

Revista Letras Raras, a scholarly journal of Linguistics and Literature, v. 10, n. 4. 2021

Ecocriticism and Pandemic: from fictional to factual

At the end of this second year of confinement due to the world health crisis, caused by SARS-CoV-2, in its tenth year, **Revista Letras Raras [RLR]** launches its latest edition; and as this issue goes live, more than 619,000 Brazilians have lost their lives. Who hasn't lost a family member, a friend, an acquaintance? For collective memory, as we have done in several previous editions of RLR, we note the importance of not forgetting so many lives touched by this evil called Covid-19, which has decimated people on all continents of our planet, impacting the world socially, economically, culturally, and, consequently, in publications not only in our knowledge domain, but also in several other areas of science.

Such impacts are registered in this issue entitled **Ecocriticism and Pandemic: from fictional to factual**. It has been very special for us to organise an issue with studies in the scope of Ecocriticism to this *Revista Letras Raras*' edition, as proposing a collection of papers which deals with themes regarding the relationship between literature and environment, field of literary and cultural analysis upon which we have been dedicating our scholarship. This focus is essential to deepen studies within this research realm. Undoubtedly, the pandemic has emerged as a necessary topic, or even rather mandatory since we are still under the catastrophic impact of the new Coronavirus all over the planet since 2020.

Therefore, by suggesting an issue entitled Ecocriticism and Pandemic: from fictional to factual was the way through which we thought to contribute somehow to reflect upon the current pandemic moment. Some scholars, both from Brazil and other countries were invited to collaborate with this project and fortunately, some of them promptly accepted to provide relevant reflections whose texts comprise this brief *Revista Letras Raras* special cluster.

In the opening issue's paper, **Ventos do apocalipse and the relationship with Ecofeminism**, coauthored by Clara Mayara de Almeida Vasconcelos and Rafael Francisco Braz, who are both faculty members at the State University of Paraíba (UEPB), they propose an ecofeminist reading of Mozambican Paulina Chiziane's novel *Ventos do apocalipse* [Winds of Apocalypse]. In their analysis, supported by Feminism, Postcolonial studies, and Ecocriticism, they provide a relevant parallel between the apocalyptic rhetoric, following Garrard (2006), and Ecofeminism whose approach relies on the idea of the feminine connected to the natural world.

Furthermore, this paper is aligned to our current situation with traumatic traces caused by Covid-19 pandemic which spread through the planet as strong winds of a real apocalypse.

Covid-19 is the central theme of the paper ***Neither here nor there – Where can COVID-19 pandemic lead, since near/far is nowhere?***. Through this text, the author reflects on the several crises arising from a disease which made the world stop. Owing to the uncertainties of an unprecedented global sanitary crisis, this text is intrinsically connected with the factual aspect within the overarching scope of this issue. This reflection, thereby, helps us to reinforce the interdisciplinarity inherent to ecocritical studies, widely supported by the Environmental Humanities. We also inferred that one of Alice Maria Corrêa Medina's aims, from the University of Brasília (UnB), has to do with our human adaptability which is necessary considering the current moment in which the preoccupation with the planet is clearly urgent.

The urgency also pervades the discourse of the international media, especially concerning climate change. This subject has been very often associated with the Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg, an environmentalist who has attracted multitudes of people, mostly children and younger people, who are very concerned with the environmental agenda. Thus, Simão Farias's paper ***Greta Thunberg's biography against climate change and the pandemic: the educational and alarmist profiles***, faculty member at the Federal University of Roraima (UFRR), allows us to pay attention to journalistic texts in which the presence of the Young Swedish girl emerges as a light at the tunnel's end to fight against both obscurantist and denialist voices still prevalent in our world. We need Greta's alarmism, but also her educative voice to teach us that changing our current lifestyles will be one of the ways to guarantee both human and nonhuman survival.

This issue also brings an essay following this line of thought: the coauthored text by Sueli Meira Liebig (UEPB) and Rafaela Liebig (UFAL). In their essay ***O dever dos animais não-humanos em um mundo pós-pandêmico***, the authors, from an ecocritical standpoint based on an antispeciesist focus, emphasise that to the pandemic aftermath, nonhuman animals' rights must be guaranteed, otherwise, we will be always susceptible to other pandemics caused by both unethical and unsustainable human actions towards other species over the planet.

