes en su análisis sobre el filme (adaptando la teoría de la representación de Peggy Phelan), el ojo, la mirada que subyuga al sujeto (João) a una situación de subalternidad se caracteriza por ser un ojo normativo, blanco: “As teorias da identidade, propostas por Phelan, indicam que a política da sociedade é caracterizada pelo indivíduo (self) e o Outro (Other). O indivíduo, o que vê, é o termo normativo do binário, definido entre outras coisas por ser branco” (135). También alude a este solapamiento Ruby Rich en *New Queer Cinema: Director’s Cut* al analizar la película: “race and class are often too incidental to queer narratives. In this tale of Brazil’s unlikely hero/heroine, such omissions were impossible, for they are the core of Madame Satã’s life and narrative” (176).

La dimensión artística del personaje queda contenida en la apertura aludida, ya que estos primeros momentos reflejan la tensión latente a lo largo de la película entre la recompensa y el efecto que gestos cargados de connotaciones

afectivas como los aplausos y los flashes generan en el artista, y el rechazo social al amenazante malandro, concepto de connotaciones bohemias a la vez que criminosas. Ahora, bajo el enfoque de la cámara penal, queda convertido en un mero objeto, a la vez que su mirada perdida hacia la audiencia atenúa su condición de sujeto. Esta naturaleza bifronte se da en todos los ámbitos de su vida, ya sea como diva en el escenario o como malandro en las calles del barrio, siempre sujeto al escrutinio de un público de naturaleza divergente. En el penal, la voz superpuesta de la autoridad lo describe como pederasta pasivo, frecuentador del barrio la Lapa, con actitudes femeninas, cejas depiladas, hombre que altera su propia voz, ateo, fumador, antisocial, con dificultades en comunicar su pensamiento, poco inteligente, frecuentador de pederastas y prostitutas, reincidente, agresivo, propenso al crimen, nocivo para la sociedad, etc. Es, en definitiva, un cuerpo que amenaza los pilares del orden nacional heteronormativo. Un cuerpo que se ha de controlar. Un malandro.

La lectura de la ficha policial nos ha presentado al protagonista con un plano fijo. El uso de esta técnica representa la rigidez social y la sumisión al encuadre surgido de la mirada policial. Pero se produce, de nuevo, un abrupto cambio, ya que ahora la cámara se convierte en un elemento móvil que refleja una realidad fluyente. El personaje principal, trabajador injustamente tratado del Cabaret Lux, observa a Vitória dos Anjos, artista y propietaria, mientras esta ejecuta su performance de las *Mil y una noches*. João la observa desde el otro lado de la cortina del camerino mientras suena una adaptación de la célebre composición *Scherezade* de Rimski-Korsakov. Pero no se trata de un observador pasivo. A través del movimiento mimético de los labios se produce una apropiación del gesto artístico. João imita a la artista y, a escondidas, lleva a cabo su particular performance. Es decir, si bien el cabaret participa de la exclusión del cuerpo marginal en el plano de lo social,⁴ en lo personal permite en una primera instancia trazar el proyecto liberador a través del nacimiento de una nueva identidad, la diva y artista *Mulata de Balacoché*, uno de los avatares de João. La cortina, objeto que marca el espacio de transición, la liminidad entre lo observado y la posibilidad de la actualización del deseo, pasa de representar el elemento divisorio en el ámbito de lo social, lo artístico, lo racial y lo identitario, a convertirse (visual y simbólicamente) en una suerte de tocado nubio o egipcio que corona el rostro de João, permitiendo la transgresión de las barreras de género a la vez que derribando los muros que le separan de su realización como artista. Este gesto de João, usando la cortina como improvisado vestuario, muestra cómo el efímero tocado de reminiscencias africanas y orientalizantes subraya el descontento con una realidad incapaz de proporcionar al personaje un ápice de felicidad. La disposición del plano remite a los orígenes míticos de la negritud latinoamericana

4 Esta dinámica de exclusión y aceptación es a su vez compleja, ya que los cabarets de la Lapa fueron el espacio que permitieron a los sujetos excluidos por la sociedad brillar en el escenario (Streva 2019).

a la vez que refleja la función simbólica de oriente como un espacio donde es posible una alteridad que venga a suplir las fallas del entorno.⁵ En una escena posterior João incluso propone a la artista representar un número sobre China, un lugar para él maravilloso, en las antípodas del mundo, y donde todo el mundo está y es invertido, donde, como dice el personaje, lo negro es blanco.

Pero la mera apropiación del gesto artístico no es suficiente para João, quien busca el aplauso, el reconocimiento a su arte. Frustrado por la imposibilidad de encontrar en el Cabaret Lux un espacio donde desarrollarse, proyecta sus ambiciones en la conquista del espacio liminal de otros escenarios que permitan la expresión de las tensiones y posibilidades de su compleja esencia, espacios donde la existencia trágica del excluido, del violento macho del ámbito privado, de paso al éxtasis de la vida a través de la canción, la actuación y el erotismo, a la reapropiación subversiva de la categoría de bicha, una categoría que en puridad alude estrictamente al homosexual pasivo, como explica Fry:

A categoria “bicha” se define em relação à categoria “homem” em termos do comportamento social e sexual. Enquanto o “homem” deveria se comportar de uma maneira “masculina”, a “bicha” tende a reproduzir comportamentos geralmente associados ao papel de gênero (gender role) feminino. No ato sexual, o “homem” penetra, enquanto a “bicha” é penetrada. (90)

Esta tensión entre el macho y la bicha es característica de João. Esto es, se muestra como el macho más masculino en su faceta de malandro, pero se envuelve en halo de femineidad en su faceta de artista travesti y homosexual tanto activo como pasivo. Como señala en sus memorias, el João histórico acepta este doble papel:

Comecei minha vida sexual aos 13 anos quando as mulheres da Lapa organizavam bacanais das quais participavam homens e mulheres e bichas. Com essa idade de treze anos eu fui convidado para alguns e funcionei como homem e como bicha e gostei mais de ser bicha e por isso fui bicha. (116)

Es decir, no podemos entender al personaje (al histórico y al ficcional) en base a esa distinción binaria, ya que se escapa de esa lógica dual:

5 En este punto se puede hacer extensiva la conclusión de McClendon, que ya en 1976, al estudiar la música afroamericana, enfatiza el valor liberador que la performance negra tiene para el propio individuo, convirtiéndose en algo extremadamente íntimo (como es el caso de João), “Much of black music is uniquely situational, uncannily prophetic, painfully personal and shockingly intimate” (24).

Madame Satã, despite his love for feminizing dress, nonetheless refused to be labeled as a passive object of erotic pursuance, that is to say, conform to the dichotomy of the top/bottom and *homem/bicha* tradition. When asked, in an interview for *Pasquim* if he was the *caça* or *caçador*, he categorically answered *caçador*. In the film, this conflict between sexual behavior and ascribed gender roles manifests itself in aggressive ways. (Nemi Neto, 161)

El bascular entre actitudes cuyo valor político (en tanto que determinan la posición del sujeto en el espacio y su relación de poder con los demás) se caracterizan por hacer uso de actos performativos de valor masculino o femenino, hace que—a través del elemento travesti—podamos considerar que el personaje sea exitoso

in destabilizing the causal continuum between biological sexual identity, gender identity and performance, problematizing the man/woman distinction along much the same lines proposed by the writer Judith Butler. In her analysis of the exaggerated role-playing of the drag queen, Butler argues that this performance implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself. (Sepúlveda y Issa 6)

El Danubio Azul y otros espacios

En la película, un lugar de importancia capital para su proyecto es el bar Danubio Azul. El bar es lugar de encuentro homosexual y violencia, aunque, como veremos, también participa de cierta fluidez en su naturaleza. Como espacio simbólico representa la dicotomía existencial entre Eros y Tánatos. Allí conoce a Renato, su enamorado, y se ve envuelto en una pelea cautivado por sus ojos de madreperla. En ella, João reduce a un borracho que estaba sobrepasándose con Laurita, la mujer con la que conviven João y Tabu (Laurita y Tabu conforman una suerte de núcleo familiar). En la escena de la pelea, aparece el arma de fuego, pistola que posteriormente se demostrará homicida y que desembocará en la detención y condena del personaje. Una vez con el arma en su mano, João acaricia la cara de Renato con el cañón de la pistola, gesto de reminiscencias fálicas y exhibición de masculinidad homosexual dominante. Las pulsiones entre el deseo erótico y la latencia de la muerte quedan resumidas en un sugerente a la vez que amenazante gesto.

En todo momento, João se mueve continuamente en esa ambigüedad. En el espacio doméstico, por ejemplo, es un maltratador, pero generalmente cumple funciones asociadas al universo femenino. La estética de la película subraya esto con un contraste de colores que enfatiza esa disparidad y aparente incongruencia. Esta incongruencia se supera en el ámbito de lo artístico y en el espacio de

lo carnavalesco, ya que el travestismo posibilita el acceso a lo femenino desde una masculinidad en ocasiones imperante.

The *persona* of *Madame Satã* attracts attention because of the contrast between the effeminacy of the homosexual and the masculinity of the *malandro*. In his transgressive performances, he blended delicacy and softness with lust and vigor. His deviant body interweaved the movements of samba, the *ginga* (swing) of *capoeira*, the ritual of *candomblé* and the influence of Josephine Baker creating a hybrid body that produced a thrilling presence. (Streva par. 23)

Sobre la problemática del travestismo en la película, Subero señala que se trata de un recurso al servicio del director, más allá que fruto de una mirada documental o histórica:

By modifying his body through very ambivalent and androgynous clothing, Joao creates a significant symbol that confuses gender specifications, yet he is presented as a crossdresser who is neither a man nor a woman. Even though some may see such an androgynous presentation as one of the many strengths of the film, it is undeniable that such a polysexualized depiction of the character responds more to the director's intention to offer an ambivalent reading of the character rather than an accurate portrayal of the protagonist. (170)

Subrayando esa hibridez, en los espacios domésticos se repite el juego de la cámara que se diera en el cabaret. Renato observa tras una puerta entreabierta a Tabu y a su amante. Se repite la estructura de la escena del cabaret y el observador reacciona buscando en este caso protagonizar la performance, en este caso su propia escena homoerótica. Ahora bien, no se consuma la relación, sino que João le deleita con una actuación cantando *Noite cheia de estrelas*, composición, hoy ya clásica, de Cândido das Neves.

Pero a pesar de sus encantos de artista, la estructura opresiva derivada de la masculinidad en el ámbito doméstico cristaliza en sus reproches a Tabu, por, precisamente, haber permitido que los elementos divisorios (las cortinas o las puertas) no hubieran sido suficientes para evitar a los espectadores (Renato) ser partícipes del espectáculo homoerótico. Como vemos, el espacio cumple un papel esencial en el lenguaje visual y poético de la película para establecer esos límites que el personaje transgrede continuamente, complejizando el problema sobre su identidad de género y su comportamiento.

Una de las pocas escenas familiares que tienen lugar en un espacio abierto se da en la playa frente al mar. El mar es un tropo común cuando nos referimos

a la libertad del marino o a su poder evocativo en la mente de los poetas, pero en *Madame Satã* funciona de modo análogo a la cortina del cabaret o la puerta de la casa. El mar es un espacio que separa, a la vez que un espacio transitable, un espacio que acerca el oriente mítico donde lo negro es blanco, donde todo se haya invertido. Posteriormente, tras enterarse de la muerte de Renato, João vuelve al mar, y la cámara nos muestra su cuerpo nadando, alejándose de la orilla, internándose en el intranquilo océano, escapando. El cuerpo fronterizo se funde con el espacio transitable a través de un deseo que solo en la realidad del escenario puede ser actualizado. La serenidad del personaje mirando el oleaje contrasta con una agresividad que se muestra en su máximo esplendor tras ser sorprendido por Vitoria vistiéndose con la ropa de ella y cantando en los camerinos del cabaret. La reacción racista, homofóbica y autoritaria de la actriz provoca el estallido de rabia de João que amenaza con desfigurarla. La técnica cinematográfica se adapta a la situación: la cámara vuela de un lado para otro acompañando al torbellino ya que, como señala Jeremy Lehen sobre la escena,

This scene encapsulates many of the tensions that pulsate within Karim Aïnouz's 2002 film *Madame Satã*. The protagonist, João, rejects racist, homophobic notions of self and rather embodies a counter-discourse of resistance that queers Brazilian masculinity, a disidentificatory strategy (José Esteban Muñoz) of survival. (78)

A raíz de ello, se despide y exige el dinero al patrón, que consigue tras amenazar a este con rasgar sus genitales con una navaja. La justicia solo queda reparada en cuanto la masculinidad del patrón opresor es amenazada. El temor a perder la masculinidad se puede dar a través de la mutilación física, real, de los genitales, o a través de su cercenación social (la humillación). Tras despedirse del cabaret, João declara que está harto de luchar por su sueño de artista e insiste que ha nacido para ser bandido. El primer golpe que dan consiste en confrontar a su víctima con la posibilidad de que su homosexualidad sea públicamente conocida. Tras dar una falsa voz de alarma, el cliente sale corriendo para evitar ser descubierto frecuentando la compañía de un hombre y ser así humillado, socialmente castrado. El miedo a hacer explícito el deseo homoerótico se da incluso en el plano del discurso, donde João y su víctima mantienen la ficción. João dice ser Josefa (su ficticia hermana), mujer morena, de labios y muslos gruesos. Tras el éxito del plan, João y Tabu rompen en abierta y descontrolada risa. El éxito en el ámbito del bandidaje, de una performance de transgresión de género, es recompensada económicamente, produciéndose una analogía con la satisfacción de la performance artística y su pago en aplausos.

Eventualmente volverá a su sueño de ser artista. Busca la felicidad como resultado de la consecución de lo anhelado, de la actualización del deseo. En

su intento de acceder al espacio vedado del cabaret más elegante de la ciudad, el High Life Club, es rechazado. Pelea haciendo uso de sus conocimientos de capoeira mientras suena un tango triste. Tras la pelea tenemos un plano de un puente transitado por un tranvía en el que se aleja la familia. El puente vuelve a representar el hecho de que João vive física e identitariamente en un espacio fronterizo, fronteras que separan su subjetividad normativa de su deseo. Sólo cruzando estos límites encuentra un momento de felicidad.

Este deseo, así como la presencia de su cuerpo, transforma a su vez el espacio circundante. El Danubio Azul pasa de ser un antro de violencia, un lugar que, según Amador, su propietario, no es apto para los espectáculos, a ser el escenario donde la Mulata de Balacoché representa el nacimiento de Jamacy, la bella hechicera del bosque (otro de los avatares del protagonista en su performance travesti).⁶ El propio espacio muda su ropaje y se convierte en una plataforma donde articular una narrativa de lucha, supervivencia y resistencia. En los ensayos, João travestido se enfrenta al espejo y sitúa su performance en China. El espejo representa la dialéctica interna del personaje que queda sintetizada en una lucha que dura mil y una noches. Se enfrentan un puma de formas suaves (Jamacy), y un cruel y bruto tiburón, alter ego simbólico de la masculinidad de João. El resultado final de la lucha no sorprende en esta constante tensión entre el macho y la bicha en que se debate el artista: al final, la gloriosa Jamacy y el furioso tiburón se funden en una misma criatura.

Después del número, João es vejado y decide tomarse la justicia por su mano. Asesina de tres disparos por la espalda a un borracho. La película cierra con la lectura de la sentencia, recuperando plano fijo, el sonido de la cámara fotográfica y la voz de la autoridad que condena por diez años a João, pero a este discurso penal se le superpone la voz de João narrando la prisión de Jamacy (ese puma de suaves formas) en una cárcel de Arabia (referencia a la historia de las *Mil y una noches*), donde la joven prisionera vivía (la identidad femenina de João en tanto diva) triste hasta que en un día de carnaval un caballero la llevó al barrio de la Lapa donde esta desfiló en el carnaval de 1942 para ganar el concurso de Caçadores de veados, tras lo cual Jamacy fue conocida por el resto del mundo como Madame Satã. La cinta cierra con João, efectivamente, transformado en Madame Satã vistiendo su fantasía inspirada en la película homónima de Cecil Boulton de Mille (estrenada en 1930), con la que ganó dicho concurso de Caçadores de veados, voz que en portugués adquiere la connotación *queer* de homosexual.

6 La dimensión espiritual de la figura de Jamacy y los motivos de la religión Yoruba en la película (puestos en relación con la fluidez de género) han sido estudiados por Naa Ayuke y Mongor-Lizarrabengoa (2019).

Conclusión

Este cuerpo excluido y marginal, diferente a los demás, adapta el entorno, independientemente de su entrada a prisión, transformándolo. Encuentra en el escenario, el baile, el canto y sus ropas de diva, un nicho desde donde enunciar a través de la performance una narrativa liberadora. João procede a la construcción mítica de su identidad como travesti y la convierte en un camino a la felicidad imperfecta, una escapatoria al encuadre de la sociedad excluyente. En palabras de Rodrigues Fontes, el personaje experimenta una redención parcial, posible solamente durante este tiempo del carnaval (128). El carnaval en última instancia, es, pues, el espacio posibilitador de un discurso de resistencia, un espacio transitable hacia las bondades de un Oriente mágico.

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Rooms of Their Own: Virginia Woolf, Private Space, and Metaliterature in Martín Gaité's *Visión de Nueva York*

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Abstract: Spanish author Carmen Martín Gaité's collage book *Visión de Nueva York* (2005) is a record of her time spent in New York City in 1980 while teaching at Barnard College. The collages mix media from newspapers and magazines with Martín Gaité's personal photographs and writing, and documents the influence of writers like Virginia Woolf on Martín Gaité's creative process. This essay uses criticism from feminist geography and metaliterary studies to analyze how Martín Gaité's construction of private spaces aids in the development of a metaliterary "I" in her collages. Through an examination of three collages, we see how Martín Gaité dialogues with Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929) in a complex negotiation of artistic self-creation.

Keywords: Martín Gaité, collage, Virginia Woolf, New York, metaliterature

In the fall of 1980, Spanish writer Carmen Martín Gaité (1925-2000) arrived in New York City for a teaching position at Barnard College, and began to compile a personal collage diary of her time in the United States. The resulting work is *Visión de Nueva York*, a facsimile of which was published posthumously in 2005. The collages interweave media from a variety of sources: personal photos of Martín Gaité meet clippings of women from magazines, handwritten phrases loop around words cut from newspapers—a mixture of mediums that forms what Martín Gaité calls "cuadernos de todo." Of the genesis of *Visión de Nueva York*, Martín Gaité writes that "se inició con pretensiones de diario y había acabado en una serie de collages subrayados por textos cada vez más sucintos, porque en Nueva York las imágenes corren más rápidamente que las palabras y las desplazan" (11). It is through this union of image and text that Martín Gaité hopes to transmit a sense of the city, and her place in it. Despite her affirmation that image flows faster than words and displaces them, *Visión de Nueva York* contains a significant amount of text, much of it handwritten. Even in a compilation of a highly image-based collage diary, Martín Gaité never leaves words behind. What kind of book is *Visión de Nueva York*? On one hand, it could be considered a personal diary of images and words: Martín Gaité herself is prominently featured in her collages. Some entries are mostly visual, while at times some pages are closer to a diary than to a mosaic of images. On the other hand, certain elements of the book, such as its dedication to her friend Ignacio Álvarez Vara at the beginning, make us question the idea of the book as a purely autobiographical, personal creation.¹

1 According to Debra Ochoa, "A more appropriate classification for *Visión de Nueva York* is Romera Castillo's concept of 'diarísticos diversos [diverse diary materials]' cited by Granata de Egiés in her study of Martín Gaité's *Cuadernos de todo* and *Visión de Nueva York*" (86).

