

**Europe, *Edenic Space***  
**A Literary Cartography in the Works of**  
**Maria Gabriela Llansol**

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the  
University of Liverpool for the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy  
by Raquel Cristina de Araújo Ribeiro.

May 2009



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Ciência, Inovação 2010  
Programa Operacional Ciência e Inovação 2010  
MINISTÉRIO DA CIÊNCIA, TECNOLOGIA E ENSINO SUPERIOR

**FCT** Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia  
MINISTÉRIO DA CIÊNCIA, TECNOLOGIA E ENSINO SUPERIOR

This PhD research (SFRH/BD/23146/2005) was supported by Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT) under the European Union program POCI 2010.

# Abstract

## EUROPE, *EDENIC SPACE* – A LITERARY CARTOGRAPHY IN THE WORKS OF MARIA GABRIELA LLANSOL

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This thesis maps a cartography of literary references in the works of the Portuguese writer Maria Gabriela Llansol (1931-2008), through a comparative reading of Llansol alongside four writers: José Saramago, Robert Musil, Franz Kafka and Virginia Woolf. The study argues that Llansol, who created an original imaginary universe, named the *edenic space*, is both recognized as an original and groundbreaking author in Portuguese literature, and simultaneously, confined to isolation by authoritative voices in Portuguese studies.

The Llansolian universe is an a-historical, timeless space inhabited by *figures* who establish a *community of living*. These *figures* can be historical people (writers like Nietzsche, Spinoza or Hölderlin, composers like Bach), but they can also be animals, plants or objects. These *living* are the nations in the Llansolian map, *figures* Llansol removed from history and placed in the *edenic* space, a map inside Europe in which there is no exclusion of the *other* for reasons of language, territory, or realm. Here there are no hierarchies.

In the Introduction, I will expose the difficulties of framing Llansol within a genealogy of Portuguese authors, within a distinct genre (diary, essay, narrative or meta-narrative?), and existing theoretical frameworks. As such, the Introduction proposes a reading of the Llansolian *oeuvre* as a theoretical paradigm *per se*, for it develops concepts which could be used in order to read other authors.

This study draws on Augusto Joaquim's premise that one should not read Llansol in the light of other theories or authors, but rather, read these *in the light of* her text. The thesis is, then, organized in four chapters, each related to a Llansolian concept. Chapter One, will argue that the Portuguese writer José Saramago's characters are like the Llansolian *poor man*; Chapter Two will relate the writings of Robert Musil to the Llansolian concept of *fulgor*; Chapter Three will explain that Franz Kafka's literary metamorphoses could be seen as embryonic processes of a Llansolian *figuration*; and finally, Chapter Four will show how some works by Virginia Woolf can be read in the light of the Llansolian *sex of reading* or the *scribin'body*.

By emphasizing the problematic labelling of Maria Gabriela Llansol's *oeuvre*, and by affirming the importance of her concepts in order to read other authors' texts, this thesis proposes a repositioning of the Llansolian text not only in the context of Portuguese literature, but also – through the comparative readings with European authors – in a wider European one.

# Acknowledgements

The research for this project would not have been possible without the financial support of Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia, and the travel grants from the School of Modern Languages at the University of Liverpool.

On an academic level, I would also like to acknowledge my supervisors, Claire Williams and Kirsty Hooper, for their patience and support. This project also benefited greatly from the contributions of Maria de Lourdes Azevedo Soares, Pedro Eiras, Sônia Helena Piteri, Ana Paula Arnaut, João Barrento and Espaço Llansol, David Frier, Rhian Atkin, Maria Guterres, Maria Graciete Besse and Lígia Silva.

This thesis would not have been possible without my family (Teté, Bártolo, Mariazinha, Adelina, Agostinha e Leta), whose encouragement and support led me to believe that there was a life beyond journalism. My sister, Rita, and my old friends Joana, Maria, Catarina, Carolina, Bruno, Cláudia, Pedro, Ricardo, João, Vasco, Paulo Ricca and Paulo Pimenta, who have continued to believe in me during these four years – even when I was absently submerged in a Llansolian world.

I could not have reached the end of this dissertation without the valuable dedication, friendship and mentoring of my *legentes* and interlocutors, Andréia Azevedo Soares and Charlotte Gleghorn. Charlotte, to whom I will be permanently in debt – there are not enough words to express my gratitude. And Ana, whose constant friendship and support helped keep my feet on the ground.

And finally, Ana, Charlotte, Rob, Nicki, John, Florent, Laura, Ben, Hartley, Chris, Silke, and baby Dexter – with your intelligence, dreams, challenges and hopes, during these four years, you have transformed Liverpool into an exciting place to live, and I am grateful for having shared this *edenic space* with you. With wishes of a bright and hopeful future, this thesis is for all of you.

