

Carnavalization in the film adaptation *Alice in Wonderland* by Tim Burton / *Carnavalização na adaptação filmica Alice no país das maravilhas de Tim Burton*

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ABSTRACT

The narrative *Alice in Wonderland* was adapted for cinema at different times in the 20th and 21st centuries, by different directors. One of the most recent intersemiotic translations on this plot took place in 2010, carried out by Tim Burton, in which it is possible to visualize carnivalesque features in the film produced. Carnivalization is the event in which the popular stratum of society has the opportunity to also participate in privileged social processes, traditionally carried out by a class holding power, such as kings, queens, popes, princes, etc. Carnival events occur through an inversion of

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social roles, or poles, resulting in laughter or mockery. In view of this, in this work, the film adaptation of Alice in Wonderland, by the aforementioned director, is analyzed in order to understand carnivalization in Bakhtinian terms, developed in the work. To this end, the works of Bakhtin (2005 and 2008) on Carnivalization and Discini (2006) were used as the main theoretical contribution. Five scenes from the highlighted film were analyzed, in order to understand how carnivalization happens in the cinematic narrative, its characteristics and consequences. We highlight, in fact, the presence of carnival in Tim Burton's work, in which the scenes analyzed make the work more of a carnivalesque production.

KEYWORD: Film adaptation; Alice in Wonderland; Carnivalization.

RESUMO

A narrativa Alice no País das Maravilhas foi adaptada para o cinema em diferentes momentos do século XX e XXI, por diferentes diretores. Um dos mais recentes trabalhos de tradução intersemiótica desse enredo aconteceu em 2010, levado a cabo por Tim Burton, em que é possível visualizar traços carnavalescos no filme produzido. A carnavalização é o evento em que a camada popular da sociedade tem a oportunidade de também participar dos processos sociais privilegiados, desempenhados tradicionalmente por uma classe detentora do poder, como reis, rainhas, papas, príncipes etc. Eventos carnavalescos ocorrem por meio de uma inversão dos papéis sociais, ou polos, resultando no riso ou escárnio. Em vista disso, analisamos, neste trabalho, a adaptação fílmica de Alice no País das Maravilhas, do diretor citado, a fim de compreendermos a carnavalização nos termos bakhtinianos, desenvolvida na obra. Para tanto, utilizou-se como aporte teórico principal os trabalhos de Bakhtin (2005 e 2008) sobre Carnavalização e Discini (2006). Analisamos cinco cenas do filme destacado, a fim de compreendermos como a carnavalização acontece na narrativa cinematográfica, quais suas características e consequências. Evidenciamos, de fato, a presença do carnaval na obra de Tim Burton, em que as cenas analisadas tornam a obra maior uma produção carnavalesca.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Adaptação fílmica; Alice no País das Maravilhas; Carnavalização.

1 Introduction

The theme of carnivalization recurs in various works that aim to explore the inversion of oppositional poles in a given social configuration, within a society. It subverts social and moral standards, rules of conduct, and current ideologies, in favor of valuing content produced by the lowest strata of the population, promoting an inversion of values. Carnivalization breaks with the way of viewing traditional events and, as a result, generates laughter and derision, since the content of the less favored layers can be elevated to the “higher” levels of the social order.

The cinematic narrative Alice in Wonderland, by director Tim Burton, released in 2010 by Disney studios, takes the viewer through a fantastic universe in which the character Alice undertakes a journey to dethrone the Red Queen, still in power then. The story takes place in a distinctly Victorian environment, with a strong presence of official figures of power, such as the aforementioned queen, for example. Throughout the plot, it is possible to visualize different situations that have carnivalization as a background for aesthetic construction, inverting the established social order, and elevating the oppressed layer to a higher position on the hierarchical scale, through mockery, due to the alteration of normal meanings.

“Carnivalization is a category that can be inferred and analyzed in texts from any time” (Discini, 2006, p. 90)¹, having a tone of “demarginalization” of the oppressed, which enables the participation of popular culture in aesthetic processes, and its valuing as a valid and significant production. It is a characteristic of society itself, which was transposed into literary analysis, and culminates in the dethronement of traditional figures of power that produce and reinforce the exercise of an elitist, exploitative culture in relation to the base, historically marginalized population.

Carnival can be understood as satire produced by the lower classes in relation to the power figures of traditional, hegemonic culture, in the form of politicians, kings, queens, priests, etc. who exercise some type of control over the popular classes, who were excluded and exploited materially and morally. It is a form of liberation from oppression - undertaken by the hegemonic class -, carried out with the production of a markedly popular satirical culture, which allows the ridicule of official power figures (Bakhtin, 2008).

