

Memory and Space of the city of Manaus in the chronicle Dried
margins of the city (2013), by Milton Hatoum /
*Memória e Espaço Manauenses na crônica “Margens Secas da
Cidade” (2013), de Milton Hatoum.*

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ABSTRACT

The Brazilian Amazônia, North region of the country, specifically, Manaus city, provided great part of the literary production of Milton Hatoum. An example are the works: Tale of a certain Orient (1989), The brothers (2000), Ashes of the Amazon (2005) and A lonely lurking (2013), in which we understand Manaus city as a constructed space and evoked several times by the memorialist discourse of the author. In this way, we aim to discuss the evolution of Manaus city space, from the relation among the memories constructed in childhood and the return to the same spaces in adulthood, through a contrastive and explanatory analysis of the chronological time, inferring yet about the place of memory in the process of the city reconstruction. Thus, this article has as corpus the chronicle Dried margins of the city (2013), part of the collection A lonely lurking. The theoretical discussions were based on Assmann (2008; 2011), Halbwachs (2006), Bachelard (1993) and Tuan (2012), among others, in whom we supported the reflections about memory and space. We aim that the discussions may reflect about the manauense city space, understood by the narrator as a movement of decline, through the relation between past and present, from the moment of return to the spaces of happiness to comprehend the effects of modernity over the man and over the city.

KEYWORDS: Space; Memory; Manaus; Milton Hatoum.

RESUMO

A Amazônia Brasileira, região norte do país, especificamente, a cidade de Manaus, ambientou grande parte da produção literária de Milton Hatoum. Exemplo disso são as obras: *Relato de um certo Oriente* (1989), *Dois Irmãos* (2000), *Cinzas do Norte* (2005) e *Um Solitário à espreita* (2013), em que percebemos a cidade de Manaus como espaço construído e evocado inúmeras vezes pela tessitura memorialista do autor. Nesse sentido, objetivamos discutir a evolução do espaço citadino em Manaus a partir da relação entre as memórias construídas na infância e a revisitação dos mesmos espaços geradores na vida adulta, partindo de uma análise contrastivo-explicativa do tempo cronológico, inferindo ainda sobre o lugar da memória no processo de reconstrução da cidade. Para tanto, este artigo tem como corpus de análise a crônica *Margens Secas da Cidade* (2013), integrante da coletânea *Um Solitário à espreita*. As discussões teóricas partiram de Assmann (2008; 2011), Halbwachs (2006), Bachelard (1993) e Tuan (2012), dentre outros, nos quais ancoramos as reflexões a respeito da memória e do espaço. Intenta-se que as discussões contemplem um olhar sobre evolução do espaço citadino manauense, entendido pelo narrador como movimento de declínio, através da reação entre o passado e o presente, a partir do retorno aos espaços de felicidade para entender os efeitos da modernidade sobre o homem e sobre a cidade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Espaço; Memória; Manaus; Milton Hatoum.

1 Introduction

The Contemporary Brazilian literature has been interpreted by various nuances that instead of classifying and dictating what should or should not be contemplated by critics, provides subsidies that allow analysis through numerous categories, as it happens with the presence of memory and space, as a rule, through all the literature. In this context, many are the voices, the writers, the time, the themes and the leading roles resulting from this perspective. Such referrals direct literary aesthetics of contemporaneity to be understood by criticism from infinity of themes and contexts, linking them to their writers, domiciled and acclimatized in the most diverse places of affection, happiness and speech. From this perspective, of literature as a means of enabling

and undertaking a heterogeneous project production, we dive in the intricacies of the *manauense* literary writer Milton Hatoum, to identify and think about place(s) of memory and space in the construction of a modern society, once the writer may be known by the cultivation of a writing based on memorialist content of his narratives, whose weaving (re)draws Manaus in the 20th century, as we glimpse on *Tale of a certain orient* when the innominate narrator reveals his impressions at the time of his return to Manaus, after many years away from the city. Let's look at the excerpt that follows:

[...] I did not want to be landed here in the light of day, I wanted to avoid the surprises that clarity imposes, and return blindly, as some birds that take refuge in the dark of a lonely treetop, or a body that escapes from a fireball, to join the stormy sea of memory. There, at the top, the nighttime traveler has the feeling that a river of stories flows in the invisible city. [...] Nothing announces the end of the long air crossing: abruptly, as the lights of a giant transatlantic floating in the ocean that separates two continents, a of terrestrial and aquatic constellation warns you that the forest there changes its name, that the river earlier invisible now becomes an illuminated path, and also its margins, its affluents, the tributaries and even the forest, in sparse spots, is dotted of light. (HATOUM, 2008, p. 186-187).