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# Abbreviations

Citations from Maria Gabriela Llansol's principal works correspond to the following abbreviations. Only footnotes will contain abbreviations (e.g., *LC*, p. 76). In the main body of the text, the title of the book will be given in full or, when repeated, the shortest intelligible form is used (e.g., *Pregos* in the place of *Os Pregos na Erva*). The date in brackets corresponds to the first edition of the book. See the **Bibliography** for reference to the editions used in this dissertation, and other texts by Maria Gabriela Llansol which are not abbreviated.

- PE:** *Os Pregos na Erva* (1962)  
**DPE:** *Depois de os Pregos na Erva* (1973)  
**LC:** *O Livro das Comunidades* (1977)  
**RV:** *A Restante Vida* (1983)  
**CJA:** *Na Casa de Julho e Agosto* (1984)  
**CA:** *Causa Amante* (1984)  
**FP:** *Um Falcão no Punho. Diário I* (1985)  
**CME:** *Contos do Mal Errante* (1986)  
**F:** *Finita. Diário II* (1987)  
**SS:** *Da Sebe ao Ser* (1988)  
**AC:** *Amar um Cão* (1990)  
**RSL:** *O Raio Sobre o Lápis* (1990)  
**BDMT:** *Um Beijo Dado Mais Tarde* (1990)  
**HH:** *Hölder, de Hölderlin* (1993)  
**L1:** *Lisboaleipzig 1. O Encontro Inesperado do Diverso* (1994)  
**L2:** *Lisboaleipzig 2. O Ensaio de Música* (1994)  
**IQC:** *Inquérito às Quatro Confidências. Diário III* (1996)  
**ATJ:** *Ardente Texto Joshua* (1999)  
**OVDP:** *Onde Vais, Drama-Poesia?* (2000)  
**C:** *Cantileno* (2000)  
**P:** *Parasceve. Puzzles e Ironias* (2001)  
**SH:** *O Senhor de Herbais* (2002)  
**CLP:** *O Começo de um Livro é Precioso* (2003)  
**JLA:** *O Jogo da Liberdade da Alma* (2003)  
**AA:** *Amigo, Amiga. Curso de Silêncio 2004* (2006)  
**CL:** *Os Cantores de Leitura* (2007)

# Introduction

## EUROPE, *EDENIC SPACE* – A LITERARY CARTOGRAPHY IN THE WORKS OF MARIA GABRIELA LLANSOL

‘\_\_\_\_\_ eu ando a contar o mal-estar profundo dos seres humanos, dos animais e das plantas, ando à procura de um final feliz.’<sup>1</sup>  
Maria Gabriela Llansol

When the Portuguese writer Maria Gabriela Llansol died in March 2008, Claire Williams wrote in the obituary in *The Guardian* that this was the loss of an author who ‘eschewed the literary conventions of her country’.<sup>2</sup> The acknowledgement of Llansol’s forsaking of Portuguese literary conventions could only be explained by the fact that Llansol was an ‘isolated figure in Portuguese literature’,<sup>3</sup> an isolation provoked by her exile in Belgium, for over twenty years, which physically separated her from a hypothetical community of writers in Portugal. Moreover, Llansol seemingly cultivated her own isolation, in her scant public appearances and interviews, and in her dense, erudite, and impenetrable text, which did not encounter a popular readership in Portugal.

Born in Lisbon, in 1931, Llansol published extensively for over forty years: twenty-three novels, three diaries, seven translations (Rilke, Verlaine, Rimbaud and Apollinaire, to name just a few), and many other texts. She developed an absolutely original text, creating concepts in order to escape its own solipsistic nature. She established herself as a singular voice in Portuguese literature by creating a literary cartography with a series of European references (historical, literary, or musical), to which she gave an absolutely radical continuity, thus devising her own literary universe. The path to analysing and understanding the creation of Llansol’s imaginary is to study these *vectors* of knowledge. Authors such as Hölderlin, Nietzsche, Robert Musil, San Juan de la Cruz or Fernando Pessoa are *nations* in the Llansolian map, which she names the *edenic space*. Mapping this *edenic space* is the *raison d’être* of this thesis.

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<sup>1</sup> *OVDP*, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Claire Williams, ‘Maria Gabriela Llansol, Portuguese Writer who Eschewed the Literary Conventions of her Country’, *Guardian*, 15 May 2008, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29.