We therefore assume that Tim Burton's narrative is a carnivalesque work, in the sense of subverting traditional hegemonic positions, by allowing the lower layers of society to also enjoy power, and have their culture brought into focus, building new perspectives around the work of art. Therefore, in this paper, the film narrative *Alice in Wonderland* will be investigated as a carnival work, in Bakhtinian terms. In order to do so: 1) there will be an analysis of five scenes from the 2010 film, directed by Tim Burton; 2) the process of carnivalization will be identified in the scenes underlying these excerpts, through the characterization of the inversion and subversion of the oppositional poles; and 3) the content of these scenes will be related to the larger narrative produced, in order to highlight the interconnection between the parts that contribute to making the object of study a more comprehensive carnival cultural product.

2 Carnivalization

The concept of carnivalization was outlined by Mikhail Bakhtin in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (2005), published in 1929. However, it was in *Rabelais and his world* (2008), originally released in 1965, that the Russian author revisits the concept when analyzing the popular culture

¹ Translated from: A carnavalização é categoria que pode ser depreendida e analisada nos textos de qualquer época (DISCINI, 2006, p. 90).

of the Middle Ages, highlighting the importance of the role of laughter in cultural productions of that age. In it, the author explores the influence of popular sources on the aesthetic construction of culture and presents François Rabelais as the catalyst of a culture placed on the margins of scholarship: carnival, Menippean satire and grotesque realism.

Carnivalization is related to the inversion of social roles, through the dethronement of important figures, powerful people, in favor of the enthronement of less important people, coming from the lower strata of society. The result of this process is the generation of laughter, since situations of oppression are approached with derision by popular culture, historically marginalized and excluded from official cultural production processes. During carnivalization, the population gains a voice to say what they think, using mockery as a structuring element of the productions. According to Bakhtin (2005):

Carnival is a spectacle without limelight and without division between actors and spectators. During carnival everyone is an active participant, everyone takes part in the carnivalesque action. Carnival is not contemplated, and in more rigorous terms, nor is it represented, but rather one lives in it, and lives in accordance with the laws while they are in force, that is, one lives a carnival life. This is a life deviated from its usual order, in a certain sense it is a 'life in reverse' an 'inverted world' (Bakhtin, 2005, p. 122-123).²

Bakhtin clarifies that carnival is one of the most interesting and complex structures in the history of popular culture as a whole, referring to it as the set of all rites, festivities and ways of making carnival. When discussing carnival, he does so in the sense of what constitutes it in essence, the deep roots of society and the first/primitive thought of man, how it developed in class society, the characteristics of the various carnivals, and the set of all the multiple popular festivities.

Bakhtin's ideas, regarding carnivalization, converge with the ideas of New Historicism, which seeks to undermine the foundations of traditional hegemonic history, which focuses on major events and the actions of important people, such as popes, kings, generals, etc. This new way of telling the story, with Peter Burke as an exponent, shifts the focus from the traditional actors of the

² Translated from: O carnaval é um espetáculo sem ribalta e sem divisão entre os atores e espectadores. No carnaval todos são participantes ativos, todos participam da ação carnavalesca. Não se contempla, e em termos mais rigorosos, nem se representa o carnaval, mas *vive-se* nele, e *vive-se* conforme as leis enquanto estas vigoram, ou seja, *vive-se* uma vida carnavalesca. Esta é uma vida desviada da sua ordem *habitual*, em certo sentido é uma 'vida às avessas' um 'mundo invertido' (Bakhtin, 2005, p. 122-123).

story to new figures and witnesses of the acts, using satire and comedy to show the subversion of the position of traditional characters in the narratives of facts that also belong to the people, whether in official ways of narrating the facts or in aesthetic forms, especially literature; after all, the work of art reflects the context in which it is produced (Eagleton, 2011).

According to Bakhtin (2005), carnival is a type of ritual spectacle that varies depending on the time and people, with its origins in the agrarian cults of primitive societies. Man plants, harvests, transforms the crops into food, while expanding his dominion over the material world. It celebrates its union with nature, which was once the enemy, and comes to symbolize this entire process of transforming nature into home, abandoning the fear it caused. Symbolization represents a giant leap in the evolution of humankind, since through it humans create modern societies and organize the internal and external relationships of a community, which result in the construction of a culture, and, with it, the emergence of carnival.

