

## Introduction

### Memorial and postmemorial narratives

“Nowadays, memory narratives tend to be different or even to substitute historical discourse by proposing other approaches of the past that assume their own subjectivity and an off-centred perspective”. Thus, the organisers of the issue **Memorial and postmemorial narratives** – Conceição Coelho Ferreira (Lyon – France), Ilana Heineberg (Bordeaux – France), and Sandra Assunção (Paris – France) – which is published in *Revista Letras Raras*’s ninth edition, vol. 2, in 2020, proposed to receive reflections that are materialised here through 10 papers about the aforementioned theme. In fact, the events that happened in 2020 will be recorded on personal diaries, on historical documents, and on literary narratives as a “duty of memory”, according to Ricoeur (2007), since “[...] the deficiencies stemming from forgetting, [...], should not be treated straight away as pathological forms, as dysfunctions, but as the shadowy underside of the bright region of memory”. (RICOUER, 2007, p. 40).

Writing transforms itself in our “duty of memory”, so to speak, since it may imply some marks of a personal or collective moment. This is what Germanotta (2010) reinforces: “It is necessary a deep personal commitment in order to control emotions and intellectual confusion. Then, writing becomes an interior search that will change the need and the meaning of writing itself” (GERMANOTTA, 2010, p. 15)<sup>1</sup>. Based on these perceptions, the papers presented in this issue walk through literary spaces from different continents witnessed by narrators who bring up experiences, testimonies, traumas... In this issue, there are also reflections founded by contemporary thinkers and scholars who confirm that, for instance, “the construction of testimony into a literary genre is the result of a normative operation that is authorised by a norm without founding it”<sup>2</sup>. (COQUIO, 2015, p. 182).

According to this perspective, the authors Conceição Coelho Ferreira, from Lumière University Lyon 2, Ilana Heineberg, from Bordeaux Montaigne University, and Sandra Assunção, from Paris Nanterre University, shed light on the contribution of theorists who are devoted to “memory and the complex representation of the past” in a more theoretical approach with a view to “discuss the role of narration and fiction as mediators in the interpretation of the lived experience”. In the paper **Thinking of memory and postmemory narratives in vulnerable times**, the authors highlight how the “intergenerational transmission of traumatic memories offers some tools for the interpretation of the so-

<sup>1</sup> Il faut un engagement personnel profond pour maîtriser les émotions et l'égarement intellectuel. Écrire se transforme alors en une quête intérieure, qui va changer la nécessité et le sens de l'écriture même. (GERMANOTTA, 2010, p. 15, our translation).

<sup>2</sup> La constitution du témoignage en genre littéraire est le résultat d'une opération normative qui s'autorise d'une norme sans la fonder. (COQUIO, 2015, p. 182, our translation).

called postmemory generation works”. Hence, this first contribution is enlightening in terms of laying foundations for the other papers of this special issue.

Among the other papers for the ninth issue of *Revista Letras Raras*, the memory of space and of society were subjects that called the attention of collaborators. Rayron Lennon Costa Sousa, professor of the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA) and PhD student at the Federal University of Piauí (UFPI), and Risoleta Viana Freiras, professor of the State University of Maranhão (UEMA) and PhD student at the Federal University of Piauí (UFPI), engaged in the literary reconstruction of Milton Hatoum’s city of Manaus, in the chronicle *Margens da cidade* (2013). Based on the theoretical framework of Aleida Assmann, Maurice Halbwachs, Yi-Fu Tuan, and Gaston Bachelard, the text **Memory and Space of the city of Manaus in the chronicle Dried margins of the city (2013), by Milton Hatoum** challenges the memory constructed during one’s childhood by revisiting these spaces in adult life. Now centred in Pernambuco and Minas Gerais, space is the common thread of the contribution of Maria Alice Ribeiro Gabriel, researcher of the Federal University of Uberlândia (UFU). Through the narratives of Gilberto Freyre, Jayme Gris, and Pedro Nava on ghostly meetings and haunted places, the historian demonstrates that these stories are often linked to traumatic memories and experiences of slavery, migration, and urbanisation in the paper **Haunted heritage: Space and history as repositories of cultural memory in Gilberto Freyre and Jayme Griz**. José Otávio Monteiro Badaró Santos, from the State University of Southwest Bahia (UESB), Oton Magno Santana dos Santos, PhD in Education from the University of Campinas (UNICAMP), and Mateus Santos Souza, specialist in Politics and International Relations by the Foundation School of Sociology and Political Science of São Paulo (FESPSP), are also devoted to the Northeast region of Brazil, precisely to Jorge Amado’s Bahia on *Cacau*. The paper **Literature and representation: a critical analysis of Cacau, by Jorge Amado** rereads the second novel of the writer based on the concept of “representation” proposed by Roger Chartier and Louis Marin, considering the sensibility of a group of people with their cultural practices, always marked with positions and choices.