While the visual elements of *Visión de Nueva York* are clearly central to the work, and have been the main focus of past studies of the book, I am particularly interested in the textual elements of *Visión de Nueva York*, specifically those that work to complicate the nature of the book, and Martín Gaité's complex literary-autobiographical identity within it. This essay owes much to previous studies of *Visión de Nueva York* by Debra Ochoa, who has examined how Martín Gaité uses collage to negotiate her relationship to space and gender, as well as how Martín Gaité relates her work to that of Virginia Woolf. Elide Pittarello's study of the influence of Woolf on Martín Gaité, specifically her analysis of the collage "Homenaje a Virginia Woolf," also serves as a foundational text in my argument. Both critics also question how to define *Visión de Nueva York*, pointing to its complex mix of media and imposition of the literary on the autobiographical. While Ochoa and Pittarello examine the construction of Martín Gaité's personal relationship to space in the collages, and her literary relationship to Woolf, neither fully probes the complexities of how Martín Gaité positions herself alongside and within Woolf's writing in her collages. Building off of the criticism of Ochoa, Pittarello, and others, this essay aims to explore how the relationship between the private and the public informs the creation and articulation of a metaliterary "I" in *Visión de Nueva York*. Looking first to the principles of feminist geography and the methodology of collage, this paper examines this interplay of self/space identity in Martín Gaité's collages that center on Virginia Woolf, with a focus on written text. Applying this analysis to three different pages of the book, I propose that, through this negotiation of space and identity, Martín Gaité constructs a vision of herself through the superposition of Virginia Woolf's meta-writing onto Martín Gaité's own artistic production. Through a juxtaposition of public and private, literary and biographical, the written text in union with images in *Visión de Nueva York* serves as a means for Martín Gaité to negotiate metaliterary identity.

To understand how Martín Gaité constructs public and private space in *Visión de Nueva York*, we must first see how gender is constructed in public space, and can do so via the critical branch of "feminist geography." Forming part of the theory of human geographies, feminist geography analyzes the relationship between space and gender, applying a feminist perspective to society, spaces, and environments. Feminist geography first appeared in the academic sphere during the 1970s with the criticism of Linda McDowell and Joan P. Sharp, and social theories of feminist geography were also transferred to literary criticism. Scholar Debra Ochoa's study on the work of Martín Gaité employs the feminist geography theories of Linda McDowell, Elizabeth Wilson, and Elizabeth Grosz for this very aim. Particularly relevant to this study is the examination of how Martín Gaité, as a woman, explores the discourses of the spaces in which she finds herself in New York. On the way in which the city establishes its social relations, critic Elizabeth Grosz proposes that:

the city organizes and orients family, sexual and social relations insofar as the city divides cultural life into public and private domains, geographically dividing and defining the particular social positions and locations occupied by individuals and groups... These spaces, divisions, and interconnections are the roles and means by which bodies are individuated to become subjects. (250)

Gender and the city have long interacted, creating a complex historical web of relationality. The prevalence of patriarchal norms confined women to the domestic, private sphere, resulting in literary and artistic perceptions of the city that are derived from a predominantly white male perspective. Walter Benjamín identified this figure of the wandering man as the *flâneur*. In their questioning of the city as an inherently masculine space, critics such as Lauren Elkin have developed the idea of the *flâneuse*, the female *flâneur*. This subversive figure challenges the patriarchal hegemony that centers the city around masculinity, instead claiming the city for herself. Regarding this dynamic in Martín Gaité's work, Debra Ochoa maintains that "Martín Gaité questions the assumption that the city is inherently a male space through her consistent portrayal of female presence in New York" (87), a questioning that reveals itself through Martín Gaité's inscription of herself onto the city. In contrast to the strict limitations of Francoist Spain, which confined women to the domestic sphere, Martín Gaité possesses the freedom to both wander and shelter. In one collage, she writes: "Es lo malo de New York, que lo quiere uno todo y que continuamente te salen al paso tentaciones inesperadas. Y yo no sé decir no a ninguna, y ando de acá para allá, a merced de mis pasos, ¡tan feliz!" (156). With these words, Martín Gaité becomes the *flâneuse* of her own work. This interaction between visual images of the city and personal life-writing is precisely the self/city identity that Parsons proposes.

However, part of *Visión de Nueva York* concerns the private sphere, and it is in this portrayal of private space where Martín Gaité engages in much of her textual self-creation within the collages. Martín Gaité's use of the medium of collage allows her to pull from a variety of sources to represent her life and self, and it is this combination of media that complicates a simple reading of the book as purely autobiographical. In considering *Visión de Nueva York* as a whole, it can be difficult to determine the extent to which Martín Gaité's first-person writing and use of personal photos is exclusively autobiographical, or a creation of a separate literary voice that turns Martín Gaité into a character in her own collages. Much like W.J.T. Mitchell's reflections on meta-picture and the insertion of the artist into the work (58-64), Martín Gaité plays with the use of her own image, inserting herself alongside references to fictional characters and women clipped from magazines. Martín Gaité purposefully complicates this distinction by combining elements of pop culture and daily life with references to

literature and art. Political headlines mix with letters, personal photos, magazine clippings, and literary fragments from Martín Gaité's own writing, as well as quotes from others. Majorie Perloff proposes in her article on the invention of collage that such collection of elements is key to subjectivity formation within the medium: "to collage elements from impersonal, external sources...is, as it were, to establish continuity between one's own private universe and the world outside, to make from what is already there something that is one's own" (43). That Martín Gaité selects this medium to make sense of the world around her is a way of writing herself onto the literary, political, and social landscape of a new space. She refers to other published works of hers throughout the collages—one page features a flyer about her presentation at Barnard, with a prominent photo of the author taking up most of the page—but these biographical elements are always interwoven with images from public media. Due to this combination of personal elements from Martín Gaité's "private universe" and artifacts from the outside world, it becomes difficult to distinguish between the autobiographical Martín Gaité and the construction of a literary "I." Where Martín Gaité ends and the literary version of herself begins is, at times, unclear. This lack of clarity between the two is especially evident in her two main collages focused on Woolf, which complicate the relationship between personal and fictional self.

New York was where Martín Gaité first read Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929), an essay that aided in expanding her interpretations of her own identity relative to space and place. *Visión de Nueva York* reveals that Martín Gaité is highly aware of both herself and the ways in which her literary production interconnects with other texts, specifically those of Woolf. One of the main focuses of my analysis is a collage completely dedicated to Woolf, dominated by handwritten text. The first thing we see in the top left corner is Martín Gaité's colored-pencil drawing of the cover of the 1957 American edition of Woolf's text, setting the tone and environment of the page. Under the cover's prominent title is a room featuring a larger-than-life fountain pen, a blue flower in the center, and a green chair, all under a yellow circle that seems to be both the sun and a ceiling light. Martín Gaité wants to give us a visual copy of her own paperback, a personal artifact that she re-inscribes onto the collage in her own hand, making it her own. Examining Martín's drawing of the book cover, Elide Pittarello writes: "A Carmen Martín Gaité no le basta poseerlo, necesita estrechar gráficamente el vínculo representando su imagen en lo alto y a la izquierda: una posición preeminente...[n]o evoca una época pasada, archiva el momento presente" (241). Pittarello's observation that it "archives the present moment" touches on the layers of narrative present in the collage: Martín Gaité re-creates the present moment of her reading through her drawing, while evoking the past—and past readings of Woolf—through the nostalgia of the 1957 cover. The collage contains a handwritten paragraph in which Martín Gaité discusses the text: "Ahora he comprado *A room of one's own*, que he terminado de leer este fin

de semana en New Haven y que me congeniaba con la Woolf ya definitivamente. Porque ella, cómo yo, entendía de interiores” (145). This understanding of interiors, of their solace and necessity, is echoed in *Desde la ventana* when Martín Gaité describes her apartment with language linked to femininity and maternal protection: “las cuatro paredes de mi refugio provisional no solo no se me caían encima, sino que me arropaban maternalmente” (12). The intimacy of this space lies in its womb-like containment and safety, a gestational environment for subjectivity as Martín Gaité writes and self-fashions within it.

Other textual elements in the collage that further emphasize this intimacy include a newspaper clipping that reads “she had a lifestyle all her own.”² Martín Gaité’s selection of this particular headline serves to underline Woolf’s central message in *A Room of One’s Own*, affirming the construction of independent feminine subjectivity. The collage also includes an image of a woman’s hand cut from a magazine, pasted among the handwritten text, which is forced to curve around it. Ink emerges from a finger to form the words “automne 1980.” It fixes us in the present moment of Martín Gaité, and ties us to her via the image of the hand. While the hand does not belong to her, the placement of its inky fingers recalls the act of hand-writing the text around it, centering us in the moment of creation. While it attempts to suspend the abstract figure of Martín Gaité, it inevitably “archives the present,” to reiterate Pittarello—a present that immediately becomes the past, and moves beyond the act of personal creation to stay fixed on the page. Furthermore, this juxtaposition of text and image creates, according to Juan Senís Fernández, a “nueva significación con la cual se integran en la narración de las experiencias neoyorquinas de la autora y por tanto palabra y texto en conjunto redundan el nivel superior de la diégesis, de manera que necesita dos códigos para entender esta” (253). These two codes, visual and textual, bring Woolf into the contemporary moment of the autumn of 1980 and contribute to the process through which Martín Gaité reinscribes Woolf on her own literary self, fashioning a literary “I” that is both fictional/literary and autobiographical. While there are no images of Martín Gaité, she is clearly “visible” as a self-aware creator, especially in relationship to her own work. Martín Gaité mentions her recent translation of Woolf’s *To The Lighthouse*: “Me acuerdo de todas las horas que le dediqué en El Boalo, de las resonancias que allí, en el despacho de papá, me traía ese texto (Hace solo mes y medio)” (145). Given that act of translating implicitly involves the re-imagining and re-writing of the text by the translator, it is clear that Martín Gaité relates to Woolf on both a personal and artistic plane, and the use of text in this collage page aids in expanding the intertextual conversation between Martín Gaité and Woolf.

The next page in *Visión de Nueva York* is mostly comprised of text, with barely any images: several handwritten paragraphs detail the relationship between

2 Elide Pittarello identifies this fragment as part of an article on Greta Garbo from the *New York Post* from September 17, 1980 (253).

Woolf's ideas of individual space and Martín Gaité's own life. The only image is a clipping of an invitation to a Barnard College cocktail party welcoming Martín Gaité, set for Tuesday, September 23rd at Milbank Hall. The handwritten text to the left of the invitation reads "(Acabo de volver de un party que me han ofrecido en Barnard College) Y yo con mi abanico" (146). Before even reading about Martín Gaité's experience at the party, we see how she already demarcates herself as distinct from the Americans in the room: "Y yo con mi abanico" conveys her separation both linguistically, with the use of a sentence fragment beginning with "and," as well as symbolically, her fan standing in as symbol of her Spanish identity. She is presented with a flourish, apart and distinct. While there are no images of Martín Gaité on the page, we are able to picture her by how she sets the scene with her words. Below the invitation, Martín Gaité recalls the experience of the cocktail party and relates it to Woolf's writing. Reflecting on the party relative to *A Room of One's Own*, Martín Gaité writes, "Y no estoy segura de que las mujeres americanas, ni las de ningún lado, acaben de conquistar la libertad y el estar-en-sí que Virginia Woolf deseaba para ellas, ni que acaricien ese sueño de tener una habitación propia, o que sepan habitarla en soledad una vez que la han puesto" (146). Martín Gaité's observations of other women and their apparent inability to achieve what Woolf had hoped for them are tied up in this question of a room of one's own. The "estar-en-sí" that Martín Gaité references is inherently linked to the privacy and solitude of an individualized space, a space onto which Martín Gaité places great symbolic weight.

It is noteworthy that Martín Gaité differentiates herself from the women who have yet to achieve Woolf's goals, referring to them as "ellas," not the collective "nosotras." There is a clear divide here. This dialogue with Woolf forms part of what Elide Pittarello terms an "alianza intertextual e intermedial" (244) between Woolf's work and Martín Gaité's life-writing. Martín Gaité continues this "intertextual alliance" in her paragraph:

Yo, aleccionada por este libro, que tanto coincide (en la forma sobre todo) con alguna de mis solitarias retahílas, con mi afán por abarcar lo concreto y lo abstracto al mismo tiempo, me esforzaré por no echar las pelotas fuera de banda y estar lo más posible en este apartamento neoyorkino donde, a lo tonto, llevo ya viviendo quince días, sin haberle sacado por ahora todo el fruto a sus posibilidades de retiro e independencia. (146)

It is clear that privacy and personal space are fundamental to Martín Gaité, to the extent that she must force herself to leave the sanctity of this space to explore "todo el fruto a sus posibilidades" of New York City. Her writing demonstrates her search for that which is intimate and individual, despite the "retiro

e independencia” that the public sphere offers, but also interfaces the events of Martín Gaité’s own life and her identity as a writer with Woolf’s work. Martín Gaité positions herself as a living example of what Woolf hoped for women to explore, putting herself directly into conversation with Woolf. While not directly comparable, Martín Gaité’s musings here serve a similar meta-function to that of the narrator of Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own*. Woolf’s essay is written from the perspective of a first-person narrator who is not precisely Woolf, but whose language blurs the boundary between essay lecture and personal account. The essay opens with Woolf’s narrator addressing the audience: “But, you may say, we asked you to speak about women and fiction—what, has that got to do with a room of one’s own?” (4). Beth Boehm, in her analysis of Woolf’s metaliterature, remarks that “Woolf’s self-consciousness about the boundaries between fictional and factual genres (and about the ways genre and gender are intertwined) in...*A Room of One’s Own* align her with postmodern writers of metafiction” (196). Similarly, Martín Gaité engages in meta-reflection, positioning her own identity and writing within Woolf’s, using it to magnify her own ideas and orient herself relative to her gender and space.

The collage on the page following is titled “Homenaje a Virginia Woolf”: dominated primarily by images, it nevertheless contains text that reveals further connections between Martín Gaité and Woolf. This specific collage has already been the subject of critical investigation, in particular by Elide Pittarello, and features images of women of various ages, clipped from a variety of newspapers and magazine adverts. Bolded, underlined words clipped from a newspaper declare “because I want to be alone” (147). The words are separated: “because” sits on the right side of the page, “I want to” placed on the left, with “be” and “alone” disjointed and descending towards the bottom of the collage. Here, Martín Gaité clearly echoes the desire for solitude expressed in *A Room of One’s Own*, both in the words she has chosen and in their placement on the page; most words are cut away from the others in the phrase and scattered. The words themselves seek their own space on the page, intentionally isolated from each other. Beneath the word “alone,” Martín Gaité has handwritten a quote from Woolf’s aforementioned text: “To absorb the new into the old without disturbing the infinitely intricate balance of the whole” (147). Martín Gaité writes Woolf’s words in her own handwriting, personalizing them. The function of this personalization recalls the characteristics of the collage as elaborated by Perloff: Martín Gaité takes elements from the external world and establishes continuity with her own life. Woolf’s writing is incorporated into the intimate framework of Martín Gaité’s collage. Martín Gaité continues this trend in another handwritten quote along the bottom: “Women never have an half hour they can call their own” (147). Pittarello explains: “Es metanarrativa. Virginia Woolf la había sacado de un texto de la luchadora Florence Nightingale para hablar de Jane Austen, quien escribía sus novelas a escondidas en el cuarto de estar. Vuelve el tema de

la habitación propia en esta cita de una cita" (255). The boundaries between the personal/private and the impersonal/public are also blurred through the way Martín Gaité arranges the images of women on the page: there are few physical borders between them; they overlap and encroach on each other.

Aside from a few clues around these women about their environment, the women seem to exist in a nebulous mix of both public and private spaces. In her analysis of *Visión de Nueva York*, Debra Ochoa focuses on the use of windows in Martín Gaité's collages, and purports that "the absence of windows in 'Homenaje a Virginia Woolf' represents a spatial obstacle that Martín Gaité removes in her collage to be able to depict women that can move freely between public and private space" (94). Martín Gaité possesses the freedom to choose the spaces in which she spends her free time, a freedom that is represented in the collage through the collection of diverse spaces into which women are placed. Although Martín Gaité does not appear in any of the photos in "Homenaje a Virginia Woolf," the text "because I want to be alone" centers a first-person declaration of desire for intimacy and privacy. In turn, Martín Gaité demarcates her personal identity in her tribute to Woolf, again re-inscribing herself into Woolf's literary production and social consciousness. For Martín Gaité, being alone is a tremendous luxury. Commenting on her experience reading Woolf's essay for the first time in her own room, she writes: "Nunca como aquella tarde me he dado cuenta del privilegio que supone para una mujer tener un cuarto solo suyo y habitarlo cómo liberación, no cómo encierro" (12). This privilege and the subsequent personal freedom it confers on Martín Gaité is the means by which she is able to inscribe her own literary/artistic self into Woolf's oeuvre. As we can see, Martín Gaité's time in New York City and her apartment on 119th Street is key to this reconceptualization of her own identity within the context of various public and private spheres. Here, Martín Gaité surpasses the autobiographical, writing herself into a canon of women's discourse of space and identity.

The combination of Woolf's writing, the new environment of a foreign city, and the ability to play with visual and textual elements all coalesce to form the final product that is *Visión de Nueva York*. In it, Martín Gaité is able to combine media from sources both personal and public to create a space in which she can enact subjectivity. Through her use of Woolf's texts as a literary frame of reference, Martín Gaité is able to transform herself into a literary subject within her own collage. She employs the collage as a means of gaining a more intimate knowledge of herself within the private space of her apartment, and at the same time she is simultaneously inscribed in the broad panorama of discourse on women and space. Whether or not she accomplishes the full creation of a metaliterary "I" is up for debate, especially since the collage book was published posthumously, as a complex, multi-media work defying easy categorization. There is no one clear way to define the text, or Martín Gaité's

place within it—one that the author herself debates within her handwritten passages. Returning to “Homenaje a Virginia Woolf,” Martín Gaité’s reflections on her drawing of the cover of *A Room of One’s Own* are particularly revelatory of how she was still working through her metaliterary pursuits—“el libro cuya portada he dibujado más arriba, lidiando con las reflexiones que me deparaba” (146). The verb “lidiar” reveals her struggle, an admission that “no consigue argumentar de manera satisfactoria sus desvelos metaliterarios” (Pittarello 245). I believe that we can think of *Visión de Nueva York* as a fertile, experimental space that allows for the exploration of the self, precisely due to its ambiguous nature. What better way to explore personal and literary identity in a space that is once personal and public, autobiographical and literary, written and visual? All told, the processes of literary and visual creation that Martín Gaité enacts in *Visión de Nueva York* are key to her future writing, proving the importance of this “estar-en-sí” in a room of one’s own.