Hatoum's narratives, if analyzed under the theoretical aspect of categories of space and memory, tell us a lot about its authenticity, which, as a general rule, resides in the process of remembering everyday experiences by its protagonists, while evoking memories to revisit the same spaces of childhood. The revisiting, for the reconstruction of a past, is a characteristic of his works, because in the movement of the description of the space reactivated through the individual memory, the intradiegetic narrator comes in and questions the declension of the city, as well as the effects of time on being and on spaces, which dies to give life to an automated indifference regarding the transformations of spaces that surround them.

Based on that, we aim to discuss the space in the process of evolution of the city of Manaus through the relationship between the memories built in childhood and the revisiting of the same spaces generators in adulthood, assuming a contrast and explanatory analysis of the effects of chronological time, inferring about the place of memory in the process of rebuilding the city at the present time. Such aspects are observed in the chronicle *Dried margins of the city* (2013), which integrates the collection *a lonely lurking*.

The theoretical discussions left from a perspective that consider the spaces as places of remembrance, anchored in making inferences about Aleida Assmann (2008; 2011), dialogically

aligned with that discusses Maurice Halbwachs (2006), about the collective memory as cultural memory, formed from countless individual memories. Gaston Bachelard (1993) enters into the debate to think on these geographical spaces as spaces of affectivity, spaces that constitute the timelessness of memories. Yi-Fu Tuan (2012) argues about the relations established between being and the environment, symbolically represented in literary narratives, in this context, specifically, on the materiality of topophilia, while perception and constitution of the spaces of happiness, as well as other authors.

Therefore, *Dried margins of the city* (2013) enables us to dive into the reconstruction through the memories loaded of inaugural feelings of each space mapped by childhood, a town lost in time, replaced by modernity, in which their effects on being and, consequently, the spaces were not measured. The memorialistic and spatial reconstruction of Manaus ensue after the relationship between past and present, which are designed by the protagonist as spaces (re)constructed by the wire of memory, allowing situate the partakers of the narrative in a determined space and time. The figure of the tree-man, in an allegorical way, is the representation of the childhood naked and alive, of an Amazonian context that is forgotten while the city walks in chronological time of modernity and, in this way, the same tree-man, who was able to go through the time, occupying a place in the past and the present, survives consumed in the city and take the embodiment of his dry margins - of his decline. In the item that follows, we see the relationship established between the theoretical reflections about the space, memory and literary know-how of the *manauara* writer.

2 Milton Hatoum and the theories of space and memory

Manaus, as already mentioned in this paper, is the scenery of many literary productions of Hatoum. In the temporal context of the 20th century, the author has inscribed in Brazilian literature with his work *Tale of a certain orient*, in 1989, which granted him the Jabuti Prize of memorialist best novel of the year. He followed with *The brothers*, in 2000, which was translated into twelve languages, having also been adapted for other media - cinema, television, comic books¹²ⁱ. Five years later, the writer releases *Ashes of the Amazon* (2005), which for the second time, graced him with the Jabuti Prize.

¹ The brothers and comic artists Fábio Moon and Gabriel Bá adapted *The Brothers* (2000), by Hatoum, to comic book. The homonymous work was released in comics in 2015. This same work was adapted for miniseries, as

In the universe of short stories, the author has released *the Marooned city* (2006), followed by his first novel, *Orphans of Eldorado* (2008). In this context, as a result of an organization of chronicles, publishes *A lonely lurking* (2013), which brings a quota of ninety-six chronicles compiled of his publications in newspapers and magazines, among which we selected dried margins of the City³ⁱⁱ to discuss the temporal walk of the space in the city of Manaus, from the cultural and individual memories, as well as the declension of this space, which is revisited in adulthood, by means of the childhood memories.

In this sense, being among the greatest contemporary memorialist writers, Hatoum inscribes his literature in the dialog between the real and fictional worlds, a context built through memories and affections that usually characterize it by the presentation of the Amazon as a starting point for thinking and intertwining the past and the present, contrastively, through space of the *manauara* city, which is presented by the weaving constructed by the individual wire of memories that form a whole collective, i.e., the collective memory of which Halbwachs (2006) expounds, that for him is the sum of reports of experiences of each individual. Thus, we see the establishment of relations among subject, space and memory, which can be corroborated with the thought and discussions of Gaston Bachelard (1993), when he expatiates on the relations established between being and space.