This study, the first of its kind in English-speaking academia, argues that Llansol is often recognized as groundbreaking and original, yet simultaneously still neglected in Portuguese literary studies. It is founded on the following premise by Augusto Joaquim (Llansol's husband and a dedicated reader of her text):

Mais interessante do que ler Gabriela Llansol à luz de Derrida, ou de Deleuze, ou de Blanchot, *seria ler estes à luz daquela*. [...] A leitura que vou propondo poderá, pois, justificar-se, como creio que ganha em emparceirar com as demais que vão sendo praticadas. Não só porque a obra em referência *não permite*, em meu entender, *qualquer doxa*, como muitos dos seus referentes são literários e filosóficos, precisando ser trabalhados *precisamente a esse nível* [...]. O que lhes proponho é que comecem a praticar uma *certa reversibilidade dos pontos de vista* e questionem o *acesso ao cânone*.<sup>4</sup>

The Llansolian text, therefore, presents a series of *concepts* which defy existing literary structures and theoretical paradigms, not only because they contest previously established ones (for instance, in the place of a *character* she proposes a *figure*), but also since these concepts create a new *philosophical* and *literary paradigm* that can be used to read or analyse other authors. Following Joaquim's suggestion, then, this thesis puts into practice a 'reversibilidade dos pontos de vista', and questions the access of writers to the literary canon. However, in contrast to Joaquim's view that the Llansolian text 'não permite qualquer *doxa*', I would like to propose a reading of Llansol as an author who *reworks*, *re-appropriates* and *re-inscribes* previous *doxa* in order to create her own. The problematic framing of Llansol in a paradigm does not necessarily refuse theoretical models that might be able to make her text more intelligible; rather, it means precisely that her text presents a *confluence* of theories and paradigms sustained by the chaotic freedom of literary creation at the end of the twentieth century. Considering the Llansolian text in both literary *and* philosophical terms (through the creation of concepts which support its structure), this thesis argues for a reading of José Saramago, Franz Kafka, Robert Musil, and Virginia Woolf not *in comparison with* Llansol, but *in the light of* her concepts.

By outlining a cartography of Llansol's references in both a Portuguese and a European map, this thesis interrogates the use of adjectives such as 'controversial', 'enigmatic', 'difficult', or 'marginal' to describe her vast work, pointing to her problematic positioning within a literary genealogy. This problematic positioning is

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<sup>4</sup> Augusto Joaquim, 'Algumas Coisas', in *FP*, pp. 153-204 (p. 195) (emphasis mine).



the subject of the present Introduction, which is divided into three main parts. The **first part** is comprised of an attempt to situate Llansol's *oeuvre* within the context of a Portuguese lineage of writers. Llansol does not easily fit into the 'canon' of post-1974 Portuguese literature, neither into the group of Portuguese women writers (Lídia Jorge, Olga Gonçalves and Maria Velho da Costa, for instance), nor in a specific genre, which accentuates, in my opinion, the originality of the Llansolian text.

The **second part** of this Introduction offers a reappraisal of Llansol's work, related to the idea of Europe as an *edenic space*. This will involve an overview of some of her concepts (the *figure*, *community*, *rebel* or *poor man*, among others). In doing so, my aim is to create a solid philosophical-literary framework that will be used throughout the thesis in order to analyse the four authors in question.

The **third** and final part will address the difficulties in framing Llansol in existing theoretical paradigms – modernist, postmodernist, postcolonial or postnational literatures. Here we will show how difficult it is to establish *one discrete framework* which corresponds accurately to the originality of this text. In my opinion, scholars have not yet entirely grasped the theoretical implications of the Llansolian text, a lack this thesis attempts to redress through a reading of Llansol's *oeuvre* as literature, indeed, but also as something which moves *beyond* the parameters instituted by literary theory.

## PART I

### THE MAKING OF AN (ANTI)-CANON: THE PROBLEMATIC GENEALOGY OF MARIA GABRIELA LLANSOL

*'Não há texto autobiográfico. Que os humanos,  
ao ler-me, não falem de mim'.<sup>5</sup>*  
Maria Gabriela Llansol