Thereby, this edition (focused on the current pandemic situation) also presents seven papers, one more essay, a review, and two interviews (given by puppeteer Ronaldo Gomes, in the scope of popular literature, and the other, in the context of French-language female authorship, provided by Congolese writer Marie-Léontine Tsiminda). Furthermore, this issue brings, within the

editorial policy and scope of RLR, some literary productions that allow evasion along the paths of poetic imagination by the end of 2021.

Thus, right after the texts of **Ecocriticism and Pandemic: from fictional to factual**, the reader will find papers not directly linked to the issue itself, but in the areas of Discourse Analysis, Translation Studies, Didactics and Literature. The first of these is **Motherly and feminist reflections in contemporary narratives written by women**, authored by professors Tássia Tavares de Oliveira, from the Federal University of Campina (UFCG), and Paloma do Nascimento, from the Department of Education and Science and Technology of the State of Paraíba (SEECT/PB). In this paper, they problematise the romanticisation of motherhood as a space for the “control of bodies and reproduction in the patriarchal system”. For them, in this social context, motherhood is compulsory, helping to develop the belief “that women are only fulfilled after giving birth”, and also add that maternal love becomes a “means to exploit the act of caring, something that is not imposed on fathers”, but only on mothers. The text instigates and presents a contemporary view and a pertinent contribution to studies in the area.

The second paper in this part is also anchored in Literary Studies, entitled **Possible Azevedian appropriations of Hamlet: to be or not to be**, by Alexandre Silva da Paixão and Alexandre de Melo Andrade, both from the Federal University of Sergipe (UFS). Founded in Comparative Literature, the authors seek to offer an overview of Shakespeare's quotes in the theatre play “Hamlet” presented in the work of the then young Brazilian writer Álvares de Azevedo. In the paper, similarities and contrasts were identified, verifying whether assimilation had occurred or what type of dialogue with the English dramatist.

Following that, Naiara Sales Araújo and Eveline Gonçalves Dias, from the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA), bring a discussion anchored in the studies of indigenous identity affirmation presented in the works *Metade Cara, Metade Máscara*, by Eliane Potiguara, and *Iracema*, by José de Alencar. This paper establishes a comparative dialogue between the narratives and presents necessary considerations about the indigenous identity, from the Potiguara peoples, “their traditions, experiences, cultural representations and influences of their ancestors”.

The fourth paper is backgrounded in Discourse Analysis, entitled **Constitution and (re)formulation of meanings: women in speeches about AIDS prevention**, written by Rosely Diniz da Silva Machado, from the Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG). It mobilises theoretical notions of Discourse Analysis (DA) in a Pecheutian perspective, such as: “discursive memory, interdiscourse, discursive formations and ideological formations that together allow us to

understand imaginary processes of recognition/ignorance that constitute the subjects in their social relations”.

Also according to Discourse Analysis and other major areas, Poliana Soares, from Feevale University, and Marinês Kunz, from the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), present an exciting interdisciplinary study that embraces the daily discursive genre, Literature, Linguistics, and Translation accordingly to the reflections in **Enunciation and translation in 'Quarto de Despejo: diário de uma favelada' and 'Child of the dark: the diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus'**. The authors show that the translation into English of Carolina de Jesus' work under study "is the result of a new enunciation that did not necessarily keep the expression of the subjectivity of the original one, changing its meaning", even though it seeks to bring the senses, not fully realising it.

In the scope of Didactics, the paper **Humor as a pedagogical strategy: a short review** is presented by Silvia Ines Coneglian Carrilho de Vasconcelos and Érica Milani Dellai, both from the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC). It provides reflections related to the pedagogical practises of teachers, focusing on humour as a beneficial practice “for bonding between student and teacher, efficient learning, letting off steam within the classroom”. The authors emphasise the need to make moderate use of activities related to humour.