Through this impulsion, we understand the transit of the writer in conceiving at the present time a journey to the past from a (re)construction through the literary text. Thus, Hatoum walks in the direction of that Aleida Assmann exposes in her book *Cultural memory and western civilization: functions, media, archives* (2011), when she speaks about the end of the memory in recent decades, due to a process of forgetting, that is the result of modernization. In this discussion, according to the author, the memory is generated by all collectives, assertion that speaks directly with Halbwachs (2006).

eponymous title by Luiz Fernando de Carvalho in 2016. The filmmakers Guilherme de Carvalho and Marcelo Gomes took to the screen of the cinema, in 2016, the work *orphans of Eldorado*, published in 2008.

² We emphasize that other chronicles of the collection - a lonely lurking (2013) - could also have been selected as the analytical corpus in this article or added to the analysis already undertaken here, due to the memorialist and spatial character that they show, however, due to the nature of this text and its very first purpose intended - final paper to a discipline of doctorate -, we have opted for selecting only a chronicle.

Exposing the memory as construction not only individual but also collective, as the authors point out, the conception of cultural memory as a dialogue between the dead and the living, from the perspective of collectiveness that survives the time and transcends the lifetime of the individual (Assmann, 2011). Considering this premise, we understand that the *amazonense* writer aims, through his narratives, to reestablish a relationship with the forgotten past, specifically, in this discussion, on a Manaus which no longer responds by its name, by its identity and its circumscriptions, for the present having lost its vital relation with the past. In the interstices of this reflection, in the weaving and unweaving of a memorialist narrative, the writer would walk toward the most intimate remembrance, which is socially delimited by a space and objects that refer to memories. Thus, considering the intimate character and the establishment of a "cultural/social agreement" between the community and the subject, Assmann (2008, p. 18) emphasizes that:

As the consciousness, language and personality, memory is a social phenomenon, and insofar as we remember not only descended to the depths of our more proper inner life but we have introduced in this (inner) life an order and a structure that are socially conditioned and that bind us to the world. All consciousness is mediated by the social.

Based on the social relation pointed out by the author, we have established a link between memory and society, this bond conditioned by members in/by the space through the subjectivities. These spaces of memory are not created in an accidental and random way, they have characteristics that connect to each other via common objects, such as: the city itself, the margins that surround it, the river, the trees, the fruits, among other objects that are glimpsed in Milton Hatoum's literary production and makes the reader situate many of his narratives in the capital of Amazonas.

On the other hand, taking advantage of discussions on space, it is important to discuss it in the narrative review "[...] even that far, past or merely fictitious, fosters, in a curious way, reader expectation to rediscover it in real geography or, at least, a simulacrum" (PIATTI, 2012, p. 276). From the Piatti's expectation, recalling Manaus in the 20th century, Hatoum gathers traces of a forgotten past, puts in performance the literary text that symbolizes the intimate dip, beside a memorialist projection in a given space. In this trace of thought, according to Brandão (2015, p. 56 In DALCASTAGNÈ & AZEVEDO, 2015), the space is "[...] as a "scenario", i.e., places of belonging and/or transit of fictional subjects and appeal of contextualization of the action [...]".

Considering Piatti's statement (2012), that relates the expectation of the reader materially live the space of the narrative, dates back to the considerations of Brandão (2015) on these spaces as places of belonging. Thus, we reiterate the dialogic relationship between both authors to think and conceive the present time, adding that Assmann (2011) emphasizes when ascribes to him the deconstruction of memory as recording and storing, placing it in the position of redeveloper of the past under its rules and contemporary optic.

In this way, we visualize the narrative as an element that holds the opacity of the interstice of past time with the present. Narratives found, for example, in *tale of a certain orient* (1989), inaugurate, in Brazil, the city as a living being, which grows, that develops and also dies in the collective imagination. In this sense, we can infer that Hatoum seeks, by the use of categories of space and memory in his literature, to portray and situate the city of Manaus in past and present times, revealing changes originated in and caused by being who lives in modernity, through the inseparable relationship of being with the spaces generators of memories and that, consequently, constitute himself/herself in all his/her subjectivities.