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La tartamudez como síntoma del exilio en “El regreso” de Calvert Casey

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Resumen: Las averías del habla del personaje de Calvert Casey en “El regreso” son síntomas y cicatrices profundas que se generan durante su exilio a Estados Unidos. El personaje cubano regresa a la isla después de la Revolución en busca de un *regreso* a su ser perdido durante el destierro. En este trabajo, se analizan los relatos “invisibles” y/o “secretos” del autor que nos revelan que en el regreso del exilio no es completamente posible. El mensaje de Casey en esta historia tripartita es que el exilio crea un amplio desfase entre la realidad y un mundo imaginario, y como consecuencia una imposibilidad de “saber estar”. Para darnos ese mensaje, Casey usa el cuerpo y utiliza los síntomas que mejor conoce y que está seguro que provocan deslices mentales.

Palabras claves: exilio, Calvert Casey, “El regreso”, destierro, tartamudez, Revolución cubana

Qué nos hace querer hablar? ¿Qué nos hace querer comunicarnos con otras personas? Aprendemos a hablar desde corta edad; lo hacemos porque lo necesitamos, porque si no, los demás humanos no entienden lo que queremos decir; porque nuestro propio cuerpo produce sonidos sin pensarlo. Pero, ¿qué pasa, si nunca llegamos al nivel del habla esperado o exigido por la sociedad? Esos trastornos del habla crean una impotencia y una fragilidad expresiva que no permite comunicar lo que uno quiere y otorgan una imagen de debilidad. Este es el caso del protagonista sin nombre en el relato “El regreso”, de Calvert Casey. Un personaje desdichado, tartamudo, homosexual, miope, casi calvo, marcado por las particularidades de su frágil cuerpo, refugiado en su imaginación. Esa imaginación lo lleva a regresar a una patria que desconoce, con el propósito de ser amado con todas sus flaquezas y de lograr ser él mismo. Las limitaciones del protagonista, específicamente el tartamudeo, son observadas y analizadas en este trabajo como mensajes ocultos que nos ha dejado Casey para expresarnos que el exilio no es completamente posible debido a las averías y cicatrices profundas que conlleva el destierro.

Calvert Casey (1924-1969) nació en Estados Unidos y vivió gran parte de su infancia en Cuba. Después de que el militar Fulgencio Batista es derrocado, Casey regresa a Cuba y se une al círculo literario.¹ Casey formó parte de un grupo de intelectuales que cobraron protagonismo después del triunfo de la Revolución cubana. Se exilia de nuevo al desenamorarse de La Habana después de la Revolución. De acuerdo a Gustavo Pérez Firmat en “Bilingual Blues,

1 Según Juan Carlos Quintero-Herencia en su artículo “‘El regreso’ de Calvert Casey: una exposición en la playa” (2013) durante los primeros años de la Revolución, iniciar el viaje hacia la isla revolucionada también representó, para considerables intelectuales, no solo una escala imprescindible para descifrar el sentido utópico de su “latinoamericanidad”, sino una zona donde experimentar con los límites de sus creencias, poéticas y hasta los modos de configurar su propia subjetividad (385).

Bilingual Bliss: El caso Casey” (2002), en 1966 durante un viaje a Polonia para la publicación de la traducción de sus historias, Casey decide no regresar a Cuba, en parte por la persecución de homosexuales después de la Revolución (434). Casey se suicidó en 1969 en Italia después de una decepción amorosa.

Su relato “El regreso”, publicado en 1961 en la *Casa de las Américas* después la dictadura Batista, sigue el trayecto de un cubano de cuarenta años que ha vivido la mayor parte de su vida en el extranjero. El relato está ambientado durante la época Batista en Cuba. En la primera parte del cuento, narrado en tercera persona, se describe al personaje como solitario, sonámbulo en su vida neoyorkina y acomplexado por sus deficiencias físicas. En la segunda parte, él viaja a la patria en la que nació debido a una desgracia familiar luctuosa. El personaje de Casey se enamora de la vida isleña y desarrolla el deseo y la ilusión de acalorar su vida fría. Durante la tercera parte, el protagonista se muda a Cuba e intenta ser como uno de los locales. En base a su nueva apariencia, lo secuestran, lo torturan y lo abandonan en la playa desahuciado y sin lengua. A primera vista, el relato se presenta como una serie de desencantos e infortunios de un personaje cuyas limitaciones lo llevan a una búsqueda que acaba trágicamente.

No obstante, “El regreso” contiene un relato invisible o “secreto”. Ricardo Piglia en “Tesis sobre el cuento” (2000) habla acerca de las dos historias que se narran en un relato. La primera historia es el cuento clásico que se narra en primer plano de Casey y construye en secreto una segunda narrativa, “Un relato visible esconde un relato secreto, narrado de un modo elíptico y fragmentario” (17). La narración clásica en primer plano es la tragedia de un hombre lleno de minusvalías que acaba cruelmente y el relato secreto, a simple vista, es una crítica del exilio, a la Revolución cubana, a la guerra entre ideologías que fragmentan a sus habitantes. Esta disputa entre países es un marco mucho más amplio que el de la felicidad y mala suerte del personaje.²

Según Piglia, “La historia secreta se construye con lo no dicho, con el sobreentendido y la alusión” (18). Pienso que, la clave de lo “no dicho” o lo “sobreentendido” está en el tartamudeo y los síntomas restantes del personaje de Casey. ¿Qué nos está diciendo este tartamudeo del personaje y del espacio en el que vive y el espacio que anhela habitar?

El tartamudeo es la fractura que persigue al personaje. Esta condición, por ser un síntoma, es una manifestación reveladora de una enfermedad.³ En su artículo “Nuevas tecnologías empleadas en la intervención de la tartamudez: una revisión” (2016), María Fernández-Martín, Nuria Calet y José A. González

2 De acuerdo con Quintero-Herencia: “El relato de Casey es pionero al inscribir en el emergente campo literario de la Revolución los signos de la duda y la extrañeza como partes constitutivas de cualquier viaje o deseo de inserción intelectual en la sociabilidad cubana de entonces” (393).

3 La RAE define a la palabra “síntoma” como “una manifestación reveladora de una enfermedad” o “señal o indicio de algo que está sucediendo o va a suceder”.

describen a la tartamudez como un trastorno del habla que aparece durante la infancia y que, en algunos casos, permanece durante la edad adulta (89). En el caso del personaje de Casey, el tartamudeo es “un rastro doloroso de alguna tragedia oscura e ignorada de los primeros años” (130). En la segunda parte, descubrimos que sus primeros años los pasó en Cuba, por lo que se puede interpretar que en ese país o durante el exilio ocurrió el trauma que generó el trastorno del habla.

El protagonista sin nombre se encuentra perdido en la vida y utiliza su tartamudez como pretexto para esconderse del mundo, alienándose y viviendo feliz sólo en su imaginación. Este trastorno se usa no sólo para representar la situación del personaje, sino que también se usa para representar el trauma de la situación política de los cubanos. La Revolución parecía ofrecer un espacio para revisar temas de sexualidad, el machismo, la homofobia, experiencias negativas como la muerte y el suicidio y otras como la pornografía y el voyerismo y también para cuestionarse prohibiciones, moralismos y violencias simbólicas sedimentadas en la cultura del poder cubanas (Quintero-Herencia 392). Además de representar el trauma de la situación política de los sesenta, el cuento genera una especulación, que se desarrollará más adelante, que implica que el personaje de Casey realmente se exilió “muerto” en vida de la isla cuando era pequeño; y su fantasma, sin consultarlo con el protagonista, necesitaba regresar a Cuba para terminar con lo que había comenzado: “su muerte”.

De este modo, Casey nos está tratando de decir que el exilio no funciona, que una vez que la nación se fragmenta, tarde o temprano, sus integrantes también se desmoronarán. En mi punto de vista, Casey utiliza estratégicamente síntomas físicos autobiográficos para señalar que el exilio no existe en su totalidad, porque la isla se queda en la mente o en el inconsciente del exiliado.⁴ Entonces, ¿cómo afectan estos síntomas al exiliado? y principalmente, ¿cómo se generan estos síntomas cuasi indomables?

El tartamudeo en el relato de Casey se puede observar más allá del habla del personaje. Según Fernández-Martín, Calet y González, el tartamudeo “se caracteriza por repeticiones involuntarias, prolongaciones y bloqueos en la expresión de los elementos del habla, incluyendo sonidos, sílabas y palabras” (89-90). Estas repeticiones se emplean también en la forma que el narrador cuenta la historia:

Pasado el mal momento, enrojecía y palidecía simultáneamente y para probar que el defecto era imaginario, que *jamás, jamás, jamás* existió, se lanzaba a una perorata rápida e intempestiva que sazonaba con frases brillantes, chistes y carcajadas inoportunas, hasta volver a tropezar con otra palabra desdichada que le producía nuevas convulsiones. (130; el énfasis es mío)

4 Casey también es tartamudo, homosexual, miope y casi calvo. Según Pérez Firmat, su apodo era “La Calvita”, que aludía a su calvicie y su homosexualidad (434).

La repetición del “jamás”, un adverbio del tiempo, quiere borrar la existencia de su trastorno del habla. El tartamudeo del narrador me hace ver a Casey, que también era tartamudo en la vida real, levantar un espejo distorsionado y crear dos entes similares a él: el primero, el narrador que tropieza con las palabras y el segundo, el personaje sin nombre al que seguimos en este cuento. Este personaje se encuentra desdichado por una situación que no puede controlar y de la que se avergüenza:

Rojo de confusión y vergüenza, buscaba el refugio donde vivía, cerraba a cal y canto las ventanas y aplicaba un fósforo al mechero de gas con que se calentaba, preguntándose melancólicamente si no era preferible dejar fluir el gas sin encender la llama. (130)

Este trastorno vocal gobierna todo su ser que lo lleva a pensar en un posible suicidio. Este cuestionamiento de vivir o morir es una de las razones que llevan al personaje a cambiar su vida drásticamente cuando visita Cuba. Un país, del que estaba seguro que “nunca, nunca” se volvería a ir (139) y que irónicamente estaba en lo correcto.

El deseo de eliminar su tartamudez, lo hace regresar a Cuba, en donde los efectos “*del sol, del sol, del sol*” (137; el énfasis es mío) penetran sus entrañas y en donde inesperadamente sus parientes lo aceptan a pesar de sus defectos. Sus particularidades dejan de ser un lastre; es perdonado por todo su ser, incluyendo su tartamudeo. Lo perdonan por “ser extranjero”:

Aquellas gentes, a las que temía por razones tan desconocidas como las que provocaban su violento tartajeo, lo acogieron con naturalidad y hasta con cariño, sonrieron ante sus crisis nerviosas, le permitieron las vestimentas más extremas con una tolerancia candorosa ante todo lo que viniera del extranjero que le desarmaba, justificándole con un “ha vivido tantos años fuera...”. (135)

Esa aceptación lo conmocionó y fue el motor para cambiar su vida radicalmente. Ya que él desconoce que esa aceptación de su forma “extranjera” de ser, no es exclusivamente hacia a él, sino una forma de ser caribeña.⁵

5 Juan Carlos Quintero-Herencia menciona que “lo extranjero es una continuidad constitutiva del Caribe...La palabra *extranjero* no significa en el Caribe o su significado convencional se desfonda en la resaca de sus orillas reales e históricas. Lo extranjero como dispositivo singular del *ethos* archipelágico es uno de los puntos de ensamblaje cultural más productivos y recurrentes en la historia caribeña. La familiaridad extraña del otro caribeño, su extranjería sin embargo ‘conocida’, es un signo de ciudadanía impropia, momentánea, imposible. A larga, ‘lo extranjero’ termina siendo pieza clave para la sintaxis ciudadana y cultural caribeña que se sabe frente a otras y se imagina acompañada por sus lenguas” (392-393).

El personaje comparaba su vida neoyorkina con la vida cubana de los habitantes de la isla, los veía más felices, más en paz. Y, sobre todo, veía que sabían estar consigo mismos.

El “saber estar” que el personaje de Casey lo llama intraducible, es lo que él carece, ya que su tartamudez crea un ambiente inhabitable en su propio cuerpo. Esta posibilidad de “saber estar” aún a pesar de su tartamudez, la ve a través de las sonrisas de sus parientes:

Esta gente sabía estar. Se repitió la frase varias veces: sabían estar, saber estar, regocijado del descubrimiento feliz. En aquel frío Norte, él había perdido el viejo arte de saber estar (la frase allí era incluso intraducible) y tendría que aprenderlo de nuevo, pacientemente, amorosamente. (136)

Él mismo no sabía traducir el “saber estar”, ni a su idioma anglosajón, ni a su ser fracturado. Él lo interpretó como una posible felicidad, en donde no tuviera que hacer el trabajo de encontrar calor y paz en su alma. Su mente le hacía imaginar que el lugar era el responsable del “saber estar”; en su mente esa isla pequeña y estrecha era la que lograba la felicidad de las personas.

La dificultad de traducir se menciona desde el primer párrafo:

¿Cómo se llamaban esas cosas? ¿Actos fallidos? ¿Alienación del yo? Traducía mal los conceptos psicológicos a la moda, que había leído en inglés sin entenderlos mucho, más bien para impresionar a los demás. (125)

Esta manía por traducir literalmente, me hace pensar en que este personaje está atrapado en dos culturas y en dos lenguas, tal como el autor mismo. Gustavo Pérez Firmat menciona que esta conciencia lingüística recorre todo el trabajo de Casey (439).⁶ Casey vivió tiempo en Cuba, en Estados Unidos y en Europa, y aunque escribía principalmente en español, escribió un par de historias en inglés; una de esas, “Piazza Margana”, fue parte de su novela “Gianni, Gianni”.⁷

Esa dificultad en traducir, Paul B. Miller en “El pecado original de Calvert Casey” (2004) la observa como parte de la tartamudez:

En términos generales, ¿cómo definir la tartamudez? Además de las múltiples explicaciones fisiológicas y lingüísticas, podemos decir que metafóricamente se refiere a la imposibilidad o la dificultad de *traducir* o *transcribir* el pensa-

6 Véase “Calvert Casey’s Wasted Narratives” (2017) para un amplio recorrido del trabajo de Casey.

7 Esta novela nunca fue publicada ya que Casey la tiró y solo le quedó la parte de “Piazza Margana” que fue publicada después de su muerte.

miento a la palabra. Entre el pensamiento y la palabra hay una barrera o un vacío infranqueable, algo que impide la conexión. (98)

Miller añade más adelante que esa intraducibilidad del “saber estar” no es otra cosa más que el matrimonio feliz entre el ser humano y sus circunstancias espaciales y temporales (99). El personaje intenta realizar este “matrimonio” en varias ocasiones al querer “imitar” a los demás. Cuando vivía en Nueva York con ese afán de ser aceptado y ocultar sus disfuncionalidades:

A todos los imitaba fiel e irresistiblemente, copiaba sus gestos, sus palabras, sus malas o buenas costumbres, y no descansaba hasta haberse convertido en facsímil exacto de ellos, tratando al mismo tiempo de conservar la primera impresión de conquistador, de amante difícil y deseado que creía haberles causado. Por una palabra bondadosa los colmaba de regalos absurdos, les prometía la holganza a sus expensas para toda la eternidad, y más de uno, de aficiones parasitarias, le tomó la palabra. (129)

Esta imitación, se podría observar como una manera de repetición o tartamudeo en la forma de ser debido a la falta de autoestima; ya que las repeticiones no son sólo de palabras, sino que también él intenta repetir formas de vida, imitar para poder ser aceptado.

La noción de querer ser alguien que no se es, también la aplica cuando se va a vivir a Cuba. A pesar de que “ni en sus ademanes ni en su manera de hablar ni de ser recordaba en lo más mínimo a sus compatriotas” (134), sus diferencias son aceptadas. Al irse a vivir al lugar en el que él piensa que “pronto iba a ser él, él, a entrar en su cultura, en su ambiente, donde no tenía que explicarse nada, donde todo ‘era’ desde siempre” (140), deshecha sus vestimentas extranjeras y se viste con una guayabera como los locales.

Sin embargo, sus intentos de querer pertenecer a alguna parte fallan, ya que los trastornos ocasionados por el exilio provocan que el protagonista no pueda hacer una conexión real ni con un país ni con el otro. El matrimonio que menciona Miller no se da. Sus barreras corporales impiden que él sea “él” y que pueda “saber estar” consigo mismo. En su segundo día en la isla, le incomoda que el chofer que lo lleva a la playa le hablase en inglés, o que también sus costumbres se identificasen más con las de los turistas:

En la playa se sintió molesto al verse rodeado de turistas y más molesto aún al comprobar que, como ellos, también se ponía aceite sobre la piel para protegerla del sol. Se rió un poco de sí mismo, pidió de beber y se tendió al sol. (142)

Su ingenuidad e ignorancia de la cultura de la que él piensa como suya, lo hacen estar aún más lejos de ella. Esa risa del personaje al compararse con los turistas son guiños que el narrador hace al lector para darnos a entender que el personaje ve la vida caribeña como un gozo detenido por el tiempo, que en ocasiones es compartido con los turistas.

En relación al gozo y al “saber estar”, Juan Carlos Quintero-Herencia en su artículo “‘El regreso’ de Calvert Casey: una exposición en la playa” (2013) menciona: “El saber estar y el gozo que lo acompaña es un efecto del ‘calor solar’ como estimulante de la memoria y de un imaginario demasiado real” (397).⁸ La memoria del personaje, ciertamente, es estimulada con el calor de la isla en dos formas. Primero:

Aquel sol, aquel sol maravilloso y omnipresente de enero, que le reconfortaba y le quemaba suavemente los omoplatos, brillando desde un cielo transparente, que le hacía olvidar los dolorosos inviernos del Norte y el tiritar violento que destrozaba sus nervios enfermos, y le despertaba viejas memorias de infancia. (136)

El clima caluroso le hace añorar lo que perdió de pequeño, aún a pesar de no acordarse bien de estas: su tierra, su cultura. Ignora el hecho de que al irse de esa tierra que llama “patria recuperada” creó una interrupción irreparable en su vida, que desarrolló en él un tartamudeo. En la mente del personaje esa grieta que creó el exilio puede sanar y desaparecer, aún a pesar de los vacíos que lo trastornan. Un ejemplo de esa mentalidad ocurre cuando el personaje regresa a Nueva York cargado de suvenires cubanos y llena sus rincones de música criolla y boleros (138), con la ilusión de recuperar memorias de las que no se acuerda, creando una utopía de su memoria.