Born in 1931, to a bourgeois family, 'decadente, bibliófila, com traços de aristocracia, salazarista e republicana, estável, matriarcal, respeitável',<sup>6</sup> Maria Gabriela Llansol was only twenty-four years old when she published her first collection of short stories *Os Pregos na Erva* (1962). Approximately ten years later *Depois de os Pregos na Erva* (1973) appeared, another collection of short stories (mostly written in the late 1960s) in which the texts are longer, and more fragmented. During the years before the 1974 Carnation Revolution, Llansol abandoned Portugal (in 1965) and her Law degree, and moved to Louvain, in Belgium, with her husband Augusto Joaquim, who had deserted the Colonial war in Africa. In the diary *Finita*, she wrote: 'Pusemos a partida sob o impulso do Génesis, como há dez anos pusemos a deserção do Augusto, e a nossa vinda subsequente para aqui, no rastro do Êxodo.'<sup>7</sup> From her texts, we know that she had no children – 'renunciei a que alguém, um dia, me chame: "Avó Gabriela"';<sup>8</sup> that she assumed her exilic condition as a necessary evil to become nomadic – 'quero ser nómada ou ermita'.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, Llansol is clearly aware that her writings are difficult, for they presuppose a 'pacto de desconforto'.<sup>10</sup> Yet this 'inconforto' does not mean 'discomfort', but rather 'uncomfort', both 'incómodo e coração ansioso, à espera de um amigo sereno', as Llansol explains. The Llansolian text both invites and rejects, hosts and abandons the reader, now divided in her/his own insecurity, between love and hate. And if the reader insists on listening to this text, 'se o coração persiste em ler, é porque há nele um fulgor estético que ilumina o próximo passo'.<sup>11</sup> Llansol thus rejects the statement that her text is difficult: 'Continuam a dizer-me que este texto é difícil e fascinante

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<sup>5</sup> *CL*, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> 'Preface', in *DPE*, n.p.

<sup>7</sup> *F*, p. 25.

<sup>8</sup> *CLP*, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> *F*, p. 86.

<sup>10</sup> *LI*, p. 12

<sup>11</sup> *LI*, p. 12

\_\_\_\_\_ quando eu tanto desejei que *olhassem para o pensamento* que contém.<sup>12</sup> Ultimately, even if *there is* an autobiographical text in Llansol, its presence is dissolved by the need to transcend the constraints of the text, moving towards *beholding the thought* it comprises, so that, when the heart continues to read this impenetrable text, it accepts the ‘un-comfort’ as a mutual agreement.

Llansol’s death in March 2008 sparked public and private reactions in the Portuguese media and academia – unprecedented attention for a writer who the daily newspaper *Público* called ‘almost secret’<sup>13</sup> (two years earlier, in one of her rare public appearances, the same paper called her ‘discreet’).<sup>14</sup> Evidently, Llansol was not that secret, given the amount of comments and condolences posted on blogs, personal pages, newspapers, newsletters and press releases, ranging from the President of the European Commission, to the ordinary reader. Llansol’s death provoked a change in the course of my research, not least because I intended to interview the author. The reactions about Llansol’s death also made me rethink several aspects of my research, principally regarding Llansol’s portrayal in the media and by academics who specialize in her texts.

Throughout her career Llansol drew around her a cohesive group of academics, researchers, artists, or simply passionate readers, and she is now widely studied in Portugal and in Brazil, as demonstrated by the large number of publications, theses or cultural performances that have appeared in the last decade. Although her books are not yet translated into English,<sup>15</sup> there has been a surge in translations in both France and Spain,<sup>16</sup> attesting to her growing international reputation. For example:

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<sup>12</sup> *L2*, p. 156 (emphasis mine). Throughout the thesis I will try to be as faithful as possible to the graphic specificities of the Llansolian text. Consequently, gaps such as \_\_\_\_\_ or long blank spaces like these [ ] will be as close as possible to the original. When a short quotation is presented, breaks like / or //, which represent a change of verse, in poetry, will be used.

<sup>13</sup> Alexandra Lucas Coelho, ‘Llansol – A Vida Nova’, *Público*, 4 March 2008, section P2, pp. 4-6 (p. 4).

<sup>14</sup> Andréia Azevedo Soares, ‘Maria Gabriela Llansol, a Escritora “Discreta” Reaparece em Público’, *Público*, 24 June 2006, p. 29.

<sup>15</sup> The exception is the short story ‘Nails in the Grass’, trans. by Giovanni Pontiero, *The Literary Review*, 22 June 1995, <<http://www.theliteraryreview.org/tlr-mg11.htm>> [accessed 4 April 2009].

<sup>16</sup> In Spanish: *El Libro de las Comunidades*, trans. by Atalaire (Madrid: Atalaire, 2005); *La Vida Restante*, trans. by Atalaire (Madrid: Atalaire, 2008). In French: *Les errances du mal*, trans. by Isabel Meyrelles (Paris: Métailié, 1991); *La foudre sur le crayon / O Raio Sobre o Lápis*, trans. by Augusto Joaquim (Lisbon: Comissariado Europália-91, 1991); *Un faucon au poing. Journal 1*, trans. by Alice Raillard (Paris: Gallimard, 1993); *Aimer un chien*, trans. by Alice Raillard, *Nouvelle Revue Française*, 522-23 (juillet/août, 1996); ‘Où vas-tu, drame-poésie?’ [excerpts], *Action Restreinte. Théories et expériences de la fiction*, 5-6 (2004), and 7 (2006); *Le jeu de la liberté de l’âme*, trans. by Cristina Isabel de Melo (Paris: Page d’Arte, 2009).