Some authors are also interested in literary works that criticise some collective and traumatic historical events. Past is thus revisited according to decentralised perspectives that question metanarratives. Based on the analysis of the historical novels *Desmundo* (1996), by Ana Miranda, *A Guerrilheira* (1979), by João Felício dos Santos, and *Xicoténcatl* (1826), by an anonymous author, Beatrice Uber, Leila Shaí Del Pozo González, and Marina Luísa Rhode, PhD students at the State University of Western Paraná (UNIOESTE), demonstrate how female characters so important to the construction of collective identities in Latin America were put on the fringes of history. In the paper **The construction of the collective memory by literature: women in America**, the authors emphasise visibility and protagonism from the female and ex-centric standpoint in these three memory narratives that deconstruct images of subalternity, opposing the narratives presented by official historiography. Jéssica

Amanda de Souza Silva, PhD student at the University of Aveiro (Portugal), in turn, analyses the novel *Beloved* (1987), by Toni Morrison, and proposes a reflection about the traumatic memory of slavery and the function performed by testimony literature as a narration of pain and resiliency. The paper **Trauma, memory and identity in *Beloved*, by Toni Morrison** highlights the real facts, basis of the novel, by emphasising the place of memory and speech against the historical amnesia imposed to a whole specific oppressed race and, at the same time, questioning the hierarchisation of knowledge.

According to the French discourse analysis perspective, based on the philosophical and political considerations of Giorgio Agamben and Walter Benjamin concerning poverty in the experience of testimony, Julien da Silva Marques, PhD student at the University of the South of Santa Catarina (UNISUL) and teacher of the Federal Institute of Education, Science, and Technology of Rio Grande do Sul (IFRS), and Diego Airoso da Motta, PhD in Sociology at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRS), take as their object of research some testimonies about the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship and the resignification of this period in the present, which results in the paper **Discursive remains: considerations on the testimony about the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship**. Issues related to silence, meaning and conditions of production of some discursive sequences demonstrate the need for the discourse analyst to appeal to new stratagems in order to recover extra-institutional discursive remains, once testimonies are experimental (although historical records) and, thus, marked by subjectivity.

Finally, some collaborators of this issue situate their theoretical perspective in the “post” age, especially in the postmemorial and postcolonial scholarship. Accordingly, Marianne Hirsch explains that the prefix paradoxically brings a critical distance and deep interrelation with the main term, which indicates a problematic continuity. Hence, Lilian Reichert Coelho, professor of undergraduate and post-graduate programmes of the Federal University of the South of Bahia (UFSB) and of the Post-Graduation Program in Communication at the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia (UFRB), analyses the ethical commitment assumed by the offspring generation of the Argentinian dictatorship in the novel *O espírito dos meus pais continua a subir na chuva* (2011), by Patrício Pron. The paper **When the dead call the alive: memory as ethical commitment** approaches the transmission of the traumatic memory and is situated in a postmemorial perspective. This is the same perspective of Felipe Cammaert, researcher in the international project *Memoirs – Children of Empire and European Postmemories* by the European Research Council (Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra), who compares some novels of the second generation the colonial and postcolonial contexts of Portugal, France, and Belgium. The paper **Ownership of experience and postmemory in postcolonial European literature** analyses the different textual strategies applied for representing the traumatic experience and its transmission, based on the concept of “ownership of experience”, by Margarida Calafate Ribeiro and António Sousa Ribeiro. This special issue finishes with the Angolan postcolonial memory in the paper **Angola facing chaos: memory as rescue of Angolan tradition**

in **Parable of the Old Tortoise**. Based on Pepetela's novel, Carolina Silva Almeida and Rita de Cássia Oliveira, researchers at the Federal University of Maranhão, consider memory as a symbol of resistance and cultural perpetuation.

Following the special issue, the thematic papers that compose the ninth issue are also, somehow, testimony records of research. In the realm of literature, the paper **The woman as a subordinate subject in the short story "Liberdade adiada", by Dina Salústio**, by Ana Carolina da Silveira Costa Santiago and Sebastião Marques Cardoso, both from the State University of Rio Grande do Norte (UERN), discuss the mentioned work by the Cape Verdean writer in a postcolonial feminist perspective, problematising women's history and highlighting issues such as subalternity, and women's condition in society, in order to reflect about the construction of a Cape Verdean female identity. The reader will also have some Canadian studies with the paper **Beyond the money, he would take nothing: A literary analysis of Stephen Leacock's stereotyped characters**<sup>3</sup>, by Davi Gonçalves, from the Midwestern Paraná State University (UNICENTRO), and Luciana Rassier, from the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC). In this paper, the authors analyse the irony in two specific moments described in *Sunshine sketches of a little town* (1912), by Stephen Leacock, and identify the use of social stereotypes and their role in this narrative. Moreover, still in the realm of English language literature, we go even farther from chronological time and situate ourselves in the medieval studies with the paper **Between reality and fiction: the history of England in the 9th century from the perspective of the medieval and the contemporary**, by Isabelle Maria Soares and Edson Santos Silva, both researchers at the Midwestern Paraná State University (UNICENTRO). In this text, the authors develop some considerations concerning the relation between medieval historical documents: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and *The Life of King Alfred*, and literature. By setting the contemporary literary narrative in the Viking Age and having as the object of study *The Last Kingdom* (2004), by Bernard Cornwell, the historical texts narrate stories from the 9th century. In this paper, it will be possible to identify the dialogue between history and fiction, which reveals power relations between Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons. In terms of theoretical approach, the authors aim to reflect on the theoretical basis that contextualise historical-fiction as a literary genre.