Carnivalization can be analyzed, according to Discini (2006), in any text from any time, since at any time there is a counterpoint between upper and lower classes and the defense of interests. If we analyze it from this perspective, popular culture displaces and decentralizes the conceptions of facts in the history of a people, undermining the basis of great historical figures, which causes the questioning and inversion of positions previously taken as fixed in the social order through parody, a trope structured to cause laughter. In this sense, the subjects of other narratives, coming from subaltern layers, are valued in a kind of rupture with the traditional social hierarchy, and the oppressed makers of culture are enthroned, while heroes and great figures are dethroned.

In the words of Discini (2006), it is recorded that:

(...) carnivalization as a movement of destabilization, subversion and rupture in relation to the “official world”, whether this is thought of as antagonistic to the grotesque created by the popular culture of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, or whether as a mode of presence that aspires to transparency and the representation of reality as a finished, single and stable meaning, which is incompatible with polyphony (Discini, 2006, p. 84).³

³ Translated from: (...) a carnavalização como movimento de desestabilização, subversão e ruptura em relação ao “mundo oficial” seja este pensado como antagônico ao grotesco criado pela cultura popular da Idade Média e Renascimento, seja este pensado como modo de presença que aspira a transparência e à representação da realidade como sentido acabado, uno e estável, o que é incompatível com a polifonia (Discini, 2006, p. 84).

It is clear, when we talk about carnivalization, that the term refers to the popular culture of the Middle Ages to address situations of subversion of social positions of power, finding in parody and satire, and, consequently, in laughter, a foundation for the fruition of the concept. However, carnival itself is not an inherently literary phenomenon, but a phenomenon relating to the social relations of a given society. By transposing the carnival spirit into art, Bakhtin creates the Theory of Carnivalization, which can only be understood when we relate it to the popular culture of a given time.

Carnivalization brings the rupture with the “official world”, as the previous quote points out, even though Bakhtin's focus is in the field of literature. According to Sacramento (2012), Bakhtin's ideas should be taken with caution when analyzing social carnivals, since he looked more deeply into the analysis of “cultural products that involve demotion, inversion, incompleteness, ambivalence, parody, the grotesque body and its regeneration as a form of criticism of modern society” (Sacramento, 2012, p. 158-159).⁴

Carnivalization reacts to the hegemonic project of modernity and its constant attempts to exclude equality, communion, solidarity, joint joy, laughter and pleasure. For Bakhtin, almost nothing else exists, in contemporary times, about the meaning that carnivalization brings in relation to semantic regeneration in language systems, since, in contemporary times, elements such as cynicism and insult are just “fragments of a foreign language in which one could once say something, but which now only expresses meaningless insults” (Bakhtin, 2008, p. 25).⁵

For Jameson (1985), the emphasis on contemporary pastiche productions in relation to parody, which characterizes carnivalization, would be one of the hallmarks of the presence of postmodernism in mass culture. Even taking into account that the mark that distinguishes both is humor, “pastiche is a blank parody, the parody that has lost its sense of humor” (Jameson, 1985, p. 18-19)⁶. This directly implies the aesthetic construction of cultural products, since carnivalization is characterized by the “‘grand universally popular worldview’ that brings the world closer to man and man to man, in a familiar and free ‘contact zone’, free from the seriousness of moral constraints,

⁴ Translated from: produtos culturais que toam o rebaixamento, a inversão, o inacabamento, a ambivalência, a paródia, o corpo grotesco e sua regeneração como forma de crítica à sociedade moderna” (Sacramento, 2012, p. 158-159).

⁵ Translated from: fragmentos de uma língua estrangeira na qual se podia outrora dizer alguma coisa, mas que agora só expressa insultos carentes de sentido” (Bakhtin, 2008, p. 25).

⁶ Translated from: o pastiche é a paródia lacunar, a paródia que perdeu seu senso de humor (Jameson, 1985, p. 18-19).

nihilism, levity and individualism” (Bakhtin, 2005, p. 161)⁷. In other words, without the subversion of order, in the contemporary world, we only have pastiche emptied of meaning.

Ambivalence is a characteristic of carnival, and in it, basic elements are contrasted: serious and comical, official and subversive, old and new, reality and dream, etc. In Bakhtin’s terms (2008):

In the carnival worldview, ambivalence prevails, an interaction between the basic opposites in language and in life - serious and comic, official and subversive, old and new, beginning and end -, which makes the opposites combine with each other in order to free words from the “tightness of meaning, logic, verbal hierarchy” (Bakhtin, 2008, p. 371).⁸

Parody, as a structure of carnivalesque aesthetics, plays the role of “degenerating to regenerate” and giving birth to new meanings, relating opposites to promote “inversion as subversion”. It is one of the evident forms in the serious-comic genres of carnivalized cultural productions, especially literary ones. As Bakhtin (2005, p. 107-108) points out, the aforementioned genres have 3 distinctive characteristics: 1) everyday life is the object and starting point of their productions; 2) genres are not based on legend, but on human experience and fantasy; and 3) great variety of style and genres of speech, producing the union of the serious with the comic, the representation with the represented, etc.