- a) The creation of the Espaço Llansol Association in 2007 (continuing the work of the research group GELL, Grupo de Estudos Llansolianos, since 2000).<sup>17</sup> This association has been extremely active in promoting the Llansolian *oeuvre*, particularly since the author's death, organizing conferences, and presentations, and supporting publications (collections of essays, books, plays, and DVD editions), in Portugal, Brazil and France. Espaço Llansol is now also responsible for cataloguing and maintaining the author's literary estate.<sup>18</sup>
- b) Since the beginning of the decade there has been a surge in research (masters and doctorates) on Llansol, especially in Brazil, but also in Portugal.<sup>19</sup>
- c) The influence of the Llansolian text reaches beyond the academic or literary worlds. In recent years, dance, theatre, music and cinema have used the Llansolian text as a basis for different cultural manifestations.<sup>20</sup>

Despite this exponential growth in interest, there remains a notable lack of readings of the Llansolian text that consider different aspects of her writing, legacy and theoretical framework, such as her self-ghettoized condition within Portuguese

<sup>17</sup> See their blog Espaço Llansol, <<http://espacollansol.blogspot.com/>> [accessed 4 April 2009].

<sup>18</sup> According to Espaço Llansol, the author left an immense estate of short stories, diaries, notebooks, plays, letters, etc., which the Association will gradually digitalize until 2011. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation supported financially the digitalization of approximately seventy of Llansol's unpublished notebooks (written between 1974 and 2006) that are now accessible to the public.

<sup>19</sup> In Brazil, the research group Literaterras created by Lúcia Castello Branco, at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, in Belo Horizonte, is extremely active in studying and promoting Llansol's work. Since the mid-1990s, Castello Branco has supervised several masters and doctoral theses. The Brazilian scholars Jorge Fernandes da Silveira and Maria de Lourdes Soares also supervised several theses in Rio de Janeiro. In Portugal, most prominently, Pedro Eiras's doctorate was published under the title *Esquecer Fausto. A Fragmentação do Sujeito em Raúl Brandão, Fernando Pessoa, Herberto Helder e Maria Gabriela Llansol* (Porto: Campo das Letras, 2005). More recently, Maria Etelvina Santos's doctorate also came out as a book, *Como uma Pedra-Pássaro que Voa – Llansol e o Improvável da Leitura* (Lisbon: Mariposa Azul, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Castello Branco's group has been involved in writing and directing a series of documentaries about writers' literary experiences. See *Os Cantores de Leitura: Maria Gabriela Llansol e a Legênciã em Viva Voz*. This is the third *opus* of a trilogy including *Redemoinho-Poema* (on Llansol) and *Língua de Brincar* (about Manoel de Barros).

João Barrento and Maria Etelvina Santos are coordinating the exhibition 'Sobreimpressões – A Dimensão Europeia da Obra de Maria Gabriela Llansol', in Centro Cultural de Belém (Lisbon, October-November 2010), which will also include a film season, new publications and cultural events. The composer Amílcar Vasques Dias wrote the orchestral piece *Doze Nocturnos em Teu Nome* based on Llansol's texts, performed at Rivoli theatre (Porto, 2001). See

<<http://www.assedioteatro.com.pt/espectaculo/pdf/012.pdf>> [accessed 4 April 2009]. The choreographer Vera Mantero and the film director Miguel Gonçalves produced the performance (film and dance) *Curso de Silêncio*, for the Festival Temps d'Image (Lisbon, November 2007). The film is available on YouTube, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rVt5r9wEzZM&feature=Playlist&p=BC587F97523BC0B3&index=6>> [accessed 4 April 2009]. See also the opera *Metanoite*, João Barrento (libretto) and Luís Madureira (score), based on *O Senhor de Herbais*, performed at Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon, 29 June 2008).

literature. Llansol's isolation was, in the end, unnecessary, given the reactions to her death – it seems that everyone has been reading her in secret and no one dared to admit it. At the same time, the fact that Llansol's books are not widely translated hinders the access of English-speaking readers to her work, an obstacle that scholars like Claire Williams, Paulo de Medeiros and Fernando Arenas have tried to overcome.<sup>21</sup>

In order to trace the making of a Llansolian (anti)canon, I will consider genealogy, gender and genre in Llansol's text, and the problems scholars face in framing her within these structures.