Edouard Glissant en “El discurso antillano” (2005) habla sobre el desplazamiento de pueblos por exilio o por trasbordo (trata de negros) y de cómo “nosotros renunciamos al Ser” (43) al desplazarnos a otro lugar. También Glissant menciona:

La primera pulsión de una población trasplantada, que no está segura de mantener en el sitio de su trasbordo el antiguo orden de sus valores, es el Retorno. El Retorno es la obsesión del Uno: no hay que cambiar el ser. Retornar es consagrar la permanencia, la no-relación. (43)

Aunque Glissant se refiere a poblaciones enteras, y en “El regreso” de Casey sólo el protagonista es quien regresa, creo que vale la pena mencionar a Glissant

8 Agradezco al Profesor Juan Carlos Quintero-Herencia por introducirme a Calvert Casey en el seminario de estudios graduados de la Universidad de Maryland, College Park.

ya que esta es la obsesión que tiene el personaje. Quiere recuperar o llegar a ser *él* al cambiar de lugar, sin tener en cuenta que el retorno es algo inexistente. El vivir en otro pueblo lejos de su lugar de origen, convierte a una persona en un ente distinto y aunque ocurra ese “Retorno” físico, en realidad nunca será así, ya que con el hecho de desplazarse, ya no es ni de aquí ni de allá, es algo intermedio que no está atado a un territorio físico y tangible, sino atado a la identidad cultural de los exiliados, cualquiera que esta sea. Lo interesante de la relación de los pueblos que menciona Glissant y nuestro personaje, es que ambos piensan que el territorio les traerá de nuevo lo perdido a través del tiempo.

La segunda forma en que se estimula la memoria es a través del calor humano. El personaje tiene pocos amigos en Nueva York y está enamorado de Alejandro, a quien colmaba de regalos y envidiaba por ser “tan centrado, tan seguro, tan inmovible y sin problemas” (128). Por su limitada vida y contacto social, él crea una ilusión en su patria cubana, “¡Qué bien sonaba! Pronto sería amado de todos. ¡Si era amor, sólo amor lo que él pedía, el mismo amor que en el fondo toda la pobre humanidad deseaba!” (139). Llenar sus vacíos existenciales con amor incrementa su ingenuidad e incluso lo lleva a querer ayudar de alguna forma en la Revolución. La aceptación de su tartamudez por parte de sus parientes en Cuba, hace que ignore su inhabilidad para ser el mensajero que anhela ser debido a su tartamudez:

¿No podría servir de mensajero de la concordia y la tolerancia entre sus compatriotas? Al fin, todos eran hermanos, se entendían en el gran lenguaje atávico y no hablado con que se entienden los hombres de una misma tierra... (139)

La patología del habla es una mímica en su pensamiento que ciega al personaje y el narrador otra vez hace un guiño al lector sobre la situación con tres puntos suspensivos. Los puntos suspensivos reflejan una interrupción que podría compararse con la misma interrupción del personaje al exiliarse de pequeño. Observo esta suspensión como una forma en la que el narrador se burla de la idea de todos aquellos que piensan que el regreso a la patria de origen es posible, ignorando los sucesos políticos y revolucionarios.

Este “pensamiento ciego” del personaje se relaciona con su propia miopía, que también es un síntoma que lo aflige. La miopía ayuda a la tartamudez del personaje a tener una versión de la realidad fracturada.

La miopía o falta de visión no es única del personaje de Casey. En *A Small Place* (1988), Jamaica Kincaid relaciona la pequeñez de un lugar con la falta de visión de los habitantes, “the people in a small place cannot see themselves in a larger picture, they cannot see that they might be part of a chain of something, anything” (52). Aunque Kincaid habla de Antigua, la isla caribeña que considera

su patria, este concepto se puede aplicar también para Cuba. Puede ser que esa pequeñez haya generado los síntomas del personaje de Casey de niño y se hayan quedado incrustados en su ser. Es decir que este problema visual puede tener dos orígenes; el primero nacido en la isla y el segundo causado por el exilio. Así que independientemente de viajar y tratar de adoptar otras patrias (139), la pequeñez visual se quedó en el personaje de Casey. Una pequeñez que contrasta la intelectualidad que presume tener y que cree que alimentará en la isla:

Y además entraría por la puerta grande de la *intelligentzia*, en cuyos umbrales dorados le esperaban sus jóvenes amigos, de humor delicioso y mordaz, de charla viva e imaginativa, tan nerviosos, y tan felices. (140)

Casey se burla de esa “intelectualidad” que el personaje asume tener. Esta alusión de entrar a un círculo literario es un reflejo de la vida del autor que regresó a Cuba después del triunfo de la Revolución y contribuyó con historias y ensayos en revistas como *Ciclón*, *Lunes de Revolución* y *Casa de las Américas*. Casey no fue el único en experimentar con este sentido utópico de la isla, Quintero-Herencia menciona también a Antón Arrufat, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Reinaldo Arenas, Roque Dalton, Virgilio Piñera, José Lezama Lima y Enrique Lihn, “expusieron lo que podía llamarse una elocuencia de la rotura y del desacomodo; un deseo por exponer la multiplicidad polémica que le daba cuerpo a la cultura política de la isla” (390). Sin duda, Casey participa en explorar y experimentar con el cuerpo del protagonista y la situación de la isla. Quintero-Herencia también menciona:

Fue precisamente en medio de los días iniciáticos de la Revolución cubana que estas escrituras y otras estéticas apostaron por la exhibición de otros *cuerpos de sentido*, igual que otros *sentidos del cuerpo*, como un modo de participar políticamente en lo que acontecía en la Cuba de esos años. (390)

La “burla” o mención a esa “intelectualidad” política y literaria la usa como otra forma de enfatizar sus averías del habla:

Su vago acento extranjero atraía, como también el contraste entre las maneras desacostumbradas, el nombre impronunciable y los patéticos esfuerzos para sonar criollo. Gran lector de contraportadas, sabía cómo y cuándo citar y lo hacía con suma habilidad, dejando las frases incompletas, sugiriendo ideas que los demás completaban, cubriendo su ignorancia de los temas con el aluvión taquicárdico de su charla. (127)

Casey remarca su ignorancia y su dicción averiada no sólo por el tartamudeo, sino por su acento extranjero y su afán de imitar con sus “patéticos esfuerzos para sonar criollo”. El poder replicar el lenguaje local le ayudará al personaje a integrarse de nuevo: “Like the protagonist of ‘El regreso,’ Casey realized that to speak a language was to occupy a place, to settle into a cultural habitat with its own history and contours” (Pérez Firmat 439). El poder controlar su acento y sonar como “criollo” lo acerca cada vez más a su objetivo de “saber estar”.

Casey no ha tenido compasión al escribir este personaje y exagerar sus esfuerzos por pertenecer a esta utopía isleña que creó su pequeñez mental.

Si el espacio estrecho de la isla genera la pequeñez mental, la que a su vez genera síntomas como la tartamudez y la miopía, podría inferirse que el exilio específicamente de las islas caribeñas es el que no es posible que ocurra por completo. La pequeñez geográfica caribeña hermetiza de alguna forma la mentalidad de los habitantes provocando una especie de parálisis que llevan consigo aún a pesar de estar fuera de ellas.

Esta pequeñez también genera una distorsión en el tiempo. Kincaid menciona: “To the people in a small place, the division of Time into the Past, the Present, and the Future does not exist” (54). Esta distorsión del tiempo se expande a través del sol y del clima caluroso.

Las horas pasaron agradablemente, empujadas por el licor del país que penetraba dulcemente los sentidos hasta destruir el sentido del tiempo. (El sentido del tiempo, eso era lo que aquí era tan diferente, ahí radicaba la gran ciencia de este país, de estas gentes.) (142)

Según el personaje, el no tener sentido del tiempo es lo que marca la alegría y la despreocupación de la gente. Irónicamente, él también pierde la noción del tiempo cuando lo confunden como local, ya que porta una guayabera, y lo secuestran:

Dentro del auto, que marchaba a toda velocidad mientras la sirena chillaba perforante, creyó sufrir una pesadilla. Sintió que le agarraban los puños e inmediatamente comenzó a recibir golpes brutales en el rostro y en las costillas. Los golpes le ahogaban, no podía gritar, y sus aprehensores mantenían un silencio obstinado, como si le conocieran, realizando su tarea metódicamente. Perdió la noción del tiempo, reducida su actividad pensante a esperar cada nuevo golpe. (143)

En esta escena, cuando es confundido por un miembro de la guerrilla, finalmente se le concede su deseo de ser uno más de los locales. Su imaginación lo había llevado anteriormente a imaginar que sería amado con todo y sus diferencias. En

ese momento, no fue amado, pero sus diferencias corporales no eran relevantes, ya que al quererles decir su nombre a los secuestradores y en esforzarse en articularlo, no le creen que sea extranjero.

Un violento mazazo le derribó por el suelo. Cuando lo levantaron, medio aturdido, oyó que el que parecía el jefe le advertía que no inventara nombres extranjeros, porque le conocían bien. (144)

Su tartamudez no deja salir su acento extranjero verídico. Finalmente logra hacerse pasar por local, ya que, a pesar de sus esfuerzos, no le creen que él no es de allí. Su cuerpo es indiferente para los habitantes de la isla que están ahí para hacer cobrar a alguien “Si no es éste, es lo mismo...” (145). Su utopía de *ser* termina en un sangriento interrogatorio y con las horas que siguieron.

Anteriormente, había mencionado que el personaje se exilió “muerto” en vida de la isla cuando era pequeño y su fantasma necesitaba regresar a Cuba para terminar con lo que se había comenzado, “su muerte”. Es aquí en donde el personaje cierra la grieta que provocó la interrupción de vida cuando se exilió. Al tragarse su propia lengua, terminó con su tartamudez y finalmente se liberó de su averío del habla que había marcado su vida. Se liberó de su dolencia:

Sintió una sed terrible. Notó que tenía la boca llena de coágulos de sangre que lo ahogaban. Cuando quiso hablar para pedir agua, se dio cuenta de que se había cercenado la lengua con los dientes. Pensó que ya nunca volvería a tartamudear. Sintió que sonreía. (146)

Pienso en esta sonrisa como una representación de su libertad. Es como si alguien hubiese dejado fluir el gas de la estufa sin encender la llama con la que pensó suicidarse en Nueva York y él solamente tendría que respirarlo y dejarlo fluir en su espacio tartamudo.

El personaje de algo estaba seguro y es de que no regresaría y su deseo al final fue concedido. Ahora sería parte de esa isla de la que tanto añoraba ser. Su ser fantasmal por fin estaría en su lugar de origen y quedaría atrapado por el tiempo sin ninguna cicatriz en el habla. Su felicidad e ingenuidad se reflejan en este pasaje:

Luego echó a andar, dando gritos agudos con la boca muy abierta, cantando, tratando de hablar, aullando, meciendo el cuerpo sobre las piernas separadas, logrando un equilibrio prodigioso sobre el afilado arrecife. (147)

La falta de lengua no significa que él deje de querer comunicarse. Produciendo sonidos, el personaje intenta hablar y logra cantar. ¿Con quién trata de comunicarse en esa playa? ¿Con él mismo, con su fantasma? Muere no sin antes recordar partes de su vida que el narrador clasifica como “detalles aislados e insignificantes de su existencia” (147). ¿Es así como se sentía en la vida real Casey? Con estos detalles finales, posiblemente, se podría interpretar que sí, y que estas y otras ideas lo llevaron a su propio suicidio años después. En un artículo de The Stuttering Foundation, se menciona que: “In 1969, struggling with personal issues as well as his severe stuttering, Casey took his own life; on his desk he left open a Henry James book with an underlined passage which read: ‘He was a man too fragile to live in this world’ (n.p.). Este pasaje que se traduce como: “él era un hombre muy frágil para vivir en este mundo”, es el espejo que un momento Casey levantó para describir a su personaje de “El regreso”.

Al final del relato, los otros habitantes de la isla, los cangrejos, desactivan los síntomas que se llevó consigo a pasear por el mundo: “Donde primero hundió las tenazas el cangrejerío fue en los ojos miopes. Luego entre los labios delicados” (147). Esos labios de donde salían esas gárgaras extrañas que lo hacían esconderse de todos ahora son parte de la playa. También, esos ojos miopes con los que se deslumbró por la belleza de la isla, ahora son parte de la misma. Esta imagen final evoca el regreso real del personaje de Casey. El regreso de su cuerpo que se fue por el mundo como un espectro y que eventualmente tenía que regresar.

Esta idea fantasmal se narra en las primeras páginas del relato como un vacío:

Era como si entre él y cada uno de los episodios de su vida, entre él y las gentes que conocía y que parecían tenerle cierto apego, se interpusiera un vacío del que hubieran extraído el aire, y los contemplara del lado de allá, lejanos, como objetos tumefactos a los pocos segundos de nacer, incapaz de cruzar la terrible barrera y tocarlos. (126)

Este vacío interrumpe la vida real y crea esa forma fantasmal que me hace asumir que el personaje de Casey siempre estuvo “muerto en vida” y que su vida o intento de vivir simplemente fue un “acto fallido”. Quintero-Herencia relaciona este vacío con el tartamudeo:

Asediado por un mimetismo compulsivo, el personaje de Casey es también una voz marcada, interrumpida literalmente, por fuertes convulsiones, ahogos producidos por su tartamudeo. El tartamudeo, además de ser una relación con el vacío y la imagen de sí, enlaza ingeniosamente también una relación entre subjetividad y vacío, pertenencia y sensorialidad que recorre todo el cuento. (394)

Este vacío es uno de los primeros indicios de las fragilidades lingüísticas del personaje que lo hacen un personaje fantasmal.⁹ La forma en que puede hablar este personaje con los demás es sólo por medio de su imaginación: “Imaginaba que podía hablar con todos los seres humanos, de los que se sentía separado por aquel extraño vacío infranqueable” (127). Estos vacíos, Casey después los llena con síntomas. Al principio, cuando menciona los vacíos y sus deseos de querer hablar con todos los seres humanos, todavía no sabemos que es tartamudo. Pero se puede intuir que tiene un problema psicológico o limitación física. Pienso que este enlace ingenioso es al que se refiere Quintero-Herencia. Casey nos alimenta inteligentemente de detalles que no sabemos que marcaran la historia y que nos harán oscilar entre ser empáticos con el personaje y condenar su ingenuidad. La idea fantasmal, finalmente Casey la plasma literalmente en este pasaje:

Eran amigos que le estimaban, sin duda, un poco intrigados por la vida evasiva y fantasmal de aquel hombre que se aparecía cuando menos se le esperaba, después de largas ausencias, en que cada crisis, cada nueva pasión se delataba solamente por el recrudecimiento de una violenta tartamudez. (129-130)

Lo fantasmal lo sobrevive gracias a lo imaginario. “Su imaginación alcanzaba proporciones no vistas. Y era, se decía a sí mismo con dolorosa lucidez, su única, su auténtica, su verdadera vida” (126). Esta imaginación no es única de este personaje. En “Itinerario del insomnio” (1977) de Lydia Cabrera, se habla de un padecimiento general “en modo alguno exclusivo de aquellos exiliados cubanos que han perdido el hábito de ser felices y al cabo de los años, inadaptados e inadaptables, aún tardan muchas horas en conciliar el sueño” (1). A este padecimiento lo llama insomnio. Aunque el personaje de Casey no sufría de insomnio, el padecimiento puede compararse con las vulnerabilidades corporales ocasionadas por el exilio.

Cabrera también demuestra tendencias fantasmales al indagar en su pasado y traer a su presente imágenes nítidas manipuladas por su imaginación sobre Cuba. Debido a esta manipulación de imágenes, estos recuerdos apiñados sobre su visión de Cuba es algo ficticio que se inspira en un pasado verosímil y en un cementerio de recuerdos. Ese clavado al pasado se genera porque su realidad le da razones para abrazar sus remembranzas, “al no ofrecer alegrías el presente ni esperanzas el porvenir, se siente la necesidad de refugiarse en el pasado” (2).

Esta experiencia de Cabrera resuena con la experiencia del personaje de Casey, con la diferencia de que este no recuerda Cuba. Sus memorias están

9 Según Lorna Scott Fox en *London Review of Books*, Casey tuvo un novio santero durante la mayor parte de su estancia en la Cuba revolucionaria. Se cree que el practicante de la religión afro cubana también incursionó a Casey y es por eso que sus historias incluyen fantasmas y espiritismo.

manipuladas por el viaje temporal inicial y lo conecta con el imaginario que crea para sobrevivir su vida anglosajona fría y aburrida. A diferencia del personaje de Casey, Cabrera no tiene un síntoma como el tartamudeo o la miopía, pero sufre de insomnio; ambos son vulnerabilidades provocadas por el exilio. Ese exilio que Casey, con nutridos detalles, nos da a entender que no puede ser logrado con éxito.¹⁰

Todas estas fragmentaciones que Casey otorga a su personaje: falta de autenticidad, dificultad al traducir, repeticiones del tartamudeo, el no “saber estar”, la necesidad de imitar la personalidad de otros, la miopía, la memoria estimulada con el calor, su manera fantasmal de vivir, son los elementos que me hacen concluir que Casey no cree en el exilio.

Casey convierte al exiliado, en un ser irracional e ingenuo, cegado por la belleza de la isla, con síntomas *tartamudezcos* que perfilan en lo grotesco.

De este modo, puede interpretarse que el mensaje de Casey en esta historia tripartita es que el exilio crea un amplio desfase entre la realidad y un mundo imaginario, y como consecuencia una imposibilidad de “saber estar”. Para darnos ese mensaje, Casey usa el cuerpo y utiliza los síntomas que mejor conoce y que está seguro que provocan deslices mentales. Cojeando con sus palabras y pensamientos, el protagonista encuentra un lugar real que encaja con su imaginario e ignora los contextos políticos y sociales, reduciéndolos a problemas que según él podría ayudar a resolver.