Manaus is neither a frequent nor the favorite space in the narratives that has been composing the Brazilian literature. It is the city chosen by Hatoum for dwelling [the city inhabits the memory] the axis past and present, i.e., it goes through literature and the chronological history, the offspring of, according to the discussions of Pollak (1992) and Halbwachs (2006), memory as collective action from a social construction and a cultural experience.

The narrative of the *amazonense* writer appropriates a historic materiality, rebuilds the city through an intradiegetic bias, placing the reader on a journey to the past under a patchwork of affective memories, whose space is a return to childhood, as it is evident in the aura of her first work *tale of a certain orient*. In this context, for Assmann (2008, p. 24), the fact of the writer bring back these universes and make use of these characteristics,

It is a matter of the social group that wants to remember, and also of the individual that recalls to belong to the group. For that reason, both collective and individual - appeal to the archive of cultural traditions, the arsenal of symbolic forms, the "imaginary" of myths and images, the "great stories", the Norse sagas and legends, the scenes and constellations, which in the treasure of the traditions of a people are always alive and can reactivate it.

From this passage, the author corroborates the assertion of literature to reactivate the memories, i.e., to bring to the present "that much needed past". Thus, through a process of appropriation of real or fictional materiality, the author reconstructs the forgotten space from the

cultural memories interpellated in time - a mosaic of situations, stories and experiences that inhabit the narrative.

Regarding the forgotten memories and remembering of the city, it is important to emphasize that the subject, taking into account the collective experiences, builds his/her individual and intimate memory. In parallel to this meaning, Halbwachs (2006, p. 30) linked another characteristic to the memories and the place of others in the process.

Our collective memories remain and are remembered by others, even if they are events in which only we were involved and objects that only we saw. This happens because we are never alone. There is no need for others to be present, materially distinct from us, because we always take with us a certain amount of people who we do not mistake for.

In regard to the discussion of the French sociologist, it is possible to realize the place of the other in us, perception that puts the experiences acquired from/with other evidence, under a process of transposition of time and place, which, in turn, it is not able to confuse the subject who lives, who builds for the subject who recalls. Considering this meaning, for Pollak (1992), these experiences contribute to the formation of an individual identity, that it is also collective. This identity is a self-image constructed for themselves and for others, whose introspective dialogism is followed by selections of memory resulting from cultural experience.

The place, it is important to highlight, occupies an affective position in Milton Hatoum's narratives, and, undoubtedly, geographically speaking, is far from get lost and mistaken for other scenarios, as distinctly from *The tempest*, by Shakespeare⁴⁵³, by way of illustration, in which what it is sought highlights not the relation between space, time and subject but the relations of domination and oppression, as well as its consequences. Thus, their affective bonds with the space in which their narratives occur can be theorized by the perspective of Tuan (2012) when he talks about spaces of affectivity or Topophilia, that according to Bachelard (1993, p. 19):

⁴ The play *The Tempest* is considered the last work of William Shakespeare, that has its actions set in an island. Prospero, Duke of Milan, and his daughter, Miranda, were brought to the island by Antonio, the Duke's brother, due to an act of treason, because Antonio wanted to dethrone Prospero. The island is also inhabited by Caliban, a slave, considered by the Duke a formless adult man, with bestial characteristics; Ariel, Prospero's spirit-servant. Unlike the manauense space, the island is not a place of remembering, resignification of individual and/or collective experiences, because it does not inweave past and present.

Topofilia [...] aims to determine the human value of spaces of possession, the spaces defended against adverse forces of the beloved. The space perceived by the imagination may not be the space indifferent delivered to measurement and the reflection of the Geometrician. It is a lived space. And lived not in its positivity but with all the partialities of imagination [...].

The discussions anchored in Bachelard (1993) comprise the spaces of affectivity, ratified later by Tuan (2012) as spaces of possession - those that appropriate to the imagination with all its partialities and selections, bring back the process of creation of the narrative. Tuan, in turn, adds that this subject is conditioned to/in the space because it nourishes a bond of affection, i.e., reaffirms the relationship of interaction established between being and the material environment, a prominently characteristic in contemporary literature, which is geographically located, idealized and recreated by Hatoum.

From these theoretical conceptions, both theorists of space and cultural Humanistic geography, Bachelard and Tuan, think the spaces from the phenomenology which considers them as happy spaces. In this sense, the concept of topophilia, applied in this discursive cutout, conceives it as spaces resulting from the experiences of the intimate life, at the same time that are closely related to the collective experiences.