### Genealogy

The resistance of the Llansolian text to a genealogical definition is one of the biggest challenges faced by its readers. For instance, the scholar and literary critic Fernando Venâncio stated, in an interview, that Eduardo Prado Coelho promoted 'sub-products' in Portuguese literature, such as Maria Velho da Costa, Rui Nunes and Maria Gabriela Llansol, whose books reveal a 'literatura catastrófica, que vive da degradação da história, das personagens e da linguagem, desmobiliza[ndo] os leitores'.<sup>22</sup> According to Venâncio, Prado Coelho's (and these writers') references 'não são as nossas, mas as de literaturas estranhas. [...] [A] nossa história é aí perfeitamente secundária. Somos exportados para outro contexto, e perdemos todos porque não se nos dá de um autor o quadro em que ele realmente funciona'.<sup>23</sup> Venâncio's comment seems to me unfounded – calling Velho da Costa, Nunes and Llansol sub-products is an exaggeration. Moreover Venâncio's conviction that these authors' references are not 'ours', and that Portuguese history is secondary in their texts, suggests a superficial reading. In relation to Llansol, at least, Venâncio seems unaware that, as Paulo de Medeiros posits, whilst the Llansolian text performs 'a

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<sup>21</sup> Publications on Llansol in English include: Paulo de Medeiros, 'The Diary and Portuguese Women Writers', *Portuguese Studies*, 14 (1998), 227-241; Claire Williams, 'Speaking in Tongues: The Multiple Personalities of Maria Gabriela Llansol', *Portuguese Studies*, 18.1 (2002), 230-243; Fernando Arenas, *Utopias of Otherness – Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), pp. 87-125; Lígia Silva, 'Virginia Woolf and Gabriela Llansol – "Sweeping the Thick Leaves of Habit"', in *Virginia Woolf: Three Centenary Celebrations*, ed. by Luísa Flora and Maria Cândida Zamith (Porto: Universidade do Porto, 2007), pp. 155-164; Raquel Ribeiro, 'Maria Gabriela Llansol meets George Steiner: *The Idea of Europe* as a Llansolian *Edenic Space*', *Ellipsis*, 6 (October 2008), 33-47.

<sup>22</sup> Francisco Mangas, 'Uma História de Portugal Dividido', interview with Fernando Venâncio, *Diário de Notícias*, 28 August 2001, available at <[www.fcsh.unl.pt/docentes/cceia/educacao/DossierEPC-FV.doc](http://www.fcsh.unl.pt/docentes/cceia/educacao/DossierEPC-FV.doc)> [accessed 21 April 2009].

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

dislocation of a certain tradition of Portuguese writing, often typified as more lyrical than analytical, dreaming of the depths of the ocean rather than the heights of Europe's mountains', it also presents 'a reaffirmation of the very inclusion of Portuguese literature within a European framework'.<sup>24</sup>

Pedro Eiras discusses at length the 'problematic' framing of Llansol in the context of Portuguese literature, articulating several critics' points of view. Eduardo Lourenço struggles to establish the Llansolian text in a lineage: 'Que *Cultura* corresponde a um tal *Texto* não é fácil dizê-lo. Ou melhor: é impossível. Justamente por isso é essa enigmática prosa *contemporânea* por excelência.'<sup>25</sup> Eiras concludes that the Llansolian text creates its own cultural time (and space), becoming 'meta-cultural, não enquadrável fora das referências que propõe'.<sup>26</sup> In a later text, Lourenço places Llansol and Agustina Bessa-Luís alongside each other in an 'imaginário português de anti-realismo mas pleno de inter-textualidades', as Eiras describes.<sup>27</sup> Lourenço states that Llansol's *oeuvre* is indescribable because 'o seu conteúdo é a sua forma e a sua forma uma viagem ficcional sem outro referente que outros imaginários'.<sup>28</sup> Lourenço seems to reiterate Maria Alzira Seixo's opinion on Llansol's text (alongside José Saramago's and Mário Cláudio's), underlining its 'self-referentiality' (form reflects content and *vice-versa*) as a result of a questioning of alterity,<sup>29</sup> or, as Lourenço posits, a constant battle to define an (ontological) existence.<sup>30</sup> Consequently, Llansol's writing attempts to promote, 'via literatura, o encontro de Portugal consigo mesmo e com a(s) Europa(s), como ser-de-diálogo na convivência com a alteridade', as Maria de Lourdes Soares explains, countering Venâncio's opinion, and underscoring the proximities between Portugal and those

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<sup>24</sup> Paulo de Medeiros, 'Uncommon Community', unpublished paper presented at conference '30 Years Since *O Livro das Comunidades*' (Liverpool, September 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Eduardo Lourenço, 'Con-texto Cultural e Novo Texto Português', cited by Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 542 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>26</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 542.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 542. Llansol reacted quite vehemently to this parallel with Bessa-Luís: 'Não aprecio ser comparada a Agustina, unicamente por não me parecer uma comparação produtiva. Tê-lo-ia sido há cento e cinquenta anos. Respeito o seu trabalho gigantesco (que se vem acrescentar ao edifício gigantesco do realismo mais ou menos sapiencial ou moral que há praticamente dois séculos nos procura impor a sua imagem de um só mundo, o do poder), mas acontece que nem sempre ocupamos os extremos do mesmo espectro. Somos contemporâneas por mero acaso.' *SH*, p. 47.