Esta historia “secreta” de la que habla Piglia, la he observado como una crítica al exilio y como una manera de decir que no es posible el destierro “exitoso” o un exilio completo o un regreso pleno. Esa historia secreta también esconde el trauma real del personaje que es el origen de sus síntomas. Anteriormente, mencioné la pequeñez como una posible causa de los síntomas del exilio. El espacio y su relación con la pequeñez no sólo es terrestre, sino pequeñez imaginaria y de su sentir. La pequeñez de la isla se queda con el personaje y la trae de manera tartamuda durante sus cuarenta años por todo el mundo. También es importante mencionar el pasado oculto del personaje o la familia cercana, como sus padres o posibles hermanos. Casey nos deja a los lectores asumir muchos aspectos, incluidos el por qué el personaje va a un funeral, ¿Quién es tan importante o tan cercano que tuvo que viajar? ¿Por qué no se nos da esta información? Una vez en Cuba, ¿Por qué sus parientes aceptan su extrañeza? ¿Hay algo adicional en la corporalidad del personaje que hacen que sientan lástima por él? O ¿simplemente al aceptarlo como extranjero en su totalidad,

10 Rafael Rojas en el prólogo del libro de Nivaria Tejera, *Huir de la espiral* (2010), menciona: “parece decirnos que el laberinto del exilio no tiene fin, que la huida no es más que otra curva de la espiral. Así como la locura y el suicidio pueden ser actos de la razón y la vida, el exilio no es la pérdida de una comunidad de origen y la ganancia de otra de destino sino la reinvención de un país por medio de la escritura” (21), sin duda otra forma de alejarse de la romantización del exilio y de explorar los problemas que con llevan.

lo están encasillando en una persona pasajera que no vale la pena conocer? ¿O es solo el ser caribeño que menciona Quintero-Herencia anteriormente?

Casey nos empapa de detalles, pero no sabemos con certeza lo que siente el personaje, sólo se puede intuir su inevitable tristeza, depresión y frustración. Un sujeto que designa un lugar como la resolución de sus problemas, dándole un poder al espacio como solución a una condición corporal nos está tratando de comunicar algo. ¿Qué hace al personaje querer comunicarse con otras personas? ¿Qué lo hace querer hablar? Él quiere *ser*; él quiere existir y deshacerse de su *fantasmalidad* ocasionada por el exilio.

Esta segunda historia “secreta” es sólo una manera de interpretar este relato, y la tartamudez ha servido para cuestionarme si es posible el exilio en su totalidad; debido a que la interrupción de su vida que lo aleja de la isla deja trazos irreparables que tarde o temprano cobran factura.

Aparte de pensar en esta lógica, la lectura detallada de este relato me ha creado otras preguntas. ¿Por qué Casey satiriza y se burla de una vida tan similar a la suya? ¿Es esta una manera de ver al futuro? ¿Es este relato una nota de suicidio? ¿O es una experimentación sensorial después de la Revolución? Sin duda, este relato tiene más historias “secretas” que explorar y distintas interpretaciones más allá del mutismo y las fracturas de la infancia que trastornan al personaje sin nombre. Este texto, rico en detalles, delata una escritura tenaz que autorepresenta una nación frágil con nociones y rasgos revolucionarios, pero más que nada que representan la escritura de un exilio y crean una discusión de conceptos todavía frágiles y *tartamudezcos*.

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Race, Reform, and Nation in Salvador Camacho Roldán's 1887 *Notas de viaje (Colombia y Estados Unidos de América)*

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Abstract: This article explores the ways in which Colombian *letrado* Salvador Camacho Roldán engaged with race, reform, and nation in his 1887 travelogue about the United States. I argue that Camacho Roldán assumed an extraordinary position when he challenged popular racial pseudoscience by advocating for racial hybridity as the best outcome for *all* countries. Drawing from theorizations regarding national identity as a place of power negotiations, I unveil how this traveler broke with prevailing transatlantic intellectual discourse that discounted the contribution of non-Europeans to a country's citizenry. The article concludes with a reflection regarding how Camacho Roldán's radical perspective upheld Colombia as a model multiracial country, challenged the hegemony of U.S. exceptionalism, and served as a precursor to early twentieth-century Latin American intellectual discourse that celebrated *mestizaje*.

Keywords: Travel literature, Salvador Camacho Roldán, Colombia, nineteenth century, race

The liberal creole project involved founding an independent, decolonized American society and culture, while retaining European values and white supremacy. —Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*

Established in 1882, the Librería Colombiana was one of the most important book importers and printers in Bogotá at the end of the nineteenth century. More than a source of income, this business allowed its co-founder, Salvador Camacho Roldán, to promote his political agenda through the titles he chose to import; this agenda included promoting industrial modernization, improved means of communication, tariff-free foreign trade agreements, and the use of economic statistics to inform government planning (López 21, 219, 236). As a businessman, government official, lawyer, newspaper founder, and economist, Camacho Roldán directly participated in liberal reforms aimed at modernizing Colombia despite ongoing economic and political instability. These reforms, enacted between 1850-1886, included manumission, confiscation of Church property, and promotion of public education (Mondragón Castañeda 8-12). The book company's motto, "Luz, más luz," epitomized this author's personal and political viewpoints, while the store itself quickly became the leading literary salon for Colombian intellectuals.

The 1887 account of Camacho Roldán's book-purchasing trip to the United States, *Notas de viaje (Colombia y Estados Unidos de América)*, was published in Bogotá by Talleres Gráficos del Banco de la República three years after his return. His itinerary included Colombia, Panama, and the United States, where he travelled

from New Orleans up the Mississippi and on to various cities including Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Washington D.C. In his preface, Camacho Roldán disavowed any preconceived intention to produce a travelogue, stating that he wrote merely “por complacer á mis hijos que han deseado tener más noticias de esos lugares distantes” (v). Professing not to have had enough time to “observar las costumbres ni estudiar el estado social é industrial” while abroad, he included lengthy economic statistics—likely from his imported printed sources—to bolster the usefulness and credibility of the account (v). Despite his disclaimer, this traveler posited that one had the moral and didactic obligation of conveying to one’s homeland “las impresiones recibidas en países más adelantados,” an observation that categorized Colombia as less “advanced” in relation to other countries (vi). This stated obligation reminds us that this author was not a casual traveler, but belonged to the “ciudad letrada,” elite creoles with prestigious professions related to the written word—authors, government officials, booksellers, and more (Rama 16). A central theme of this text was a comparison between Colombia’s Magdalena and the U.S.’s Mississippi regions, and this theme held implications for race.

Indeed, this author offered a unique, radical perspective regarding race and nation in his travelogue. I argue that Camacho Roldán assumed an extraordinary position when he challenged popular racial pseudoscience by advocating for racial hybridity as the best outcome for *all* countries, a move that presaged the late-nineteenth-century ideology of *mestizaje*. Moreover, I maintain that by upholding Colombia as a model multiracial country, this traveler challenged the myth of U.S. exceptionalism as well as core vs. periphery thinking that located Latin America as perpetually trailing behind on the path of modernization.¹ More than light entertainment, this travel book has revealed that Camacho Roldán was not a passive receiver of scientific theorizations read in imported publications. Instead, this public intellectual offered a unique voice in transatlantic discourses, one intentionally designed for domestic necessities.

Racial hierarchies typified the period’s transnational discourse. By relying on archival sources, including Darwin’s unpublished letters and notebooks, historians of science Adrian Desmond and James Moore have contended that Darwin’s “notebooks make plain that competition, free trade, imperialism, racial extermination, and sexual inequality were written into the equation from the start—‘Darwinism’ was always intended to explain human society” (xxi). While *On the Origin of Species* only vaguely mentioned the evolution of man at

1 Immanuel Wallerstein first developed the concept of “core/periphery” in *The Modern World-System*. This study had the objective of interrogating “a world dominated by the industrial capitalist economies of western Europe and North America” (DuPlessis 222). Wallerstein based his theorization on two premises: that “social change occurs only in social systems...and that the only social system appropriate as an object of analysis is a world-system” (DuPlessis 222).

all (Darwin would later declare this explicitly in *Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*), in his notebooks he declared that “the varieties of man seem to act on each other; in the same way as different species of animals—the stronger always extirpating the weaker” (Desmond and Moore 149). Desmond and Moore concluded that Darwin clearly meant that evolution was “predicated on the weaker being extinguished” and that “individuals, races even, had to perish for progress to occur” (149). This is the same progress that Mary Louise Pratt has labeled “the liberal creole project,” and it is scientific Darwinism—inextricable from its social repercussions—that drove this project. Its outcome was to validate the elite *criollo* traveler’s belief that he was equal to the Anglo American with whom he shared European heritage and, as such, best suited to determine the future of his country. In the United States, Anglo Americans were at the apex of a racial pyramid that defined the nature of man, and this pyramid was thoroughly reflected in the multiethnic makeup of the country that even casual travelers could easily observe.

In Latin America, the religious and administrative legacy of the *sistema de castas* underpinned racial hierarchies. Yet by and large, Latin American *letrados* during this historical period largely identified as secular and of European rather than of mestizo descent (Graham 1). Positivism, based on the work of philosopher Auguste Comte, dominated Latin American liberal political thought as a “filosofía del orden” that offered the greatest possibility of national progress (Weinberg 55). This theory promoted the idea that human society experienced stages of development. Positivism came to be supported by the natural sciences when rational scholars, such as Herbert Spencer and Hippolyte Taine, contributed to the spread and popularization of Darwinism and its offshoots. That is, Positivism, as a philosophy of social utopianism, transformed “into a bio-logistic social technology that would fashion a new man, a new human, utilizing the laws of natural evolution” (Mendieta 4). If in the past *casta* paintings visually illustrated the dangers of degeneration caused by racial mixing, during the nineteenth century science became the epistemological reference for upholding racial hierarchies.² In fact, the development of the scientific disciplines went hand in hand with ranking humans racially on a statial timeline of development. In other words, human groups were thought to progress through predetermined, ordered stages of development and these differing stages coexisted. Racialized thinking served to justify the status quo in which certain human groups, because of their imagined superiority, dominated others. The apparent progress brought by European colonialism, along with the rapid growth of the United States from

2 French aristocrat Arthur de Gobineau produced one such example in his text, *The Inequality of Human Races* (1853-1855). Gobineau theorized that “The word *degenerate*, when applied to a people, means (as it ought to mean) that the people has no longer the same intrinsic value as it had before, because it has no longer the same blood in its veins, continual adulterations having gradually affected the quality of that blood” (25).

mid-century on, were examples that could be used to validate racial theories that classified Europe and North America as more advanced. These examples illustrated that societies, like biological organisms, were subject to evolutionary forces. In other words, the domination of particular racial groups over others, as illustrated by Great Britain's wide-ranging empire, was merely a manifestation of the "natural order." What's more, race "science" could be applied to wider social and political debates, such as which groups should receive the full rights of citizenship (Stein 13).

Notwithstanding the accepted precepts of racial pseudoscience, foreign visitors widely condemned the U.S. system of slavery. Except for Cuba and Brazil, Latin America had ended slavery earlier than the northern republic. Critics pointed to slavery and its legacy as a clear mismatch between the country's stated equalitarian principles and its social reality. Many Latin American travelers observed that the mistreatment of African Americans continued after Emancipation when they wrote about lynchings, or when they described the conditions of sharecroppers in the South. Foreign visitors also voiced their opinions regarding other U.S. racial and ethnic groups in their narratives. These authors included Argentinean visitor Eduarda Mansilla de García, who deplored the situation of Native Americans, and Mexican traveler Guillermo Prieto, who railed against the stereotyping of Mexican immigrants. In any case, expressing sympathy for subaltern groups did not always signify advocating for their social and political equality.

Initially, Camacho Roldán had professed that increasing domestic population through European immigration was key to a country's rapid economic progress. Accordingly, as Colombian leaders "querriamos inmigración europea, moralizada y provista de elementos de trabajo" that had produced "asombrosos resultados" in the United States, South Africa, Australia, and Argentina (161). Not only did European immigrants provide the physical capital ("brazos necesarios"), but they also brought with them intellectual capital ("industrias mas adelantadas y hábitos de disciplina social de paises más antiguos") (161). This reasoning conformed to prevailing theorizations that human groups coexisted at different stages of linear development, and that European "stock" was inherently most advanced.

An extreme version of statial racial development theory can be read in the work of influential French polymath Charles-Marie Gustav Le Bon who classified Latin America as existing at "the lowest level of the scale of Latin civilisation" (145). Implying *terra nullius*, the concept that land can be legally designated as unoccupied, Le Bon propounded that Latin America was "peopled by exhausted races, without energy, without initiative, without morality, without strength of will, although situated in the richest countries of the earth, are incapable of making use of their immense resources" (145). Furthermore, Le Bon held that the region could only progress by returning to a colonial state

or "by being conquered by a nation strong enough to rule it" (145). In this theorist's view, the "degenerate" countries of Latin America would have long ago returned to a state of pure barbarism had it not been for a few foreigners settled in the capital cities (145). While not as harsh as Le Bon's perspective, this type of racial bias underpinned Camacho Roldán's lament that his country had been unable to attract large numbers of European immigrants to support Colombia's modernization.

The crux of the issue was that Latin America had little to attract the European immigrant. Rather, the United States, due to its advanced state of modernity, was "la mansión en la actualidad quizás más favorecida para la raza humana en toda la tierra" (163). Immigrants chose a country based on similarities, or what Camacho Roldán described as "relaciones de lengua, climas, costumbres y estado de civilización no inferiores en mucho á las de su país nativo" (162). Since "el inmigrante civilizado...no puede prescindir del teatro, de los refinamientos culinarios ni del comercio intelectual," this author surmised that "los pueblos tropicales tenemos que renunciar por algunos años á la esperanza de grandes corrientes de inmigración europea" (163).³ In the meantime, he posited, "sólo podremos tener dos clases de importaciones humanas: las de raza amarilla (los chinos) y las de raza africana" (163). Overall, these observations regarding immigration reified established racial hierarchies.

Nevertheless, Camacho Roldán evaluated non-European immigration to Colombia with hopeful pragmatism. He labeled these two possible sources of immigration "una posibilidad feliz," affirming that "las tierras tropicales no han podido nunca ser ocupadas por la raza blanca sin el auxilio de otra raza mejor dotada para resistir las influencias físicas del clima" (165). This statement referenced the period's "race-out-of-place" theory of biology. This theory, based on drawing analogies between humans and animals, held that species were uniquely adapted to their originary geography. Accordingly, Europeans were accepted as best suited to northern, temperate climates, while Africans were associated with the tropics. A crucial aspect of this theorization was that human groups were thought to degenerate when relocated to different climatic zones. In the U.S., this theorization supported engrained social prejudices and policies of racial separation in order to prevent any possibility of future assimilation (Stepan 98-101). In Colombia, however, with its tropical climate and relatively underpopulated lands, what were thought of as appropriately adapted racial groups were welcomed as immigrants.

3 Camacho Roldán saw population growth as key to economic progress when he theorized that "para producir el doble de hoy producimos, se necesitaría un 50 por 100 más de población" (*Escritos*, vol. III, 65). In 1871, as the Secretario de Hacienda y Fomento, he issued a governmental decree to promote and protect foreign immigrants. One item of this decree proposed studying "los alicientes é incentivos que ofrecen diversos países de América, Asia y Australia para atraer los emigrantes" (*Escritos*, vol. II, 462).

Race-out-of-place theories went hand in hand with the trope of racial degeneracy. Degeneracy, in this context, signified “a pervasive, subtle decay of the individual or group, a deviation from the standard of normality” (Stepan 112). Certain races, as well as mixed-race individuals, were thought to be inherently biologically degenerate, offering an example of how science came to support deeply ingrained social prejudices and even influenced government policy.⁴ In the United States, the idea of degeneracy underpinned the “one drop rule.” According to this “rule of hypodescent,” any amount of African blood categorized the individual as of African origin—irrevocably “tainted” by one’s genetics, and subject to segregation and discrimination (Graves 31).⁵ French diplomat Alexis de Tocqueville recognized this U.S. social reality when he offered the opinion in his 1835-1840 travelogue that “those who hope that one day the Europeans will blend with the Negroes seems to me to entertain a chimera. My reason does not lead me to believe it, and I see nothing in the facts that indicate it” (553). Similarly, Camacho Roldán commented that in the northern republic “la [raza] blanca no admite nada en común” with African Americans (423). He found this stance inexplicable years after the Civil War, musing that “suponía yo que este sentimiento pasaría...pero no es así” (423). Still, miscegenation was a social issue in Latin American culture as well.

The link between degeneration and mixed-race parentage has had a long history in Latin America stemming from the Iberian preoccupation with blood purity. Colonial era *casta* paintings labeled “undesirable” racial pairings with atavistic terms such as “return backwards” and “I don’t get you” (Martínez 228-238). As in the United States, a mixed bloodline with Africans or Afrolatinos was considered a condition that could not be fully absorbed by future generations (Deans-Smith and Katzew 3). The linkage between race and purity persisted after independence, as evidenced by Argentine and Chilean government policies to eliminate indigenous peoples while at the same time whiten the population through European immigration.⁶ Camacho Roldán had originally promoted

4 Scholar Melissa Nobles identified the 1850 census as inaugurating “the inextricable and enduring link between census categorization, racial scientific thought, and public policy in the United States” (42). Additionally, Nobles upheld that “better theoretical understanding of race gave credence to the development of segregationist public policy” (43).

5 The term “miscegenation” first appeared in the United States in a polemic 1863 pamphlet entitled *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the American White Man and Negro*. Appealing to deep-seated social aversion to interracial marriage, this pamphlet aimed to garner support for Democrats by maintaining that miscegenation was a goal of the Republican Party (Von Vacano 4).

6 Susana Rotker has argued that “Argentina is the only country in Latin America that has determinedly and successfully erased the mestizo, Indian, and black minorities from its history and reality” (20). Euphemisms described government policies for eradicating indigenous groups. The twenty-year Chilean program, which ended in 1883, was called the “Pacification of Araucania,” while Argentina titled its 1884 campaign the “Conquest of the Desert.” Interestingly, literary works, such as Domingo Faustino Sarmiento’s 1845 *Facundo ò civilizacion*

European immigration when he was a government official, but because of his deep commitment to Colombia's economic growth, he ultimately reframed miscegenation as a positive outcome.

Interestingly, Camacho Roldán reworked the concept of degeneration to support miscegenation while still adhering to the ideology of European superiority. Referring to examples of animal breeding to validate his claims, he affirmed that hybridity or “el cruzamiento de las razas como medio de mejorar una y otra, es un hecho demostrado en la biología” (169). Applied to humans, the addition of European bloodlines through admixture could “mejorar la raza nativa por el cruzamiento con otra mas fuerte y en un estado superior de evolución” (161). In other words, racial mixing had the potential to fulfill the vital task of uplifting the national “body” by passing on what were popularly thought of as civilized, inheritable character traits. Where Camacho Roldán differed with the norm was his positive interpretation of the contribution of indigenous and African bloodlines. By opposing the predominating linkage between degeneration and miscegenation, the mixed-race Latin American emerged in this account as superior to individuals of entirely European parentage.