Therefore, based on this weaving, we begin to understand Milton Hatoum's journey, from the perspective that considers his narratives from the viewpoint of memory and space, directing us to think about the reconstruction process of a forgotten past as a result of the evolution of the city. This dip in the memories that re-signify the experiences of/in the childhood to rebuild Manaus, specifically in the chronicle in analysis, incorporates the effects of time, of speech and of the valuation that may be forgotten or remembered at the present time, such as the subjective elements characterize timelessness memory which, generally, is renewed by diving in the past, that in the space of the narrative may be understood as the origin of spatial transformations. In the next topic, we are going to expatiate about the evolution of space in the city of Manaus, the narrative bias of Hatoum in *Dried margins of the city*.

3 The evolution of the *manauense* space In *Dried Margins Of The City* (2013)

The literary studies have shown, in regards to the criticism, several studies, whose categories of analysis depart from the theories of space, inter-related to memory, i.e. categories dialoguing, intrinsically, to succeed in a critique of the totality. In this sense, the subject in the

time-space builds his memories and they compose a latent place in the narratives, either as a factor that identifies the writer from a peculiarity, either by the necessity of thinking transitively the realism and the fictitious and their limits.

From this assertion, Dalcastagnè & Azevedo (2015, p. 12) point out the importance of research that intertwined the literary text, as well as the inscription of the experiences of the characters:

Analyze the relationship that is established between the individuals and the spaces they frequent by them, or actually experienced, it is essential to understand the construction of subjectivities staged in the narratives, insofar as "reading" the space and its representations allows us to "read" the characters whose experiences are inscribed to it [...].

Whereas the justification of the authors between spaces that inscribe experiences and understanding the construction of subjectivities there is a construction of relations that it [the space] establishes with other categories, among them, specifically in this discussion, with memory. Based on that, thinking the spaces narrated instils to problematize gaps, objections, renunciation, oversights and silences whose cultural asymmetries lie on social issues, as a rule, the determinants.

From the voice that speaks "[...] The "voice" or the "view" of the narrator [...]" (BRANDÃO, p. 61 In. DALCASTAGNÈ & AZEVEDO, 2015), the world of memory is revisited, and spatially, takes the language [language, body, experience, culture] of those who appropriates of it in the temporal indeterminacy, "It was a morning singing, I do not know whether before or after the roosters, I even do not know when [...]" (HATOUM, 2013, p. 61).

The fragment that opens the short story outlines a countryside context by means of relating - "morning singing" and "the roosters", making the ambiance be ratified by other characterizations, such as: "forest that surrounded us," "Manaus", "the faun", "Rio Negro", etc. Based on these specificities, Wink (p. 26. In. DALCASTAGNÈ & AZEVEDO, 2015) argues that:

[...] the literature is rarely utopian (in the etymological sense), because it tends to indicate, somewhat clearly, the place where the action develops. [...] it has a sort of referentiality with the empirical world which fulfils an important function [...].

Wink's discussion (2015) emphasizes the characteristics that run through many works of Hatoum [*Tale of a certain Orient; The Brothers, Ashes of the Amazon*], especially regarding the referentiality to the city of *Manaus*. By this means, we understand that it is through the

reconstruction of this space, in the interstices of diving in childhood memories and the conflict with the present time, that the narrator recognizes that "[...] the time consumes us slowly [...]" (HATOUM, 2013, p. 62).

It consumes slowly until we are older. Thus, according to Tuan, "[...] in old age there is the movement of remembering to go back to the time of the childhood, because this is the "happy time" (TUAN, 2012). Thus, we find in the chronicle on screen the remembrances of the happy time, in which tells us Tuan, when we returned to the text: "The man was a surprise in the morning light, and the morning, so, was childhood: bare land, river of endless horizon. [...]" (HATOUM, 2013, p. 61). We reaffirm, having as corpus this fragment, the beginning of the process of remembering through the figure and the representation of a man, "[...] the tree-man, a being of the forest [...]" (p. 61).

The return to the past, through the individual memory of the narrator-character, embodied the tree-man. This process is understood as an allegory because walks into a figurative representation of a fruit vendor, who marked the infancy of the narrator-character:

[...] in my memory, this vendor was a faun of Manaus. [...] a caboclo balancing himself on the street of stones, a suspended orchard oscillating over the invisible head, his voice warbling the sounds shivered by the wind that came from *Rio Negro*. The sounds of words enchanted attracted me like a serpent that raises its head to the sound of a flute. In the voice, no bitterness of anger or desperation, only the melody of a humble man who wishes to live and depends on the voice to survive [...]" (HATOUM, 2013, p. 61).