Still in the field of Didactics, the last paper in this edition is authored by Brenda Kieling Balbinotti, Bruna Brito Soares, Keren Coimbra Fagundes, and Clarissa Laus Pereira, who bring a critical and reflective account of a teaching practice carried out in the subject of Mandatory Supervised Internship II, in the context of the French Language course at the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC). The paper **Gastronomy as a cultural element and pedagogical practice in French language teaching** presents results from the extension project *Nous parlons français (NPF)*, a partnership between UFSC and the Federal Institute of Santa Catarina (IFSC). It had the purpose of “offering the Florianopolitan community fundamental notions of the French-speaking language and culture in order to sensitise them on the importance of that language for the initial and continued education of the citizen”.

The text that follows is the essay **Needs analysis before the Herculean nature of urgent task: to render English as a Foreign Language teaching at higher education a student-centered practice**, by Vicente Santos Mendes, from the Federal University of Southern Bahia (UFSB). The author exposes the need to “review the most relevant bibliography, ranging from the classics up to nowadays on the methodological tool ‘needs analysis’”.

The review of **Confluence Narratives: Ethnicity, History, and Nation-Making in the Americas**, by Antonio Luciano de Andrade Tosta, was proposed by Orison Marden Bandeira de Melo Junior, from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN). Even though it is a 2016 publication, it is still relevant, given the fact that this work is fundamental for Comparative Literature studies and has not yet been translated into Portuguese. The author of the review recalls that it is "a great contribution to inter-American studies, to comparative literature and to the genre 'narrative of confluence'".

According to the editorial policy of this journal, we still have other texts, such as the interview entitled **Theatre of puppets: popular expression and “alumbramento” in the hands of the player**, granted to Hadoock Ezequiel Araújo de Medeiros and Naelza de Araújo Wanderley, both from the Federal University of Campina Grande (UFCG). In this interview with the puppeteer Ronaldo Gomes, the interviewers open up space for understanding how “the puppet masters survive today and how they reinvent themselves to keep this culture alive, making the school also a stage, a place of possibilities for dissemination and permanence of that theatre”.

The other interview, **Marie-Léontine: writing as an act of liberation and denunciation**, was granted by poet, novelist, playwright, essayist, and reference as a Congolese author, Marie-Léontine Tsibinda, to Emily Thaís Barbosa Neves (UFCG) and Josilene Pinheiro-Mariz (UFCG). In the interview, conducted in French and translated into Portuguese, the author reveals a little of her journey from Congo to Canada, where she currently lives, besides talking about her writing, which presents itself as an act of denunciation and paths to liberation, according to the perspective of the interviewers.

Going through the literary productions, we come across the poem **Não é assistencialismo, mas um direito legal: uma pauta a biblioteca prisional para e qualquer apenado**, by Marcelo Calderari Miguel, administrator, librarian, and teacher at the State System of Technical Courses in Espírito Santo (Brazil); we also read the poem **Queimaram meus papeis**, by Iury Aragonez da Silva, from the Federal University of Goiás (UFG); the poem **Jericho | Entre | Breve**, by Henrique Grimaldi Figueredo, from the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP); **O Cemitério** is the following poem, by Lucas Melo Rodrigues de Sousa, from the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais (PUC-Minas); the poem **Versos Abstratos** was written by Cesar Augusto de Oliveira Casella, from the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ); **Vício** is a poem by Marta Botelho Lira, from the Federal University of Amazonas (UFAM); and **Nunca mais nesta vida** is a poem by Márden Cardoso Miranda Hott, from the Federal University of Minas Gerais

(UFMG). To conclude this creative part, we present the short-story ***A Tempo e à Força***, written by Priscila Prado, from the Federal Technological University of Paraná (UTFPR).

With these texts, estimated readers, this fourth edition of the tenth volume by *Revista Letras Raras*, which can also be read by its QR Code, shows us the importance of the discussions presented here for the Languages domain. Therefore, let us read and share these texts so that, in some way, they may ease the pain of the more than 619 thousand losses of Brazilian families. With the desire that the new year that is at hand will be a year of hope and strength for all of us, we wish you a great reading of this edition.

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