Camacho Roldán offered the unconventional counterclaim to mainstream racial science when he hypothesized that inbreeding within the same racial group caused degeneration. This perspective underpinned his assertion that “la reproducción repetida en un mismo tronco, produce degeneración en la especie, debilidad física, esterilidad, enfermedades hereditarias” (169). In his view, hybridity strengthened humans, as it did for plants and animals, invigorating rather than devolving a racial group. In his construct, European racial stock offered exceptional intellect, while non-European bloodlines contributed a healthy constitution. Offering Colombia as an example, this author noted that “empieza á ser elemento dominante el de las familias de raza mixta” (170). Furthermore, the national leading families' physical and moral decline had been arrested by “algún cruzamiento oculto con el negro o con el indio” which had “restituido a la sangre del blanco el vigor físico...si bien no todavía...superioridad intelectual” (170). This ideology made sense for countries with a large racially diverse population, such as Mexico and Colombia, and contravened the mentality—then popular with Argentine and Chilean leaders—that “la nacionalidad tenga que ser homogénea en términos de raza” (Pérez Salazar 5).⁷

Camacho Roldán extended his argument regarding miscegenation to the United States and Europe. Citing newspaper and travelers' accounts as inter-

i barbarie en las pampas argentinas, nostalgically celebrated elements of the very culture that was being systematically destroyed.

7 Similarly, nineteenth-century Mexican historian Antonio García Cubas rethought prevailing discourses on *mestizaje* when he characterized mixed race individuals as “vigorous,” with a “lively and ardent temperament,” and a “tenacious and strenuous resistance to submit themselves to force” (20). His work was translated to English with the aim of reaching an Anglophone audience (Stern 155).

textual evidence of Anglo American racial decline, he surmised that “la raza blanca...ha ganado en distinción y finura en los rasgos de la fisonomía, todo lo que ha perdido en robustez física” (170). Consequently, Camacho Roldán saw the U.S. woman as the product of excessive inbreeding to the point that “parece débil y enfermiza...[con] esterilidad...no es maternal” (171). He also assessed Europe as an inbred, devolving racial body, positing that “la idea del lujo llevada al extremo [y] el desarrollo de enfermedades infectivas” could be partly attributed to “síntomas de la degeneración de la raza, que pide el cruzamiento con otra más vigorosa y más sana bajo el aspecto moral” (171). Moreover, this author radically concluded that miscegenation or “el cruzamiento de la raza europea con la africana” was a biological imperative for both tropical and temperate America (170).

In effect, Camacho Roldán articulated an antiracist perspective in this travelogue. He contested widespread prejudices against African Americans, expressing the opinion that the race was “susceptible de tanta elevación y nobleza como la raza blanca” (166). It was the institution of slavery—not inherent character defects—that caused the current state of that race, what this writer described as “no efecto de inferioridad de su organismo ni siquiera de su ignorancia y falta de cultivo moral” (166). In terms of Chinese workers, Camacho Roldán assessed them positively as “sobrios, laboriosos, buenos agricultores” as well as highly skilled in the manual arts (173). Addressing popular negative stereotypes against the Chinese race’s character, this traveler recognized that “por el lado moral no es el mejor posible el concepto de que gozan” (173). However, he dismissed this bias as unfounded by citing the example of the first Spanish explorers to Latin America, arguing that “no se puede juzgar de una comunidad inmensa por unas pocas individualidades, generalmente las menos tranquilas, como son los primeros exploradores” (173). In essence, Camacho Roldán performed more than the task of challenging racism; he offered the idea that *mestizaje* was part of Latin America’s unique destiny.

In its celebration of miscegenation, this work can be read as an important precursor to the ideology of *mestizaje*. José Martí formulated a similar counter-discursive argument in his 1891 “Nuestra América” when he insisted that “No hay odio de razas porque no hay razas” (67). This outlook, one that celebrated Latin American racial admixture, emerged more strongly in the aftermath of the 1898 Spanish American War and the 1910 Mexican Revolution. José Vasconcelos’ 1925 work, *La raza cósmica*, offered an iconic example of a positive reappraisal of racial mixture.⁸ At its core, this ideology opposed the hegemonic discourse of set racial boundaries by developing what one scholar has labeled

8 Vasconcelos envisioned America’s destiny as that of carrying out the “misión divina” of racial synthesis when he declared that “su predestinación, obedece al designio de constituir la cuna de una raza quinta en la que se fundirán todos los pueblos, para reemplazar a las cuatro que aisladamente han venido forjando la Historia” (16).

“the synthetic paradigm of race in Latin American intellectual history” (Von Vacano 4). Above all, this position was highly unusual for a nineteenth-century *letrado*.

Colombia emerged in this account as the more advanced country in comparison to the United States when considering the situation of racial relations. An ardent abolitionist, Camacho Roldán reminded his readers that Colombia was in the forefront as a social paragon because slavery had been abolished there earlier than in the United States. To that end, he declared that “Colombia ofrece un ejemplo no desmentido en los cuarenta años corridos desde la abolición de la esclavitud” from which other countries could learn (173). This traveler viewed slavery as both immoral and counterproductive to economic progress since a slave had no motivation to work due to “la falta de compensación a sus trabajos injustamente expropiados por una institutución inicua” (167). The Colombian Liberal party’s mid-nineteenth century reforms, unlike the U.S., had granted universal male voting rights without racial or income qualifications (Sanders 136). Although these reforms were modified in the 1880s, Camacho Roldán continued to uphold the liberal agenda. During an interview with a New Orleans newspaper, he roundly criticized Anglo Americans for their continued unbridled “desprecio” and spatial segregation of African Americans after Emancipation (596). He informed the reporter that Colombia offered an exemplar of racial coexistence since “no se hace diferencia política entre las dos razas y muy poca en las relaciones sociales” (596). In contrast, the U.S. experienced deep racial divisions and inequities.

Nevertheless, Colombia could profit from U.S. racial biases. Given the failure of Reconstruction, Camacho Roldán stated that freedmen in the South “no tienen muchos motivos para estar del todo contentos desde el gobierno federal cesó de darles esa protección...contra el desprecio de sus antiguos amos” (164). Therefore, he proposed an original (although never executed) strategy of attracting African-American immigration to Colombia by offering “algun pequeño auxilio para su pasaje y tierras baldías” (165). As for Chinese immigrants, overpopulation would continue to motivate their movement abroad because “la raza mongólica parece ya estrecha dentro del límite de su gran muralla” (163). Given that the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act had banned this ethnic group from further entry to the U.S., Colombia could also receive this ethnic group.⁹ Disputing the prejudices inherent in the North American law, this author noted that in Panama (part of Columbia at the time) Chinese

9 Early in the century, Chinese workers were welcomed, primarily in the West, as inexpensive laborers. After completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 and in the face of economic recessions, this racial group came to be seen as competition. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the first U.S. immigration law that barred a particular racial group, was passed “on the assumption that the Chinese were a distinct race with a biologically determined nature that was reflected in moral behavior, cultural preferences, and physiological traits” (Calavita 11).

canal workers had “*dado menores ó ningunos motivos de queja*” (164). Since these guest workers were likely to eventually settle outside of Panama after completing their labors, Camacho Roldán advocated formulating government policy regarding this ethnic group when he pointed out that “*la inmigración de mongoles está, pues, á nuestras puertas, y es bueno pensar de antemano en la manera como deberemos tratarlos*” (164). In effect, although not European, African American and Chinese immigrants could contribute to the vital task of developing Colombia. These detailed proposals for government action make clear that Camacho Roldán’s travelogue had less to do with travel than with promoting his own explicit reformist political and economic proposals for his country.

In point of fact, the most important Colombian booksellers during the nineteenth century also belonged to the lettered ruling elite. For this reason, bookselling signified more than a commercial endeavor but “*contribuyó a la legitimidad del letrado como agente rector reafirmando el fuerte enganche entre poder y trabajo intelectual en Colombia*” (Murillo Sandoval 66). Printing, bookselling, and the closely associated literary salon were key components of the domestic intellectual network, one that kept the *letrado* reader abreast of current worldwide debates—and an important way that this author could forward his liberal political agenda. Although he valorized European culture, Camacho Roldán revealed this overriding agenda when he evaluated non-Europeans and mixed-race individuals with unusually positive appraisal, offering an important nineteenth-century antecedent to the Latin American ideology of *mestizaje*. Furthermore, confronting aspects of the “model republic” through the act of writing can be viewed as an important political maneuver that validated Latin American sociocultural capital. Although Camacho Roldán shared lengthy statistics regarding North American economic progress as a service to his country, in terms of racial progress his travelogue ultimately positioned Colombia as a racially utopian future under construction, a dialectical inversion and political stance that directly contravened the myth of U.S. exceptionalism. In a period of increasing U.S. interventionism in the region, this traveling persona disrupted those pseudoscientific discourses that represented Latin Americans as less civilized “race” in a peripheral geographic region. Ultimately, as this travelogue has revealed, race, nation, and civilization were closely interrelated concepts with deep levels of signification. A traveler could consider racial issues as either a building or a stumbling block of an ideal national citizenry. This vision had direct implications for government policy by defining who should be included in the definition of nation with full rights of participation—and who should be excluded.

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Memória, resistência e futuro: Tempo e fratura na poesia de Carlos Drummond de Andrade

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Resumo: Este artigo incide sobre o conceito de resistência na poesia de Carlos Drummond de Andrade. Na primeira secção, “Tempo e Resistência”, é estudada a forma como estes dois conceitos se articulam e se manifestam na sua criação. Para isso é prestada especial atenção às ideias de memória, esperança e impureza. Na segunda secção, “Verticalidade”, é estudada a presença da ideia de verticalidade e aprofundamento inerente à sua criação e a forma como esta se afirma como um posicionamento central da sua perspectiva e visão do mundo. Para isso é dado especial destaque ao poema “(In)memória” da coletânea *Boitempo* (1968).

Palavras-chave: Carlos Drummond de Andrade; Memória; Resistência; Tempo.

No fundo somos tão, tão felizes, pois não há uma forma única de entrar em contato com a vida, há inclusive as formas negativas! Inclusive as dolorosas, inclusive as quase impossíveis—e tudo isso, tudo isso antes de morrer, tudo isso mesmo enquanto estamos acordados! —Clarice Lispector

Introdução

No seu livro *Literatura e Resistência* (2002), Alfredo Bosi afirma:

A resistência é um movimento interno ao foco narrativo, uma luz que ilumina o nó inextricável que ata o sujeito ao seu contexto social e histórico. Momento negativo de um processo dialético no qual o sujeito em vez de reproduzir mecanicamente o esquema das interações onde se insere, dá um salto para uma posição de distância e, deste ângulo se vê a si mesmo e reconhece e põe em crise os laços apertados que o prendem à teia das instituições. (Bosi 134)

Dialogando com esta aceção, e em contacto, neste caso, com o género poético, interessa-nos o *pôr em crise* que o ato de resistência implica. Resistir é fazer estremecer todo o instituído, dissolver o sólido e tornar fluido e plural qualquer sentido único, qualquer plano unidimensional. O conceito de resistência está irremediavelmente ligado, duplamente ao de risco. Resistir é correr um risco, enfrentar um risco, procurando manter uma posição de verticalidade. Mas resistir é também traçar um risco, esboçar uma rota, um percurso, um caminho. Esse risco, como a dupla-aceção da palavra indica não é uma linha reta, é um

esboço, uma aproximação (muitas vezes pelo erro). Interessa-nos, para a poesia de Carlos Drummond de Andrade, o desvio e o paradoxo face à afirmação categórica. O nascimento do questionamento. A resistência como um processo empático face à desistência, ou à hipersimplificação, como um processo criativo incessante que desestabiliza a ideia de pureza e que o mostra como perigoso naquilo que ele tem de forma mais simplificada.

Este tema vai ser tratado, juntamente com o de tempo e memória na primeira secção do artigo, “Tempo e Resistência”. Na segunda parte, “Verticalidade” serão abordadas as formas como a poesia de Carlos Drummond de Andrade se conectam a uma ideia de aprofundamento, a uma condição de verticalidade, para isso os textos de Drummond serão estudados lado a lado com outras obras literárias em diálogo com a crítica e a teoria.

O objetivo do artigo é articular a manifestação destes diferentes conceitos na poética de Drummond e a forma como eles dialogam entre si. Pretende-se que, de uma forma humilde, o texto permita algumas aproximações ao estudo da ideia de resistência na obra de Drummond através de uma leitura atenta da sua poesia.

Tempo e Resistência

O futuro em Drummond estabelece-se como um projeto programático que não é quase nunca mencionado diretamente, apresentando-se disfarçado sobre o uso do imperativo afirmativo ou negativo, como em “procura da poesia”, “Segredo”, “Sossega o amor”, ou de outra forma em “José”. O desdobramento do Eu serve o propósito de indicar um plano ou programa a seguir ou a evitar. O uso do futuro simples é quase inexistente na criação poética de Carlos Drummond de Andrade. Das poucas vezes que ele é usado serve precisamente a intenção de afirmar que o futuro não será tema: “Não serei o poeta de um mundo caduco. / Também não cantarei o mundo futuro” (Andrade 80). É no presente que o poeta (re)afirma o seu tempo e se solidariza com outro. Pela absolutização do presente Drummond procura humanizar o discurso poético; mas se a recusa em usar o futuro é deliberada e direta, a relação com o passado torna-se mais complexa e fluida: emergindo e transbordando a sua força no presente, o passado afirma-se sob o signo de um excesso, de uma memória excessiva, ele serve o mesmo propósito de humanizar e conferir um chão comum. Sob essa perspectiva é importante atentar o que nos diz Silvina Rodrigues Lopes em *Literatura, defesa do atrito* (2012):

O poema anuncia—ele é aparição do outro que se deixa pressentir no instante—súbito, inesperado. Aparição que, segundo Adorno, corresponde ao ‘estremecimento de terror do mundo primitivo’, o que é um modo de dizer que introduz a memória excessiva, a de uma insuficiência da linguagem. (...)

Como memória excessiva, essa energia dissonante nem é relação com um indizível exterior à linguagem, nem corresponde a um dizer enquanto revelação. Ela apresenta-se simplesmente como a falha de um anterior à linguagem (um Deus, uma Natureza, uma Voz) que faz com que para o poeta não exista um passado a conservar na memória, mas um passado sempre a reencontrar, a reinventar—isso mesmo que faz com que o poeta renasça a cada momento no poema. (Lopes 59)

Como memória excessiva o passado afirma-se, muitas das vezes, como o próprio tecido da matéria poética assumindo-se como uma força viva e revitalizadora do presente. Por outro lado, da ausência do futuro, Drummond tece um programa, concordante com o seu tempo, como nos afirma, em *Grammars of Creation*, George Steiner: “The twentieth century has put in doubt the theological, the philosophical, and the political-material insurance for hope. It queries the rationale and credibility of future tenses. It makes understandable the statement that ‘there is abundance of hope, but none for us’ (Franz Kafka)” (9). Drummond procura ressignificar o conceito de esperança, enquanto uma força criadora, que não pode mais passar por uma ideia estática. Nesse sentido, a esperança é um olhar revitalizador e um ato de transformação, um gesto de resistência inseparável da própria criação poética.

É na resistência face ao absurdo que o poema nasce como um gesto de humanização, de criação de relações, um ato de crescimento que se opõe a qualquer desistência (“Não se mate”, “a vida é uma ordem”): a esperança é em si uma ordem reguladora contra qualquer mistificação e idealização, talvez por isso, em contacto com Steiner, o futuro se tenha afastado da sintaxe do século XX:

The utopian, messianic, positivist-meliorist “futures” presumed, blueprinted in the Western legacy from Plato to Lenin, from the Prophets, to Leibniz, may no longer be available to our syntax. We now look back at them. They are monuments for remembrance, as obstinately haunting as Easter Island stone faces, on the journey into our outset. We now remember the futures that were. (15)

Interessa a Drummond definitivamente encontrar esses tempos futuros contidos no passado como uma esperança que se volta a tornar presente (manifestação viva): “Você deve calar urgentemente / as lembranças de menino. / Impossível. Eu conto o meu presente. / Com volúpia voltei a ser menino” (882).

A esperança afirma-se assim como um rompimento e um estremecimento, algo que cresce invariavelmente num fundo opressor, (a flor e a náusea), para que essa humanização tome lugar é necessário repensar o seu conceito, e

para isso continuar a escrever torna-se um imperativo indissociável de um ato revolucionário de resistência, doutra forma Drummond poderia ter afirmado como Günter Grass na sua conferência de 1990, “Apesar de o meu discurso ter de chegar a um ponto final, não se pode prometer um fim a escrever depois de Auschwitz, a menos que o género humano desista de si próprio” (Grass 52). Contra essa desistência a poesia afirma-se como uma resistência, um manter-se de pé, elemento de verticalidade tão celebrada na sua poesia. Face à reflexão de Adorno, Drummond afirma como Günter Grass uma esperança que tem de ser recodificada continuamente, para não cair num conceito vazio, tão estanque ou ausente como a ideia de futuro na sua poesia. É desta humanização do discurso que nasce todo o apelo à vida na sua criação. Apelo que é em si um respeito (um manter de posição), que não despreza as manchas e o impuro, que os vê como um atrito necessário. Compromisso, respeito e apelo que é, em si, uma chamada à resistência e ao estremecimento. É importante lembrar aqui uma passagem do conto “O cão de Hitler” de Günter Grass:

Era uma vez uma menina que se chamava Tulla e tinha uma testa pura de criança. Mas nada é puro. Nem a neve é pura. Nenhuma virgem é pura. Mesmo o porco não é puro. O diabo nunca é totalmente puro. Nenhum tom sobe puro. Todos os violinos o sabem. Todas as estrelas o tilintam. Todas as facas o descascam: nem a batata é pura: tem olhos, têm de ser vazados.

Mas e o sal? O sal é puro! Nada, nem o sal é puro. Deixa resíduo. Que resíduo é que fica? Pode-se lavar. Nada se pode lavar até à pureza. Mas as matérias-primas: puras? São estéreis, mas não puras. A ideia, essa permanece pura. Mesmo no princípio não é pura. Jesus Cristo não é puro. Marx e Engels não são puros. A cinza não é pura. E a hóstia não é pura. Nenhum pensamento se mantém puro. Nem a arte floresce pura. E o sol tem manchas. Todos os génios menstruam. No sofrimento nada o riso. Sentado no fundo do bramido está o silêncio. Nos ângulos encostam-se arcos.—Mas o círculo, esse é puro!