The vendor is the main character of the narrative to make us consider the effects of time on the being. In parallel, the same effect falls on the city, with larger dimensions, "[...] backyards of old houses, leafy squares that shaded the city, a huge port that mitigated the isolation and loneliness in Ecuador," (HATOUM, 2013, p. 62) proposition that takes us back to the previous discussion about the time consuming with slowness, from childhood to old age, from the past to the present. In this sense, the presence of folkloric and representative figures for childhood and disregarded by society, as the tree-man who leaves the anonymity of his marginal chores to the center of memory, corroborates the assertion by Certeau (2014, p. 191): "[...] What makes a habitable city is not so much its utilitarian and technocratic transparency but earlier the opaque ambivalence of its weirdness. [...]"

Meanwhile, the opposite directions that tree-man bears by his "weirdness" as well as his process of temporal declension in the middle of a city that was fading through the modernization

of space are observed in the fragment: "[...] the tree-man was the only living nature in the city that was being destroyed or was letting itself to be destroyed by the rage of the real estate market, by the progress, that is just a sinister caricature of progress" (HATOUM, 2013, p. 62).

The city rises from the memories that are compiled and they build, along with spaces, the people who live in them. In this direction, Certeau (2014, p. 190) points out that:

[...] These old-stuffs that seem to sleep, disfigured houses, deactivate factories, shards of shipwrecked stories, they still today are the ruins of an unknown city, strange. They burst through the modernist city, town of mass, homogeneous, as the lapses of a language that nobody convinces, maybe unconscious [...].

The declension of the symbolic nature of the city, which constitutes the memories, actualizes "[...] when a given repository of shared knowledge is lost [...]" (ASSMANN, 2011, p. 17). Let us look at the excerpt below, in which Hatoum contemplates this fall away of man/city.

How is it possible to lose the reason for being? You no longer hear the fluted sound, you no longer see the tree of life, you find neither the desire nor the sparkling of the first morning. That tree and its trunk were atrophying, the roughness of the city has usurped the individual of our conviviality, everything became enormous and formless. [...] (HATOUM, 2013, p. 62)

What before was reason, at the present time is replaced by a formless city. In this assertion, the story of the narrator raises questions on the place of that past through remembrances. It is the loss or breakage of the aura of the city (BENJAMIN, 2013). From this movement, the modernity breaks this aura and refutes all the past in favor of an empty contemporaneity. Benjamin (1987) adds that the experience, in dialog with the writing of the report, finds its paradigm in the figure of the narrator who is prevented from his function. Thus, for Certeau (2014, p. 191), such proposition is reaffirmed when "[...] the remains of past that are gone open, on the streets, city breaks into another world [...]", i.e., to the crossing, as we see below, in an excerpt from the short story in analysis:

[...] the man always showed up when I used to return to Manaus [...] the mobile tree used to cross the city and I believe that he crossed my life and time, insisting to survive with the plant head and feet of aerial roots, the invisible body, the head hidden, the fruits falling from branches and green leaves, fruits whose smell could be felt miles away and make the stars water, as if a handful of the Amazon was there [...]. (HATOUM, 2013, p. 62).

The crossing that forest-man does in the life of the narrator, from childhood to adulthood, is a necessary movement to realize that the memory was drying as the margins, these aspects are substantial to understand the semantics of the title of the story. "[...] sad and voiceless, stopped in the sultriness, survivor to whom the death lurks in the dried margins of my city". (p. 63).

Whereas the survival that cannot reach the customs of living, Bachelard (1993, p. 23) emphasizes the importance of intersecting life - our first cosmos: "It is necessary to say how we inhabit our vital space in accordance with all the dialectical of life, how we take root, day by day, in a corner of the world [...]". In this way, as well as the tree-man uprooted in parallel to the growth and modernization of the city, the narrator finds himself in a situation of confrontation: "[...] and unintentionally, an involuntary act leads us to the heart of the reality. I went there to say farewell to the now landfilled stream, the poor stilt houses replaced by ugly houses, facades, without balconies, small windows [...]" (HATOUM, 2013, p. 63).