The irony of carnival is directed at the powerful, and at the elite culture that is seen as superior, better and more appropriate. In carnival society, disorder is permitted, and laughter reveals itself as one of the main objectives of the process, as parody presents itself as one of the inseparable resources of carnival works, being ambivalent, since it has a double vocality, in the form of the voice of the parodied and the parody. Edward Lopes (2003), points out that:

When the discourse is constructed from two texts that present themselves in the form of a total disjunction, in such a way that one of them appears as the joking, parodic inversion of the other, the result is a typical, ridiculous or

⁷ Translated from: grandiosa cosmovisão universalmente popular’ que aproxima o mundo do homem e o homem do homem, numa ‘zona de contato’ familiar e livre, liberta da seriedade dos constrangimentos morais, do niilismo, da leviandade e do individualismo” (Bakhtin, 2005, p. 161).

⁸ Translated from: Na cosmovisão carnavalesca, impera a ambivalência, uma interação entre os opostos básicos na linguagem e na vida – o sério e o cômico, o oficial e o subversivo, o antigo e o novo, o princípio e o fim -, que faz com que os opostos se combinem um ao outro de modo a libertar as palavras do “aperto do sentido, da lógica, da hierarquia verbal” (Bakhtin, 2008, p. 371).

laughable inversion of the usual worldview, essence of the procedure that Bakhtin calls carnivalization (Lopes, 2003, p.76).⁹

Carnival promotes a total inversion and suspends everything that signals inequality between people. According to Bakhtin (2005), the carnivalesque perception of the world includes four mutually related categories: 1) Familiarity, referring to the repeal of all forms of inequality between men, in order to enter into free familiar contact; 2) Eccentricity, when one seeks to highlight only one side of a situation, hiding the other; 3) *Mésalliances* bringing together the sacred and the profane, the serious and the comic, the sublime and the grotesque, the elevated and the low, the wise and the foolish; and 4) Profanity, composed by indecencies of carnival with the valuing of parody. In the interrelation of these, “The main keynote is inversion. The restrictions, laws and prohibitions, that sustain the system and order of common life, i. e., outside carnival life, are revoked during carnival” (Medeiros, 2005, p. 6).¹⁰

Bakhtin points out, in the process of carnivalization, the rite of symbolic inversions, in which oppositional pairs are deconstructed and reconstructed, generating a kind of play with the senses, which follows the logic of an inverted world, “a world inside out” (Miranda, 1997, p. 131).¹¹ In Bakhtin's theory of carnivalization (2005), the main action that stands out is the buffoon coronation, with the subsequent dethronement of the carnival king. This rite contains the carnival worldview that emphasizes changes and transformations, from the perspective that everything is destroyed and renewed, that is, everything is ambivalent and relative, capable of undergoing a change of meaning through inversion.

Carnivalization gave rise to a whole set of symbolic concrete-sensory forms within language, even though this language cannot be fully adapted to verbal language, especially when it comes to abstract concepts. This does not prevent, however, content from being transported to verbal language as a representative of carnival forms, although in a very limited way. In the words of Bakhtin (2005, p. 105), “This language expresses in a diverse and, one could say, well-

⁹ Translated from: Quando o discurso se constrói de dois textos que se apresentam na forma de uma disjunção total, de tal modo que um deles surge como a inversão jocosa, paródica do outro, o resultado é uma típica inversão, ridícula ou risível da visão de mundo habitual, essência do procedimento que Bakhtin batiza de carnavalização (Lopes, 2003, p.76).

¹⁰ Translated from: A principal tônica é a inversão. As restrições, as leis e proibições, que sustentam o sistema e a ordem da vida comum, isto é, extra carnavalesca, revogam-se durante o carnaval (Medeiros, 2005, p. 6).