Nenhum círculo se fecha puro. Porque se o círculo é puro, então também a neve é pura, a virgem, os porcos, Jesus Cristo, Marx e Engels, cinza leve, todas as dores, o riso, à esquerda o bramido, à direita o silêncio, os pensamentos imaculados, as oblatas não sangram mais e os génios deixam de ter fluxo, todos os ângulos são ângulos puros, os arcos devotos fechariam círculos; puro e humano, porco, salgado, diabólico, cristão, marxista, sorrindo, bramando, ruminando, fazendo silêncios, sagrado, redondo puro anguloso. E os ossos montes brancos que há pouco foram postos em camadas, cresceriam puros sem gralhas: esplendor da pirâmide. Mas as gralhas, que não são puras, já ontem rangiam por falta de óleo: nada é puro, nenhum círculo, nenhum osso. E os montes construídos para empilhar a pureza, vão derreter, cozer

ferver, para fazer sabão, puro e barato; mas mesmo o sabão não lava até à pureza. (Grass 38-40)

Contra uma pureza homogénea o poema de Drummond afirma a necessidade de olhar o resíduo, o atrito e a diferença, afirmando como Grass que a pureza enquanto conceito reflexionado no século XX é perigosa e desumana, nada mais desumano que o *imaculado*, ou doutra forma, nada mais artificial. Observar e celebrar as manchas é agora uma urgência poética (o sol tem manchas, a vida toda tem manchas), humanizar o discurso através do resíduo é um imperativo. É de salientar como a técnica de diálogo e de refutação no texto de Günter Grass é naturalmente preferida por Drummond, contra um discurso plano e unidirecional, a poesia de Drummond impõe a visão do outro, a fratura e a expansão. Humanizar o discurso é torná-lo plural, incongruente com a nossa própria visão (naquilo que ela possa ter de pura), de uma só (e uma só) coisa. Reflexionando sobre isso mesmo, doutra forma nos diz Edward Said: “nada é puramente uma coisa” (Said 336). Também como Herberto Helder, Drummond nos poderia afirmar: “Eu procuro dizer como tudo é outra coisa” (Helder 109).

A confluência de vozes que acode ao texto de Drummond é disso um reflexo que nos mostra o tecido do texto como uma construção contínua, contra o fechamento e contra a determinação categorizável, mostrando-nos como Gonçalo M. Tavares que a pureza na linguagem é artificial: “Não existe a acção de tornar híbrido um texto. Um texto é naturalmente híbrido. A linguagem mistura espontaneamente. Ficção é ensaio, ensaio é ficção. Apenas existe o acto de impedir o híbrido na linguagem. A pureza na linguagem é artificial” (Tavares 43). O texto de Drummond é híbrido na sua confluência de vozes, no seu diálogo com outros géneros e na contínua experimentação formal, mostrando-nos um caminho mais intenso e plural, um olhar longo e um mapa mais eficaz.

Em Drummond o destino é menos importante que a intensidade com que o caminho (e através dele o texto) é percorrido. O caminho é por isso mais longo. Em detrimento de uma legenda clara, gera-se uma intensidade particular que adensa e conecta mais vividamente as diferentes secções do poema. A revolução e subversão do texto parte da contínua negação, contraposição e diálogo, da confluência de vozes no interior do sujeito, do desdobramento do Eu. Contra a pureza e o homogéneo o poema de Drummond procura abarcar a diversidade e complexidade do mundo, impondo uma desconstrução lógica e uma subversão. O poema de Drummond é nesse aspecto revolucionário, nas dimensões que Julia Kristeva nos afirma:

So within this saturated if not already closed socio-symbolic order, poetry—more precisely, poetic language—reminds us of its eternal function: to introduce through the symbolic that which works on, moves through, and

threatens it. The theory of the unconscious seeks the very thing that poetic language practices within and against the social order: the ultimate means of its transformation or subversion, the precondition for its survival and revolution. (80)

A subversão é desde logo feita a partir do interior da linguagem, vem de dentro, aproxima-se, por isso mesmo, a uma implosão, que derruba as estruturas de um edifício a partir da dinamite que está no seu interior. O poema de Drummond subverte a ordem lógica de um discurso programado, subverte os conceitos de pureza e utilidade, subverte a noção de mercadoria, de significado, de importância, de futuro e de esperança, subverte o significado da palavra a partir do seu interior, utilizando os conceitos para os desconstruir, usando o edifício para o fazer ruir e reconstruir de novas possibilidades rítmico-sugestivas, utiliza o futuro para dizer que ele não será matéria, num apelo à vida e numa resistência que tem que repensar e reposicionar continuamente as formas pelas quais o texto se apresenta formalmente. Procurando em muitos momentos desmistificar o discurso, aliviando a linguagem, o estilo e a forma através do humor e da perspectiva do chão. O poeta português Alexandre O'Neill reflexionando sobre a sua poesia fala-nos da expressão francesa *dégonfler*, que traduz por *desimportantizar*, ação que nos parece importante enquanto mecanismo que Drummond procura por vezes conferir estilisticamente ao texto:

Que quis eu da poesia? Que quis ela de mim?

Não sei bem. Mas há uma palavra francesa com a qual posso perfeitamente exprimir o rompante mais presente em tudo o que escrevo: *dégonfler*.

Em português, traduzi-la-ia por *desimportantizar*, ou em certos momentos, por aliviar, aliviar os outros, e a mim primeiro, da importância que julgamos ter.

Só aliviados podemos tirar o ombro da ombreira e partir fraternalmente, ombro a ombro, para melhores dias, que o mesmo é dizer, para dias mais verdadeiros. (7)

Aliviar um peso, o peso desde logo do transcendente, o peso do futuro, ou o peso do passado naquilo que ele tem de caduco ou de *passado puro*, aliviar o nosso próprio peso e a nossa densidade, impor uma nova vibração. Interessa mais a esta construção poética o entulho do prédio derrubado que os “monumentos erguidos à verdade” (Andrade 303), o pó que se encontra atrás dos móveis, o resíduo e os despojos em detrimento das coisas acabadas e inalteradas. As enumerações anafóricas de objetos presentes em poemas como “Resíduo”

mostram uma vitalidade do mundo exterior em que a realidade mostra a sua face mais frágil e perecível, Drummond mostra-nos continuamente um exercício de continuidade que os objetos partilham entre si, dando-nos permanentemente a ver, contacto com Herberto Helder: “As coisas que são uma só no plural dos nomes” (Helder 86). É por isso necessário dizer esse excesso de vitalidade, nomear tudo com força, para em tudo poder vislumbrar, através do ato poético, uma unidade, o poema é aquele espaço múltiplo que permite vislumbrar “a ligação subterrânea entre homens e coisas” (Andrade 212), o todo orgânico de que nos fala, em forma de arte poética, o texto “versos à boca da noite”: “Que confusão de coisas ao crepúsculo! / Que riqueza! Sem préstimo, é verdade / Bom seria captá-las e compô-las / num todo sábio, posto que sensível” (Andrade 194). Esse todo procurado na pluralidade dos nomes e das coisas aproxima-se à “inteligência do universo / comprada em sal, em rugas e cabelo” (Andrade 194), com que termina o poema. Movimento de procura e de repulsa que mostra um paradoxo vital na criação de Drummond. A “pesquisa ardente” de “A máquina do mundo” leva a um estado de repulsa face à compreensão totalizante que nos mostra a preponderância do processo e do caminho em detrimento do resultado e do destino.

Verticalidade

O caminho é longo e o olhar prolongado num respeito humilde à plural manifestação da vida, como escreve Drummond a João Cabral de Melo Neto em carta de 17 de Janeiro de 1942: “o essencial mesmo é viver e acreditar na força formidável da vida, que é nosso alimento e nosso material de trabalho” (Andrade 175). Vida que para ser contemplada e agradecida na sua mutabilidade e movimento tem de ser também vislumbrada na sua interrupção súbita: é importante notar aqui o valor que Eduardo Sterzi conferiu ao esquema narrativo da interrupção presente em diferentes etapas da sua poesia:

Este esquema pode ser descrito de forma simples: um sujeito desloca-se, literal ou figurativamente, de corpo inteiro ou só por meio do olhar ou da memória, de um ponto a outro; súbito, seu curso é interrompido por um determinado objeto. As consequências desse encontro nel mezzo del cammin, diferem de poema para poema, conforme a natureza particular de cada objeto e a caracterização singular do sujeito em cada uma das suas aparições. (Sterzi 49)

Esse é o caso de “No meio do caminho”, mas também de “Aporo” ou “A máquina do mundo”, a interrupção figura na poesia de Drummond como um atrito que faz repensar o tempo e o espaço em toda a sua unidade. Momento de epifania e de desaceleração que permite uma visão mais profunda e englobante

do mundo. O tema da mineração é um desses exemplos de busca de profundidade e de interrupção, num paralelismo com uma imagem tão vital para a poesia como a do poeta Seamus Heaney em “Digging”, podemos também afirmar que em Drummond o ato de escrita surge em paralelismo com a escavação, com a mineração, com a procura de ir ao fundo, de penetrar (surdamente) na natureza da palavra, do ser, com o aprofundamento naquilo que constitui o ser-se um humano, o estar a caminho: uma razão, uma dúvida. A interrupção de um estado de horizontalidade em detrimento de um ir ao fundo, de uma presença a prumo:

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

.....
The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it. (Heaney 3)

Tal como em “mineração do outro”, escrever é ir ao fundo, trazer à superfície, iniciar um ofício de procura. A caneta e a enxada confundem-se nas suas funções e na sua escrita, ambas vão além da superfície, o poema permite chegar mais perto (mais fundo): “Chega mais perto e contempla as palavras. / Cada uma / tem mil faces secretas sob a face neutra / e te pergunta, sem interesse pela resposta, / pobre ou terrível, que lhe deres: / Trouxeste a chave?” (Andrade 118), sob a face neutra (a denotação e o estado de dicionário, liso), esconde-se a pluralidade da conotação, as dobras, a plurissignificação: as mil faces secretas acedidas através de um aprofundamento, de um esforço radical, experiência de verticalidade, de penetração, ou em contacto com “Versos à boca da noite”, de mergulho e de fusão.

Se na sua fase inicial, a poesia de Carlos Drummond de Andrade reflete uma visão fragmentada da realidade, sobretudo em *Alguma Poesia* (1930) e *Brejo das Almas* (1934), elemento que se radicaliza em *A Rosa do Povo* (1945), de *Claro Enigma* (1951) a *Boitempo* (1968) o mundo ganha mais organicidade. Se em *A Rosa do Povo*, Drummond afirma: “Hoje estou só, Nenhum menino salta / da

minha vida para restaurá-la” (Andrade 192), no poema “Intimação” de *Boitempo*, afirma: “Eu conto o meu presente. / Com volúpia voltei a ser menino” (Andrade 882). Nas obras finais a híper-referencialidade de elementos exteriores diminui assim como as enumerações caóticas, gera-se um movimento do exterior para o interior, da superfície para o fundo. Desta maior organicidade e unidade é sintomático o poema “(In)Memória”, segundo poema de *Boitempo* (1968):

De cacos, de buracos
de hiatos e de vácuos
de elipses, psius
faz-se, desfaz-se, faz-se
uma incorpórea face,
resumo do existido.

Apura-se o retrato
na mesma transparência:
eliminando cara
situação e trânsito
subitamente vara
o bloqueio da terra.

E chega àquele ponto
onde é tudo moído
no almofariz do ouro:
uma Europa, um museu,
o projetado amar,
o conclusivo silêncio. (Andrade 882)

A nível formal, o uso de três estrofes permite uma maior sugestão de completude e de conclusão: a primeira estrofe põe em diálogo, de forma cruzada, os campos lexicais do fragmento, (os cacos e os hiatos) e o do vazio ou lacunar (buracos, vácuos, elipses), as duas redes tecem entre si a imagem de uma falta e descompensação, de um mundo quebrado que falta preencher, de uma *falta que ama*. Toda essa descompensação fragmentária é continuamente articulada e desfeita, “faz-se, desfaz-se, faz-se”, constituindo em si um mapa do real, “*um resumo do existido*”, o sentido de todo afirma-se como perene mas também como construção e aperfeiçoamento de uma imagem do próprio Eu: “Apura-se o retrato / na mesma transparência”. Na terceira estrofe, a tensão inicial dilui-se mostrando o momento em que todas as experiências vitais fragmentárias são *moídas no almofariz do ouro*. O verbo moer sugere um ato de trituração, mas também de perda de densidade, o ato de fazer em pó inerente também à própria dissolução que é o esquecimento. É através do próprio esquecimento que esta

poética confere às memórias fragmentárias um sentido de organicidade, sentido vivamente presente numa das unidades poéticas de *Boitempo: Esquecer para lembrar*. Com o esquecimento gera-se um ato de libertação, de abrandamento e de alívio, que permite o deixar pelo caminho os cacos, completar os buracos, os vácuos, as elipses. O esquecimento como ato voluntário permite a libertação da memória excessiva, e está por isso vinculado ao próprio ato de libertação da escrita do poema. Escrever é libertar e resistir. Dialogando com outro poema de *Boitempo*, o ato de esquecimento permite reagrupar, reordenar, a “coleção de cacos” iniciada na infância, procurada na terra, coleção que implica, no fluxo da vida, a doença e a violência: “a coleção e seu sinal de sangue; a coleção e seu risco de tétano” (Andrade 974). Também neste poema há um olhar para o chão que o atravessa do início ao fim; em detrimento de uma procura horizontal, inicia-se uma busca vertical: “Já não coleciono selos. O mundo me inquieta. / Tem países demais, geografias demais” [...] “Agora coleciono cacos de louça / quebrada há muito tempo.” “Desenterrados—faço questão—da horta” (Andrade 974). Através do ato de desenterrar, o chão confere unidade, os cacos esparsos e ocultos na terra são trazidos à superfície, desentranhados, formam agora uma coleção atesourada.

De outra forma nos parece dizer Drummond que a memória individual se confunde com a memória da terra, que entre as duas, e através da infância, se gera um ato de consonância. O ato infantil de atesourar e de fazer coleções passa também pela criação de um vínculo, de uma conexão com a terra, na sua origem a palavra *brincar* deriva do étimo latino *vinculum* (laço, ligação), que por sua vez provém do verbo “vincire” (prender, seduzir, encantar). Quando brinca a criança estabelece vínculos com o outro e com o mundo, inicia um conjunto de representações, de vínculos, doutra forma nos diz Mia Couto, brincar “é a génese do que podemos dizer criação artística” (1039). Não é tanto o brinquedo como objeto acabado que interessa à criança, mas a transformação do mundo em brincadeira, o devir-jogo do mundo, a sua metamorfose. A brincadeira confere ao mundo um sentido de restauração e renascimento, através de uma relação *sacralizada* com o tempo, que os adultos tentam organizar logicamente, como no poema “Brincar na rua”: “Tarde? / O dia dura menos que um dia. / O corpo ainda não parou de brincar / e já tarde estão chamando da janela: É tarde” (Andrade 939). Para a criança, o chão confere unidade, o ato de enterrar e desenterrar é por isso mesmo a possibilidade de um encontro vital. Gesto que a poesia de Drummond recupera através da memória, da recordação do jogo, mas também na constante recorrência do movimento vertical tão radicalmente presente na sua poesia. Trata-se de caminhar entre cacos, fragmentos, vazios, o mundo adulto, de uma unidade perdida. Aquilo que Drummond nos afirma num exercício radical é que o jogo pode ser repostado e que no fim, só ele faz sentido, enquanto caminhar-vínculo e enquanto compromisso ininterrupto. Doutra forma nos diria Emil Cioran:

O homem ama a tensão, o caminhar perpétuo: para onde caminhará no interior da perfeição? Inapto para o eterno presente, receia além disso a sua monotonia, escolho onde embate o paraíso na sua dupla forma: religiosa e utópica. A história não seria, em última instância, o resultado do nosso medo do tédio, desse medo que nos fará sempre saborear o condimento e a novidade do desastre, e preferir não importa que desgraça à estagnação? (Cioran 130)

Contra uma visão parcial de perfeição é necessário caminhar, escrever, revitalizar, tendo consciência de uma aprendizagem e de um fazer-se contínuo, como resumiria Paul Éluard: “O amor é o homem inacabado” (Éluard 24), ou Laís de Aquino “viver—eis a fissura / é estar inacabado até o fim”.¹ Os dois poetas mostram-nas esta condição como uma ultrapassagem indissociável da condição humana, uma negação de toda a catalogação, do estanque e do estéril: marca vital do dizer poético de Drummond.

Como “falta que ama”, o caminho é poroso, carregado de sentidos e de memórias. O dizer poético de Drummond procura preencher com vida, completar, resistir: “Sendo poesia uma construção sobre ruínas, é aquilo que se salva no tempo e se estabelece como memória do próprio tempo. Poesia é o que resiste à destruição” (Sant’Anna 190). O termo “desistência” aparece-nos na poesia de Drummond vinculado ao que se encontra irrevariavelmente afastado, ao que vem de fora, como a máquina do mundo ou a coleção de selos de todos os países, que nos aparece em “Coleção de cacos”, de uma apreensão totalizante de um todo exterior, que se dá enquanto busca mas não enquanto conclusão. Nesse sentido duas forças convergem continuamente na sua criação, uma centrípeta e uma centrífuga, uma de recolha e uma de expansão, uma em direção ao centro e outra de permanente explosão face ao exterior, a desistência nunca é total, sobre o seu conceito encontra-se uma corda em tensão, onde implodem sentidos adversos, como de outra forma sobre qualquer conceito usado por Drummond. António Carlos Secchin observou com detalhe esses dois movimentos no seu ensaio “Drummond: Infância e literatura”, observando a eclosão dos movimentos centrípeta e centrífugo nos dois primeiros poemas publicados em livro pelo poeta: “Poema de Sete faces” e “Infância”, de *Alguma Poesia* (1930). Se em “Poema de Sete Faces” se diz, “Mundo mundo, vasto mundo / mais vasto é meu coração” (5), no poema seguinte, dá-se um movimento de recolha em direção ao tempo mítico da infância, movimento em direção à terra. A tensão é nesse sentido total:

Podemos, ao longo da trajetória de Drummond, acompanhar esses sucessivos movimentos de sístoles e diástoles, de expansões e retrações. Num determinado momento, vai predominando o cidadão com o sentimento do

mundo e, logo após, teremos um fazendeiro do ar, recolhendo-se em seus mais íntimos recessos. (Secchin 36)

A um tempo da “doxa”, da opinião e da crença comum, Drummond impõe a força e coesão do “paradoxo”: a contestação, o contra-argumento, que é erguido no interior da própria reflexão, impondo o diálogo a confluência de vozes e o desdobramento, o tempo, diz-nos Drummond, não é mais de verdades feitas, de movimentos únicos e unidirecionais. O paradoxo impõe-se como uma consonância com o tempo, elemento propiciador de diálogo intertextual contínuo no interior da própria obra. Um diálogo físico e agitado, feito de retornos, de alçapões, de passagens secretas, mapas com legendas pouco claras, mas mapas vivos, movediços, que mostram um caminho mais longo. O corpo do texto de Drummond é atravessado continuamente por diferentes velocidades e direções que desestabilizam qualquer interpretação rápida, superficial e homogênea.