The evolution of Manaus went through all instances of life: from the dry stream to the design of houses without balcony. Meanwhile, the voices that enunciate, in this analysis, an intradiegetic adult narrator, can be assimilated to the roles performed by older people in the construction of memories:

[...] They assume the mysterious role that traditional societies used to attribute to old age that comes from areas that go beyond the knowledge. They are witnesses of a story that, unlike those of museums or books, no longer has a language. Historically, in fact, they have a function that consists in opening a depth at present but no longer have the content that provides meaning to the strangeness of the past [...] (CERTEAU, 2014, p. 192).

According to the author, the experience of life aligned with the remembrances assigns to the older ones the mystique figuration of a transcendent being, who is beyond his/her time because they can look to the past to understand the present (BENJAMIN, 2010). It is in this direction that Milton Hatoum settles in, as personal experience, from spaces such as, for example, *rio Negro*, *Rua Joaquim Nabuco 457*, the stream, the forest etc., which perform as setting for the protagonist to outline his memorialist experiences and, subsequently, he goes back to contrast the effects of time on the town and in the people, specifically, on the tree-man.

Manaus is no longer the same, "[...] I can no longer smell the fragrant sapodilla, the flavor of the empurpled rose-apple [...]" (HATOUM, 2013, p. 63), because it has aged, as well as tree-man, now defoliated, dry, lifeless and without depth in his eyes, but "[...] the words yellow

mombin, ice-cream-bean, sorb, *tucumã*, soursop, stinkintoe, *cupuaçu*, *bacaba* [...]" are words "[...] that I never stopped hearing wherever I walked and lived [...]" (p. 61-63). Based on these fragments, we notice that the strategy of resuming the memories, from the lexis of Amazon, corroborates to the enhancement and at the same time the declension of tree-man, besides his physical disfigurement, they say that the fruits are no longer the same, do not have the same taste nor smell like they used to.

Therefore, according to the corresponding analysis adopted here, we visualize a reminisced childhood in the adulthood, aiming to explain and identify the effects of time on people and about the spaces of the city. Manaus had its aura broken by modernity, and, respectively, all urban actions in the Amazon breast followed the same path of declension. Milton Hatoum, in *Dried margins of the city*, raises questions on space in two situations of temporality, past versus present, he confronts them from revisited memories of childhood and makes us to reflect on the place of the city, of memories built in this happy times as well as the people and the literary field in contemporary social construction, as elements that are constituents of the identity of the being, whose understanding of self and the world permeates the intertwining of temporality, in the case on screen, the manauense city space, of the author and the narrator-character by memorialistic bias.

Final Considerations

The literary text is intrinsically linked to real world, either by wire of imagery that weaves it, either by the place it occupies in the collective imagination through its reception and communicability. Thus, despite of not having a compromise with reality, the literature provides readers a dip in urban materiality, by means of a perspective that favors a critique of the whole that, as a rule, it considers the analysis of spaces that are (re)constructed in the memorialistic interstices in which the narrative uses to establish itself.

Based on the assertive that the memory and space create spaces of happiness, according to Bachelard (1993) and Tuan (2012), Milton Hatoum is inscribed in the Brazilian literature by bringing in his narratives, on one hand, the aggrandizement of a past that is remembered through the memories of childhood; and on the other, the effects of modernity on being and on the city, that time that changes and transforms everything.

In this sense, since his first novel, *Tale of a certain orient*, the writer is very charming and he sets in part of his narratives in the north of the country, specifically, in the Brazilian Amazon – the so delighted Manaus of childhood times. Hatoum uses of a very interesting strategy, which is to situate the narrative in the space through objects, which are revisited in adulthood to rebuild the same forgotten spaces. So, using these mechanisms, he rescues the memories and with them the first-person narrator has the sensation of living the same sensations of childhood. They are the spaces of happiness rebuilding themselves in adulthood from a gaze turned to the past (BENJAMIN, 2010).

Therefore, in *Dried margins of the city*, chronicle that integrates the compilation entitled *A lonely lurking* (2013), the *manauense* writer reconstructs a forgotten town in time, through memorialist pathways formed by several places and by tree-man, folkloric character in which the author examines the effects of the evolution of the city to think their contrasts. On the basis of these assertions, it is through childhood naked and alive, that tree-man was able to pass the time, occupying the same place in the past and the present, those interstices that the intradiegetic narrator uses to emphasize the forgetfulness of survivor, trapped between the materiality and temporality [space-time], this being of the forest consumed in/by the city and that took the embodiment of its margins, so that like him, they were also drying.

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