¹¹ Translated from: um mundo ao avesso (Miranda, 1997, p. 131).

articulated way (like all language) a carnivalesque worldview (however complex), which penetrates all of its forms”.¹²

In carrying out carnival, little by little, an approximation is being built between the forms of official (symmetric) cultures, such as the elite, and unofficial (asymmetric) cultures, such as the popular, which use laughter and parody to communicate their condition and promote the dethronement, through mockery, for example, of official figures. Asymmetrical culture “plays a fundamental role because it brings people together, allows them to touch each other and, consequently, become an object of laughter” (Santos Oliveira, 2009, p. 4).¹³ Being a condition seen as anarchic, asymmetrical, or popular, culture escapes control and takes upon itself the freedom to produce content outside official standards.

Finally, in Bakhtin's conception, carnival is not a stationary, static structure, which imposes itself on a finalized content, and much less external, or imposed by someone. It is a very flexible scheme of artistic production, which allows the emergence of something new and new meanings. For the author, carnivalization reveals itself as the privileged place for the inversion of opposites and meanings, in which the poles come closer, and the cultural periphery has the opportunity to become the symbolic center, in a form of subversion of standards and an explosion of alterity, the presence of the other, the marginalized, the excluded and potentially dangerous.

3 Carnivalization in Tim Burton's adaptation

Alice in Wonderland, by Tim Burton, was released in 2010 in cinemas, and freely adapted the homonymous novel written by Lewis Carroll, and published in 1865. In this work, we isolated five scenes from the 2010 film, by Tim Burton, to analyze the implicit elements and contents, and identify where carnivalization underlies. These contents will then be related to the larger narrative underway in the film adaptation.

¹² Translated from: Essa linguagem exprime de maneira diversificada e, pode-se dizer, bem articulada (como toda linguagem) uma cosmovisão carnavalesca (porém complexa), que lhe penetra todas as formas (Bakhtin, 2005, p. 105).

¹³ Translated from: tem um papel fundamental porque aproxima as pessoas, permite que se toquem e, conseqüentemente, tornem-se objeto de riso (Santos Oliveira, 2009, p. 4).

The narrative has the Victorian Era as its historical backdrop. The Victorian Era began in 1837 and ended in 1901, covering a period in which Queen Victoria was in power in England in the 19th century. England stood out as the country that invested the most in industrialization in the world, dominating a large maritime and colonial empire. It was a period marked by social and political revolutions, industrialization and maritime expansion, in addition to a strong weight on moral and behavioral issues.

The adaptation plot features Alice, a British girl, who lost her father and constantly dreamed of a place called Wonderland. When Alice gets older, she meets a white rabbit who leads her to Wonderland, through a hole in the ground, at the base of a dead tree. Everything changes when she realizes that all the fantasy experienced in her dream was not just a dream, and that she would have to face dangers during her journey in that fantastic land.

The first scene we highlight addresses the theme of gender. It points out Alice's refusal to accept Heimish's marriage proposal. Without Alice knowing, she was taken by her mother to the girl's engagement party. Duke Heimish would propose to her in the presence of numerous important people of the time. Frightened, Alice does not respond to the marriage proposal, contradicting the social norms of the Victorian era of women's submission to men. In this scene, Alice's expression is one of confusion and Heimish's is one of astonishment and embarrassment. He doesn't understand why his proposal was rejected, and he is uncomfortable because he was kneeling, holding the proposal ring, with everyone's eyes falling on him. Alice says she is confused, and just then she notices a white rabbit in the bushes and follows it. She tells Heimish, before that, that she needs to think. The guests comment on the girl's attitude, in the form of murmurs and sounds of surprise.

In English society during the Victorian Era, conservatism strongly marked social and gender relations, with prohibitions and severe rules of conduct. The Puritans, when it came to some subjects, such as sex, for example, were very conservative and treated these subjects as immoral. In the words of Burgess (2002):

It was a time of conventional morality, of large families in which the father was a kind of divine head, and the mother, a submissive creature like Milton's Eve. The strict morality, the sacredness of family life was largely due to the example

of Queen Victoria herself, and her indirect influence on literature, as well as on social life, was considerable (Burgess, 2002, p. 215).¹⁴

During the Victorian Era, women's role was to be passive, submissive and obedient. They were supposed to dedicate themselves only to household activities and the education of children, and those who broke the standards of the time were discriminated against and looked down upon by society. Alice presents herself as a woman who questions and breaks standards, thus being seen as subversive. Her behavior clearly presents carnival features as she does not follow the current social rules established for her biological gender.

Carnivalization can be seen in the exaltation of the female figure, which, historically, is degraded. The narrative highlights a female figure who refuses a marriage proposal from a man whose social position gives him respect and reverence. Having a marriage proposal denied by a woman, in 19th century England, whose activities were limited to domestic chores, social commitments, etc., highlights the revolutionary insubordination contained in the act, reversing the roles and generating mockery. The man is dethroned from his position of superiority and the woman is elevated as a gender that can also decide the direction of her life, and who to be with. Heimish's expression points to the inversion of the power relationship and the carnival effect produced.