<sup>28</sup> Eduardo Lourenço, 'Em Torno do Nosso Imaginário', *Jornal de Letras, Artes e Ideias*, 8 October 1997, pp. 10-14 (p. 12).

<sup>29</sup> Maria Alzira Seixo, *A Palavra do Romance: Ensaios de Genologia e Análise* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1986), pp. 22-23.

<sup>30</sup> Lourenço, 'Em Torno do Nosso Imaginário', p. 12.

‘other imaginaries’ to which Lourenço was referring.<sup>31</sup> More recently, Lourenço regretted not having written enough about Llansol during her life, stating that

[Llansol] era dos escritores mais originais da literatura portuguesa. Não só da literatura contemporânea mas provavelmente de sempre. É um caso. Penso que muito se falará dela no futuro. Provavelmente, a Gabriela Llansol será – penso eu – o próximo grande mito literário português. A escrita dela é fulgurante. Não há nada que se possa comparar àquilo. [...] Há páginas dela que são siderantes. Aquilo não entra dentro de um mínimo de coerência do tipo racional, a que nós estamos habituados e na qual a gente sabe o que aquilo é, para onde vai, etc. Também ela, de uma maneira diferente do Pessoa, vem de um planeta estranho: é aquele mundo flamengo, aqueles Bosch, aquele misticismo renano, aquelas coisas complicadas que aparentemente têm pouco a ver conosco. Já tiveram, em tempos. [...] A Llansol nunca será uma autora fácil e consensual. É uma espécie de fenómeno misterioso. Alguém vindo de uma outra espécie de planeta. Quem a encontra é difícil não ficar fascinado por essa escrita.<sup>32</sup>

Lourenço raises issues essential to a general understanding of the Llansolian text. His prognosis of an ‘original’, ‘strange’, or ‘phenomenal’ writer about whom much will be written in the future cannot be disregarded, since Lourenço, an authority in Portuguese literary studies, foresees the impact of the Llansolian text in Portuguese literature *a posteriori*. This may ultimately endorse its excellence, largely unacknowledged during the author’s life.

The Llansolian text also raises wider problems concerning the canon, owing to its radical novelty and to the fact that Llansol herself always wrote *against* the literary canon, rejecting its existence altogether. Yet, by placing herself quite comfortably in a lineage of twentieth-century Portuguese writers, Llansol clearly confronted the anguishes of the scholars who do not know how to describe her text. Jorge de Sena, Herberto Helder, Raul Brandão, Vergílio Ferreira, Ruben A., ‘o primeiro Almeida Faria (espero não esquecer nenhum, apesar de hesitar sobre Carlos de Oliveira)’ form the group of authors that, according to her, tried to overcome “‘as tentações e os impasses” com que, em todo o Ocidente novelístico e romancista, deparou o realismo’.<sup>33</sup> Llansol identifies herself with these authors since none of them ‘tentou o surrealismo ou o *nouveau roman*, que se revelaram tentativas sem

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<sup>31</sup> Maria de Lourdes Soares, ‘A Ficção de Llansol: Portugal na Transparência de Outras Paisagens’, in *Il Portogallo e i Mari: Un Incontro Tra Culture*, ed. by Maria Luisa Cusati (Napoli: Liguori, 1997), pp. 59-68 (p. 64).

<sup>32</sup> Carlos Vaz Marques, ‘Eduardo Lourenço: Estou em Dívida para com a Humanidade Inteira’, *Ler*, 72 (September 2008), pp. 30-40 (pp. 38-39).