Em contacto com Martin Heidegger, nada mais adequado ao estar no mundo e na criação de Drummond que aquilo que nos diz em *Caminhos da Floresta* (1950): “Os poetas são, entre os mortais, aqueles que cantando solenemente o deus do vinho, pressentem as pegadas dos deuses errantes, não se desviam delas, e traçam para os mortais, seus irmãos, o caminho do desvio” (Heidegger 326). De certa forma, contra a pretensão desta afirmação, Drummond afirma a perecibilidade da sua condição, de ser humano entre humanos, de uma condição partilhável e humilde, mas de um ser que incorpora constantemente o desvio, um estar a caminho entre seres humanos e utensílios humanos: “Não me leias se buscas / flamantes novidades / ou sopro de Camões. / Aquilo que revelo / e o mais que segue oculto / em vítreos alçapões / são notícias humanas, / simples estar-no-mundo (Andrade 3), desvio indissociável do próprio prazer da escrita, da sua fluidez e fruição: “E nada resta, mesmo do que escreves / e te forçou ao exílio das palavras, / senão contentamento de escrever” (Andrade 248). Sobre este prazer físico diz-nos Camus: “Escrevo como nado, porque o meu corpo assim o exige” (Camus 87). Exigência (corpórea e concreta) que Drummond nos afirma continuamente como uma força gravitacional da sua escrita. Exigência que nos afirma através da negação, do questionamento, do mergulho, do paradoxo e da aporia; da ressignificação contínua, da exigência para com o tempo, para com os seres humanos, para com o mundo e para com a linguagem, exigência (física) para com a poesia e para com o ser, exigência para com a vida, para com uma concordância, para com a multiplicidade, para com o outro, para com o sentido e a sua destruição, para com a revitalização de qualquer conhecimento feito, exigência para com a humanidade, para com aquilo que nela há de ultrapassagem e de ausência absoluta de uma condição.

Doutra forma, Drummond nos diz que não há uma condição dentro do humano, mas sim um tornar-se humano a cada instante, uma ultrapassagem contínua de toda e qualquer catalogação, ultrapassagem que nos mostra a

mesma aceção que o conceito detinha na Antiguidade Clássica. Na Grécia Antiga, humanidade era um verbo. Drummond reivindica essa mesma aceção para a sua visão de ser individual e de espécie, ser a caminho, ser em construção e destruição, ser em contínua metamorfose, que não pode ser definido ou compartimentado, ser que não se pode limitar. Drummond afirma, através da sua poesia, uma exigência para com a humanidade como verbo, um compromisso com a vida, com o mundo, com o outro. Compromisso, abalável e perecível, perene, com o ser, mas um compromisso de resistência, de exigência, de afirmação, uma exigência imperativa e absoluta do corpo naquilo que ele tem de transcendência. De ser total. Como em “Missão do corpo”:

Salve, meu corpo, minha estrutura de viver
e de cumprir os ritos do existir!
Amo tuas imperfeições e maravilhas,
amo-as com gratidão, pena e raiva intercadentes.
Em ti me sinto dividido, campo de batalha
sem vitória para nenhum lado
e sou feliz
na medida do que acaso me ofereças.

Será mesmo acaso,
será lei divina ou dragonária
que me parte e reparte em pedacinhos?
Meu corpo, minha dor,
Meu prazer e transcendência,
És afinal meu ser inteiro e único. (1419)

Na fase final da sua criação, Drummond apresenta-nos um corpo liberto de toda a idealidade que possa haver na ideia de alma, o corpo é apresentado como um ser completo, independente e vital em si, uma estrutura de viver totalizante na absorção da realidade. Ele configura-se como um espaço cosmificado onde o mundo ressoa e se faz sentir; com as suas “impurezas e maravilhas”, a experiência metafísica e transcendente é apresentada, nesta fase, como indissociável da sua genética e do seu tecido físico, da sua escala humana. Escala que no poema se mostra como uma imanência, enquanto completude o corpo une o humano e o divino na sua própria materialidade e concreção “és afinal meu ser inteiro e único”, despolarizando e unindo as ideias de corpo e espírito, o poema sugere também o mesmo ato de *desimportantizar* ao desconstruir estes dois conceitos.

Este é também um corpo construído poeticamente, através da linguagem e da experiência, tecido, juntamente com a criação da imagem do mundo; indissociável dela dá-se uma criação dupla. No seu livro “El hacedor”, Jorge Luis

Borges cria uma imagem que é vital para entender esta construção em Carlos Drummond de Andrade:

Un hombre se propone la tarea de dibujar el mundo. A lo largo de los años puebla un espaço con imágenes de provincias, de reinos, de montañas, de bahias, de naves, de islas, de peces, de habitaciones, de instrumentos, de astros, de caballos y de personas. Poco antes de morir, descubre que ese paciente laberinto de líneas traza la imagen de su cara. (94)

Criação dupla: escrevendo o mundo, Drummond escreve-se a si próprio, num exercício de mapeamento e criação que destabiliza as noções de interior e exterior, que repensa a noção de limite e determinação. A autocaracterização em Drummond é, por isso, indissociável de uma imagem do mundo. A intensidade da sua poética parte dessa criação dupla. A tarefa de desenhar o mundo é também a tarefa de se recriar a si próprio num contínuo cruzamento de forças, vozes, opostos, estilos e densidades que chocam, que se fragmentam, que se diluem, mas que tecem e constituem uma obra profunda e plural, amplamente dialogante com o tempo e com a tradição, constantemente atual, cruzando os nossos tecidos, os nossos muros e os nossos medos, obra extraordinariamente dialogante com a condição humana, com a sua história, mas também com a sua possibilidade, com o seu tornar-se sempre, e a todo momento, outro.

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Review: Coady, Maria R. *Connecting School and the Multilingual Home: Theory and Practice for Rural Educators.*

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Coady, Maria R. *Connecting School and the Multilingual Home: Theory and Practice for Rural Educators.* Blue Ridge Summit, PA: Multilingual Matters, 2019. ISBN 78-1-7889-2326-2.

Maria R. Coady (2019)'s *Connecting School and the Multilingual Home: Theory and Practice for Rural Educators* presents a collection of research studies as well as literature syntheses that elucidate educators' struggles in serving students in rural communities. Coady provides a variety of frameworks that conceptualize and realign essential practices to address the needs of immigrant, migrant, and refugee students and their families in conjunction with an understanding of these groups' ontology and epistemology. More importantly, although Coady's work centers around diverse research models, it aims to use these varied findings as a way to connect the public with resources that can have a practical use. The goal of this book is to connect research to practice, which it does well by making in-depth information on best practices readily accessible for educators.

Connecting School and the Multilingual Home is organized in eight chapters that structure the research sequentially to clearly portray the intricacy and interconnectedness of the themes presented. In the introduction, Coady describes the ever-changing needs of the 21st-century global environment and how demands on education are jointly evolving in response to a surge of multilingual students. In addition, Coady describes the needs of multilingual families specifically in rural areas where access to resources is often scarce. As part of this section, Coady defines relevant terms that are used throughout the text and describes its objectives, structure, and intended audience.

Chapter one presents valuable information on rurality as a way to understand the geographical context within which multilingual families and children operate. Coady points to the ambiguous distinction between rural and urban as independent concepts; to that end, the United Nations notes that the characteristics that distinguish the two are "not yet amenable to a single definition" (as cited in Coady 24). Based on the distance between communities, however, there are three different types of ruralities: fringe, distance, and remote. Understanding these intricacies is essential to rethinking rural physical spaces as social processes that take place within geographical parameters, which helps to discern the ways in which people work, cooperate, and live. This leads to an understanding of the challenges that spatial isolation may cause for multilingual children and their families; consequently, in reframing strategies for engagement, it is important to

consider rurality as part of the multiple systems that may influence home-school interactions.

Chapter two provides a literature review that describes a strengths-based approach for differentiated family engagement, which contrasts with the oft-used deficit paradigm. In this alternative, Coady recognizes the contributions of these families by advocating for linguistically responsive pedagogy. This chapter concludes by delineating the importance of relational trust and care in connecting with families.

Throughout chapter three, Coady reiterates the growing and diversifying nature of multilingual, rural communities, consequently underscoring the essential connection that educators must establish between schools and homes. In order to engage multilingual families in rural learning communities, Coady argues, educators must first seek to understand the cultural differences within each unique cultural group. To mitigate issues of appropriate and efficient multilingual family engagement, Coady points to research that suggests the impact of communication with the child within the home about the importance of education, in addition to prioritizing high expectations for future academic achievement. International research further corroborates that engagement rooted in the home cultivates a love and interest in learning. Although this body of research suggests some practical strategies for parental engagement, the majority of the proposed frameworks are grounded in a Western cultural model of education that disregards parenting as a culturally specific activity. Therefore, Coady emphasizes moving away from adapting a fossilized set of standard practices that does not contextualize according to the cultural backgrounds of multilingual families.

Chapter four further analyzes multilingual family engagement and explores how educators can learn about the needs of rural multilingual families and students. Specifically, in this section Coady suggests a shift in the pedagogical lens to view interactions with these groups as opportunities rather than challenges. As such, it is the educators' responsibility to bridge the linguistic and cultural differences between school communities and families in a way that utilizes these groups' background knowledge to inform possible communication approaches.

In chapter five, Coady underscores practical applications that educators can adopt to engage multilingual families. She conceptualizes an approach for differentiated family engagement using the work of Ladson-Billings (1994) on culturally responsive pedagogy in conjunction with Lucas (2008)'s research on linguistically relevant pedagogy. Both frameworks address the importance of using students' language as a resource for student learning. This chapter makes strong arguments for language as a tool that can facilitate cross-cultural interactions between the home and the learning community.

In chapter six, Coady describes the intersecting challenges that poverty, immigration, and rurality present for Latino families and consequent effects

on the education of children. Specifically, Coady highlights Bronfenbrenner (1979)'s Ecological Social Systems Theory as a way to identify factors that may come into play and affect a child's education. In chapter seven, a focus on the Rural Women's Health Project, an advocacy group, offers additional perspectives in delineating the role of community agencies in service of rural multilingual families.

Lastly, chapter eight concludes by suggesting practical ways to increase understanding of multilingual families and to engage them in rural settings. Learning about the families prior to meeting them is key; the work of educators should begin before the first in-person interaction and this initiative should be consistently maintained throughout the year. In addition, the best approach for engagement is a family-centered, as opposed to school-centered, approach where families' voices can be heard and taken into consideration in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways.

Overall, Maria R. Coady's *Connecting School and the Multilingual Home* presents relevant information in a concise manner; the author adequately provides research that depicts various frameworks pertinent to engaging multilingual families in rural settings and contributes her own personal criticism where appropriate. For example, Coady criticizes the static nature of Epstein (2011)'s work when she argues that any proposed set of activities that is not contextualized to address the varied realities of multilingual families only serves to distance the home from the school community. In addition, the scenarios included in the book serve as points of entry to introduce corresponding research that conveys very relatable, real-life situations for educators. Nevertheless, although Coady's work sufficiently covers a vast array of research-based findings, it lacks recommendations for any potential structural shift that could better accommodate and include multilingual families and children.

All in all, however, *Connecting School and the Multilingual Home* is a valuable read for all educators, not just those working in rural communities. It describes a specific social microcosm that nevertheless serves to inform a wide audience of the importance of creating an equitable and inclusive macrocosm through national educational practices and policies that can extend to all learning communities, regardless of the diversity that resides within the classroom walls.

Review: Bishop, Karen Elizabeth. *The Space of Disappearance: A Narrative Commons in the Ruins of Argentine State Terror*.

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Bishop, Karen Elizabeth. *The Space of Disappearance: A Narrative Commons in the Ruins of Argentine State Terror*. Albany: SUNY P, 2020. Pp. 244. ISBN 978-1-4384-7851-7.

Argentina's last military dictatorship disappeared an estimated 30,000 people from 1976 to 1983, eliminating political dissidents through a dedicated campaign of state-sponsored political terror. In the decades since the return to democracy, the country has struggled to contend with the judicial, political, and cultural consequences of these crimes against humanity. As such, it is unsurprising that disappearance haunts a significant portion of Argentine post-dictatorial literature and has attracted the attention of many critics seeking to understand this legacy of absence.

Karen Elizabeth Bishop's first monograph, *The Space of Disappearance*, advances the existing scholarship by thinking beyond disappearance as subject matter, instead focusing on narrative form. Bishop investigates and traces the shapes of the empty spaces left behind by violence and power: the epistemological gaps, the negations of death, the suspensions of human rights. In fact, none of the texts that Bishop examines center around the story of someone disappeared under the last dictatorship. Rather than tempt us too much with disappearance as an event, she repeatedly draws our attention to "the forms that disappearance acquires, the spaces it takes up, and the oblique reading practices it compels" (2). Disappearance as narrative form, she further theorizes, arises in concurrence with both the increasing use of disappearance as a strategy of state terror and the "disappearance of literature" in the late-twentieth century as predicted by Maurice Blanchot. On the one hand, disappearance operates as a strategy to disguise or displace our attention from political violence; on the other, in the aftermath of World War II, art finds itself unable to represent the real or communicate its essential meaning, and so "slips out of grasp," an unending attempt to communicate that is never actualized (194). However, as Bishop argues, disappearance can help us learn to look obliquely and perceive this gap in what literature is able to do—what she refers to as the "most literary"—and allow forms of political disappearance to come into focus as well (195). Moreover, Bishop asserts that knowledge of these forms of disappearance allows us to join in a "narrative common place defined by new forms of cognitive and imaginative engagement itself transferable to other spheres of aesthetic, political, and judicial action" (192).

Bishop identifies four formal modes of disappearance that structure her close readings: dissimulation, doubling and displacement, suspension, and embodiments. In chapter one, dissimulation, defined as “the attempt to hide, mask, or deflect presence” (41), appears in Rodolfo Walsh’s *Variaciones en rojo* as a strategy for covering up the evidence of violence. By demonstrating the use of deductive logic and spatial reasoning as ways to look (and read) obliquely, Walsh helps us to identify and understand what has been made to appear absent. Bishop argues that *Variaciones en rojo* serves as an early blueprint for both later literature dealing with disappearance and “the logical deconstruction of the legal and political defense of disappearance as a tool of state repression” by demonstrating the ways that art can be used both to conceal and decode the truth of violence (67).

Chapter two is dedicated to the techniques of doubling and displacement at work in Julio Cortázar’s *Fantomas contra los vampiros multinacionales* and the role of historical consciousness in fighting against and preventing human rights violations. In Cortázar’s graphic novel, a plague of disappearing books is used to displace the world’s attention from crimes against humanity, demonstrating how “disappearance as a fundamental tool of state repression performs and propagates its own cover-up in the interest of protecting a larger, more entrenched system of ongoing violence” (71). The aesthetic project of the graphic novel serves the political purpose of helping instruct readers in taking on a “double vision that allows for a focus on the past and the future at the same time” in order to displace our attention back to the historical catastrophe at hand so that we might intervene (95).

Chapters three and four both examine novels by Tomás Eloy Martínez, the former addressing suspension in *La novela de Perón* and the latter discussing embodiment in *Santa Evita*. In the former, Bishop argues that Martínez challenges dominant historical narratives of Perón’s life and political legacy by suspending his protagonist on a flight across the Atlantic and withholding the narration of key events in his life. In this way, Martínez seeks to explore the gaps in his personal biography and highlight what is missing from the historical record. Martínez’s use of suspension both recalls the Argentine military government’s suspensions of Congress and habeas corpus and serves to reveal “that the historical center is void and covered over with narrative invention” and we must learn other ways to know, understand, and build the world (148). Following this examination of *La novela de Perón*, Bishop reviews the role of Evita’s embalmed corpse in *Santa Evita* “as a dynamic and ethically charged metonym for what has been absented or left out of Argentine history, most pointedly the dictatorship’s disappeared” (36). The cadaver, Bishop explains, operates as a “null intersection” which, as an embodied receptacle for what has been disappeared, becomes a site of feminized excess that actively shapes the novel and our ideas of this history (166).

Bishop's interest in disappearance as narrative form is novel and useful. She insists upon finding a way to give space and shape—even if only in a narrative sense—to that which is normally defined so ambiguously by its absence or the traces it leaves behind. Her meticulous readings of primary texts are contextualized with apt explorations of their authors' biographical, political, and aesthetic contexts. Moreover, they shed new light on the ways that Argentine literature has both been shaped by state-sponsored disappearance and impacted subsequent political, ethical, and aesthetic visions of how to contend with this legacy. Perhaps most notably, she seeks to marry the aesthetic and the literary with the political and the ethical, teasing out how lessons of narrative structure can inform approaches to human rights and aid in dismantling systems of violence.

Occasionally, the monograph's vast theoretical scope—encompassing aesthetics and form, the disappearance of literature, postmodern concerns about representability, epistemology, human rights, visions of historical catastrophe, feminist visions of embodiment, and the creation of a narrative commons—can become repetitive in some instances and unclear in others, with the relationships between these approaches not always being explicitly stated. Despite the wide range of theoretical lenses that enter the discussion, some key concepts that have otherwise played a significant role in the scholarship of disappearance go nearly unmentioned, most notably spectralities studies and memory studies. Similarly, the emphasis on literary form leaves some key historical and political considerations underexplored. For example, Bishop neglects to take into account the role of fear, which has the potential to undermine the use of deductive logic as a means of resisting disappearance as a tool of state terror. Moreover, Bishop's formal modes of disappearance are not always clearly delineated, having some areas of overlap that could be better defined.

Overall, *The Space of Disappearance* is a welcome addition to the fields of literary criticism and Latin American studies. The monograph's complex theoretical and formal focus makes it apt for scholars of Argentine literature particularly and literary form and human rights more generally. Bishop also tasks future scholars with expanding this study of the forms of disappearance to other national, political, and literary contexts, with the hope that her work “reveals disappearance to be a defining feature of a more expansive, more complicated modern condition that is not yet exhausted” (38). *The Space of Disappearance* demonstrates the importance of learning to look otherwise at what has been absented—from our histories, our lives, our cultures—in order to find common ground and dismantle systems and legacies of violence that would otherwise lead to catastrophe.

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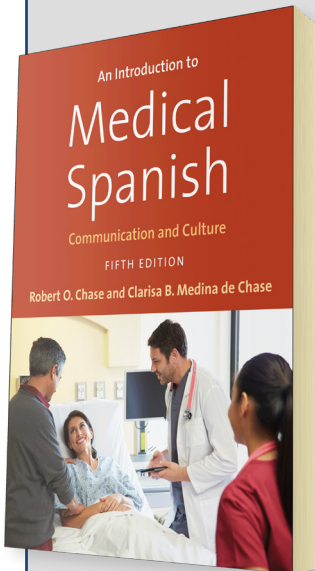
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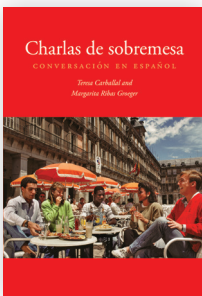
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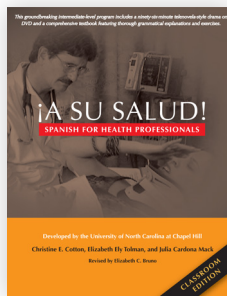
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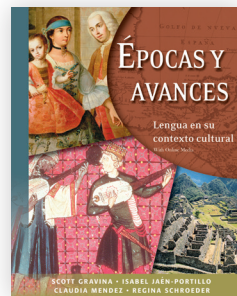
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