If Alice had accepted the request, the narrative would have been in line with the customs of the time, and carnivalization would not have happened, suspending the degeneration of roles. However, we had the opposite, and Alice's act - the dreamy, imaginative, questioning girl - fertilizes the situation for the generation of new meanings in the cinematographic work. Carnivalization happens, in the previous scene, through the subversion of gender roles and puts on the agenda the power of transformation of the inversion of positions.

The next scene unfolds when Alice arrives in Wonderland and comes across some of the local inhabitants: a dodo bird, a mouse, a white rabbit, two twin brothers Tweedledee and Tweedledum and some talking flowers. They stare at the girl with expressions of doubt and make comments about her loudly, as if Alice were not there, listening to them. They argue about whether

¹⁴ Translated from: Foi uma época de moralidade convencional, de grandes famílias em que o pai era uma espécie de chefe divino, e a mãe, uma criatura submissa como a Eva de Milton. A moralidade rígida, o caráter sagrado da vida em família era devido em grande parte ao exemplo da própria rainha Vitória, e sua influência indireta sobre a literatura, assim como sobre a vida social, foi considerável (Burgess, 2002, p. 215).

or not she is the real Alice. Most believe that the girl present is not the real Alice. In the scene, Alice appears smaller than the other characters, due to having drunk a liquid that made her shrink in size.

We observed the presence of speaking animals and plants in the description of scene 2, which are characteristic of oneiric environments. Wonderland is populated by the strangest creatures, and Alice just finds it “curious”, observing everything as if it were just a dream. Her facial expression reveals this state of belief. In fact, as a child, the girl constantly dreamed about that place, and those characters, so that, even though she was actually in Wonderland, the girl still believed that it was a dream, the same one she often had when was child.

We can observe a carnivalesque movement in scene 2 when, through a dreamlike aesthetic, elements that in the real world do not appear humanized, become so in this universe, subverting the relationship between reality and dreams, human and nature, reversing the roles. While in the real world Alice felt out of place in terms of social values, in Wonderland she feels as if she were in a familiar environment, although sometimes she still considers it a dream to be in that place, and is skeptical.

In Wonderland, Alice feels at home, more comfortable, as if the logic of that world coincided with the logic of the girl's inner world: imaginative and transgressive. However, even though she is in a place where she could be herself, distrust always places her in a position of doubt in the face of the materiality of that place, which, from the character's perspective, is nothing more than a dream. In fact, the girl takes the initiative to pinch herself to wake up from the supposed dream she believed she was having at that moment.

The human-nature relationship, in the previous scene, is subverted by the characteristics of the possible and the impossible; after all, how could a mouse talk? Or a rose grumble? Or, even, how could a human be smaller than the other characters in Wonderland, when in the real world she was larger than those animals? If analyzed more carefully, the elements arranged there invert the relationship of importance between the elements of reality – Alice, a human – and the wonderful world – flowers, animals, etc. -, elevating the position of some (animals and flowers) and dethroning others (Alice, human, in this case).

In scene 3, the character is surrounded by the Red Queen's guards, in the form of playing cards, and challenges them, even though she is outnumbered. This event takes place in the monarch's castle, in Salazen Grum - a distinctly medieval place, with towers, rooms, gardens and

walls -, after Alice steals the vorpal sword that would be used to subdue the Jabberwocky, a pet of the monarch, akin to a dragon, at the end of the narrative. The sword was hidden in the lair of Bandersnatch, a wonderful animal that injured Alice at the beginning of the narrative, when the girl had arrived in Wonderland. The girl exchanges the vorpal sword for the animal's eye, stolen by the mouse, also at the beginning of the narrative.

Alice defies the guards, although she displays an expression of insecurity. In this scene, there is a carnival effect carried out by the relationship of numerical parallelism. Large quantities are assumed to outweigh small quantities. However, only Alice faces a horde of guards. The effect intensifies when Bandersnatch helps the girl escape, overcoming all the guards surrounding the character, relating strength to number. We have carnival, once again, acting in the inversion of the order of official meanings.