Thus, it can be noticed that the three papers very aptly dialogue with the purpose of the issue, considering that their analyses of literary narratives reveal testimonies, records of stories, rescues of memories. It is also from this perspective that we read the three papers that focused on linguistic studies in this issue, as it will be possible to identify in their descriptions. This record is also possible to be read in the paper by the professor of the Department of Indigenous Languages from the University of São Paulo (USP), Eduardo de Almeida Navarro, entitled **Artificial indigenous**

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<sup>3</sup> This is a paper submitted in English and, because of that, it is presented as the first text; the second is in Portuguese.

**toponyms in Brazil: a classification of Tupi origin names created in the 19th and 20th centuries.** The researcher rescues toponyms “of indigenous origin with over five hundred years of existence, given by Indians themselves in the past, perhaps even before the discovery of Brazil, together with artificial indigenous names having few decades of existence”. According to the author, the reasons for this phenomenon are historical and related to the strengthening of political nationalism of the past century.

Still concerning linguistic studies, Alexandre Antonio Timbane, professor of the University of International Integration of Afro-Brazilian Lusophony (UNILAB, Malês Campus, BA), and Ezequiel Pedro José Bernardo, professor of the Higher Institute of Educational Sciences (ISCED – Cabinda/Angola), draw discussions on the view of necessary linguistic policies that must socially support vulnerable people with medical-hospital service in the Angolan city of Malanje. In the paper **For a linguistic policy in health services: a sociolinguistic study at the Regional Hospital of Malanje (Angola)**, the authors look at national official documents to situate their discussion, as they identify a symptomatic linguistic exclusion when the responsible institutions should actually promote inclusion, integrating national languages and not only Portuguese, “the language of the coloniser”. Therefore, it has to do with an indispensable discussion on linguistic-cultural rescue, ratifying official documents, such as the Constitution of the country that states that everybody is equal.

Concerning official documents, the paper **The theoretical configuration of textual production in the National Common Curricular Base: an inside look at didactic transposition**, by Antonio Naéliton do Nascimento and Denise Lino de Araújo, both researchers in the Federal University of Campina Grande (UFCG), one of the most important parameter documents of Brazilian education is considered in light of textual production. The authors analyse the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, 2018), emphasising the area of Languages and the subject Portuguese language, following the idea that “it is necessary to start by dismantling, demolishing this assembly, breaking down this condition and analyzing the conditions for the production of monument documents” (LE GOFF, 1990, p. 473). The authors study the version of the BNCC applied to the High School level, instituted by the Federal Government in 2018. An analysis of entries is done, revealing that the concept “textual production” presents a conceptual imprecision in its configuration, generating object overlaps and “reading” ambiguity in the mentioned document.

We then reaffirm the importance of these papers as they describe the history of language and literature, and by this same token, the other literary creative texts and interview on this issue reinforce the discussion presented here. This is the case of the interview to one of the first writers of Chicana feminist literature Lucha Corpi. Mexican, now situated in the United States, where she is a professor, the writer rescues some of her history tracks and path until reputation and recognition nowadays. The interview of Juliana Machado Meanda, researcher of the Fluminense Federal University (UFF), entitled **Chicana literature – memories and political struggle: an interview with the writer Lucha Corpi**, promotes

a historical rescue necessary to the social movement. This rescue may also be identified in the poem **A falta do jindungozinho**, by student Higor Lima da Silva, from the Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP). The short-story **Filarmônica**, by Eliseu Raphael Venturi, researcher of the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), presents an imagistic language of meaningful epiphany. The sonnet **Feminicídio**, by Cristóvão Santos Júnior, PhD student at the Federal University of Bahia, draws on the necessary and current discussion of women's vulnerability in different societies. In the same perspective, the poem **Boneca Maju**, by Élio Ferreira de Souza, professor at the State University of Piauí (UESPI), focuses on a beautiful black woman, bringing up one of the most important discussions during these days when the whole world goes to the streets in order to fight for the end of racism.

In the end of this introduction, we reinforce the importance of sharing these academic and literary texts and an interview regarding memory and testimony, hoping that the reader feels invited to also participate in the writings of the moment we are now living.

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