We can also visualize an inversion when we observe the gender category: Alice performs the woman, and the cards perform the men. In this sense, we have that the woman refuses obedience, and confronts the men, clearly placing herself against the dictates of the social positions previously established for bodies: the man subjugating the woman, and the woman obeying. We have a glimpse of Alice's personality that stands against the destructive forces that go against everything that a woman can be, after all, Alice herself is independent, imaginative, intelligent, disobedient, questioning, and refuses to be imprisoned by ideas she does not agree with, such as the mandatory use of women's clothing of the time, for example. Carnivalization arises here when the repressed gender ascends and dethrones the hegemonic gender.

Next, we have scene 4, which puts into perspective the meeting between Alice and Absolem, the wise caterpillar from Wonderland. Shrouded in smoke, Absolem questions Alice about who the girl really is. Alice responds that she is not the real Alice, and that this topic had already been discussed before, when the girl had arrived in Wonderland. The caterpillar then states that at that time she was not the real Alice, but she was close to becoming the real one. The scene from which this clipping was taken is shrouded in enigma and relates the appositions of certainty and uncertainty, human and animal, reality and dream, the latter in the form of hookah smoke that the caterpillar constantly uses.

Alice insists on thinking that it is still just a dream and that she will wake up soon. This belief establishes an absence of seriousness around her that, in the eyes of the other characters, seems naive and strange. While everyone takes the events that are happening, and that will

happen on Glorian Day, seriously, Alice views them with disdain, and often ignores them. It is possible to notice, on the character's face, always an expression of doubt about the concreteness of that place and the reality of those events.

A carnivalesque event takes place, in scene 4, when we realize that the girl receives advice from a caterpillar, who constantly smokes a hookah. The caterpillar is elevated to the category of wise, above the human race, sapiens, the one who knows. It is ironic and laughable when we observe the arrangement of the image elements. Absolem and Alice have a connection, as both are about to undergo a metamorphosis, inverting their states, respectively, physical (caterpillar into butterfly) and moral (insecurity into security, dream into reality, cowardice into courage). The changes that both will go through call into question the relationship between the two characters, since Absolem reflects Alice's interior, full of doubts, and surrounded by enigmas about the reality of that place and the events she witnesses.

Scene 5, and last, introduces the climax of the narrative by presenting the characters on Alice's side on the battlefield, before starting the battle of Glorian Day, in which Alice will face the Jabberwocky, the Red Queen's pet. In the scene, white cards appear in the background, playing pieces, as everyone will fight on a large chessboard. Then, the White Queen – sister of the Red Queen –, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, the White Rabbit, the twins, Alice, among others. This moment resonates with carnival meanings, as it aims to elevate the lower classes, socially oppressed and marginalized by the Red Queen, to the top of the social hierarchy, destabilizing the official order, and promoting laughter as a consequence.

Despite the frailty that the elements of the image present, they win the battle against the Red Queen, after Alice defeats the Jabberwocky, cutting off the animal's head. Laughter arises when this team of characters is not expected to win the battle, after all, the Queen was well garrisoned with soldiers, and had been in command of Wonderland for several years, exercising power with authoritarianism from her palace in Salazem Grum. She punished all those who did not meet her wishes, or who went against the moral precepts defended by her; after all, Wonderland reflected the Victorian society of the 19th century, as Silva (2003) points out, in the form of environments, clothes, gestures, the way of speaking and behaving, the rules of moral conduct, etc.

As a result, once again it can be observed the subversion of order in the relationship between opposites, expressed here in the relationship between high culture and low culture, poor

and rich, oppressed and oppressors, freedom and prison. By undermining the traditional order hegemony, exercised by traditional figures of power, such as queens, kings, princes, new language games were created in which new meanings were elaborated, and the potential to create and make culture, by the lower layer of society, is brought into focus, and the mockery is used as criticism of those who were in power and discriminated against those hierarchically inferior in Victorian society.

By killing the Jabberwocky, the Cheshire cat removes the crown from the Red Queen and returns it to the White Queen, promoting the enthronement of a representative of the popular classes, and ruler of the people. The tone of mockery is noticeable when the Red Queen gives an order to the guards to arrest the characters on Alice's side and they do not obey, revealing that the power is no longer exercised by her, and that it now emanates from another authority, a more close to popular culture and more empathetic with regard to everyone's right to exist and live their lives with fullness and freedom in Wonderland.

The Red Queen's dethronement rite also appears as an enthronement rite, according to Bakhtin (2005). It is a two-way ritual, in which the dethronement is opposed to the coronation, and the former is stripped of all symbols of power and ridiculed, as happened with the dethronement of the Red Queen. When the Red Queen is crowned, she is elevated, and when she is dethroned, she falls, revealing the carnival manifestation of changes and renewals. In the opposition between elevation and fall, we have the destructive and regenerative character of morph and rebirth. The queen enthroned without the consent of the population is the buffoon and her symbols of power are the denial of the seriousness of the exercise of power.

The culmination of the White Queen's coronation is reached when the Hatter performs the *futterwacken* and shows that popular culture is rich in expression and creativity. The *futterwacken* is a dance that was performed by the Hatter before the Red Queen took power, using the Jabberwocky to subjugate the people of Wonderland. His achievement marks the *de facto* enthronement of the popular stratum, and puts an end to the White Queen's sister's reign of tyranny and terror. The degenerate power was dethroned and a new power was established in its place, reversing the positions, and generating new meanings within the language system.

Bakhtin (2008) states that the interaction between opposites in language causes the resulting combinations to free words from fixed logic, from verbal hierarchy. In fact, when the oppressed are elevated, a new way of understanding creative processes emerges that can reflect

a broader social context, bringing into focus the culture of a layer of the population that had no voice due to the oppression exercised by the monarch for years.

In relation to the four categories of perception of the world, highlighted by Bakhtin (2005), we can find all of them in this adaptation by Tim Burton. Familiarity, for example, can be seen in the form of the fight against the oppression of the Red Queen's reign, as the people, represented by the White Queen, wanted equality and freedom to live. The eccentricity can be seen in the evidence of the power exercised by the monarch of Wonderland, who subjugated all people and cut off the heads of those who contradicted her wishes. Mésalliances are evidenced when opposites are brought together, in the form of the real and the dream (Alice believes she is dreaming), the tall and the small (Alice changes size during the narrative), the human and the animal (The human being interacts with animals with human characteristics), good and evil (good Alice and the evil Red Queen), authoritarian and democratic (authoritarian Red Queen and democratic White Queen), wise and ignorant (Absolom advises Alice) etc. Profanity comprises the indecencies of carnival, in the form of actions that harm morals, for example. And nothing is more exemplary than Alice's behavior, which breaks with official morality, seen as correct, and which shocks everyone present when the girl acts or speaks, as the girl is intelligent, subversive, imaginative and inquisitive.

The excerpts displayed and commented on here reflect, at a microanalytic level, what happens at a higher level of reading of Tim Burton's work. By working with pairs of opposites that constantly relate to each other and create new forms of meaning, the filmic narrative itself becomes a carnivalesque work, as the plot as a whole was structured to allow the elevation of less favored characters to a high position, undoing the traditional order, in the greater form of the Red Queen's empire, which subjugated the base layers.

The language games performed in *Alice in Wonderland*, by Tim Burton, point to the cultural effervescence of the popular sector, and validate freedom as a driver for the production of multiple ways of living. Carnivalization points us to the sources of creativity present in the popular layers of society that could and should be valued if there were no oppressive structure of class society that constantly creates ways to repress and control those who create popular culture.

Final remarks

In this work, the film adaptation *Alice in Wonderland*, by Tim Burton, is understood under the light of Bakhtin's Carnivalization. Five scenes from the film were selected and the carnivalization in progress with the larger context of the narrative is highlighted, in order to validate the initial reading hypothesis, that the film narrative is carnivalesque.

As Discini (2006) highlights, carnivalization can be analyzed in any text, from any time, as it concerns the subversion of the established, fixed social order, determined by one class. By inverting this logic, always relating opposing pairs, new meanings are created and the apparent fixity, as a result of a supposed immutability in social relations, is broken, as the less favored layers also start to be enthroned, or even participate in the privileged processes of society.

In fact, from the analysis of the highlighted fragments, we were able to observe the occurrence of isolated carnival events that made up a more comprehensive fabric of carnivalization in Tim Burton's adaptation. Carnivalization can be identified in regard to gender, social position, in the relationship between human and nature, regarding dreams and reality, always instilling laughter as a consequence of the parallel relationship between opposites.

This gives support to point out that the highlighted narrative appears to be a carnivalesque work. Scene 5, for example, is illustrative of this process by elevating the people to power. When Alice defeats the Jabberwocky, the inversion occurs, and laughter comes to the surface, because how could a girl with no experience in battle defeat a monster that killed many people and destroyed many lands? Or even, how could Alice fight against an authoritarian system and defeat it, dethroning her greatest symbol, the Red Queen?

In short, it can in fact be attested to the filmic adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* as a carnivalesque work, as well as the narrative work carried out as part of a larger social context of which the film is an inevitable result, given the conditions of oppression, mainly moral, from 19th century England.

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Filmography

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