<sup>33</sup> *SH*, p. 130.

consequência'.<sup>34</sup> As we will see below, Llansol's text constantly revolts against 'realism' and the constraints of 'narrativity', yet, by presenting this list of authors – even when they are still restricted by a realist way of writing – Llansol suggests that literature written in the same language 'nada tem de nacional'.<sup>35</sup> She cites Sena's preface to *Antigas e Novas Andanças do Demónio* (1978):

Aquele realismo mais ou menos tradicional, não o creio válido, hoje, se não for subjectivo, isto é, se não brotar de uma revolta das nossas memórias pessoais [...]. Este realismo imaginoso, e por isso não menos 'realista', que se serve da história e da lenda, ou da inexplicabilidade dos acontecimentos, não pretende, como as parábolas pretendem, salvar as almas: pretende, sim, perdê-las, fazer com que sintam o chão fugir-lhes debaixo dos pés.<sup>36</sup>

By assuming these authors as exponents of a rejection of the 'realist' model, the Llansolian text thus acknowledges an 'estranho compromisso entre linhagem e marginalidade',<sup>37</sup> a process of both parricide and filiation, in the words of Paulo de Medeiros.<sup>38</sup> By admitting her debt to Sena (who will become a *figure* in some of her texts),<sup>39</sup> and to others, Llansol recognizes that 'a grande literatura existe... e coexiste com a pequena e regressiva; toda a literatura [...], tem efeitos; [que] esses efeitos não se ficam a dever a um autor em particular, mas ao conjunto das obras que integram, ao longo do tempo, a mesma estética'.<sup>40</sup>

### **Gender (the particular context of post-1974 revolutionary Portugal)**

Placing Llansol within the framework of women's studies in Portugal is also controversial, owing to both the author's rejection of 'escrita feminina',<sup>41</sup> and the lack of scholarly readings situating her within a 'canon' of Portuguese women

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<sup>34</sup> *SH*, p. 130.

<sup>35</sup> *SH*, p. 131.

<sup>36</sup> Sena cited by Llansol in *SH*, p. 135.

<sup>37</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 542.

<sup>38</sup> As Medeiros writes, 'the scandal of the [Llansolian] text is not that obvious parricide but rather the equally clear, but obscured, process of filiation that accompanies it'. See Medeiros, 'Uncommon Community'.

<sup>39</sup> See *Um Falcão no Punho* and *Causa Amante*.

<sup>40</sup> *SH*, p. 138.

<sup>41</sup> When a friend suggested that Llansol send *O Livro das Comunidades* to an exhibition about Portuguese contemporary women writers, she replied: 'Porque, segundo ela, há uma escrita feminina. Eu não acho.' *FP*, p. 140. Llansol is not alone in the rejection of her literary production as 'women's literature'. Other Portuguese female writers reject this category as well, a category which Hilary Owen dubs a 'feminism which is not one'. See Hilary Owen, *Portuguese Women's Writing, 1972 to 1986: Reincarnations of a Revolution* (Lewiston: Mellen, 2000), p. 1. Accordingly, Isabel Allegro de Magalhães also stated how 'dentro do grande conjunto das letras portuguesas actuais, as escritoras não se considerem como autoras sexualmente marcadas, mas exijam ser consideradas *escritoras*, sem qualificativos'. Isabel Allegro de Magalhães, *O Tempo das Mulheres* (Lisbon: INCM, 1987), p. 497 (emphasis in the original).



writers. This absence is particularly noticeable given that many of these studies are devised within a feminist and post-1974 context, and consider the legacy of *Novas Cartas Portuguesas* (1972) to women's writing in general.<sup>42</sup>

Llansol first published in 1962, and then prolifically throughout the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>43</sup> Given the number of publications, it is surprising that she is disregarded by the most relevant texts about Portuguese women writers,<sup>44</sup> which consider the much-cited writers (Lídia Jorge, Teolinda Gersão, Maria Velho da Costa, Olga Gonçalves, and Agustina Bessa-Luís) to share several characteristics that, I believe, are also present in Llansol's works.<sup>45</sup> As Ana Paula Ferreira observes, these writers' works

constitute a non-negligible corpus of historical revisionism that simultaneously inscribes and internally questions the representation of the revolution as a transformative new beginning, a collective love affair commanded by a seemingly unmoveable patriarchal order. By doing so, they deconstruct the narrative of a 'new' April in Portugal, while reconfiguring the traditionally silent wombs of history as the empowered subjects of a revolution yet-to-be.<sup>46</sup>

The Llansolian text – even when placed in a European rather than Portuguese context – corresponds to Ferreira's description. Llansol's paradigm constitutes a questioning of patriarchal power structures perpetuated in the figure of the *Prince*: the medieval noble who enslaved the peasants; the Renaissance prince who burnt men and women at the stake for heresy; the nineteenth-century bourgeois who saw in the capitalist structure a way out of his entrapment in history, through the exploitation of the new territories; the twentieth-century fascist who created the Holocaust; or the colonizer

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<sup>42</sup> Maria Isabel Barreno, Maria Teresa Horta and Maria Velho da Costa, *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Lisbon: Moraes, 1980).

<sup>43</sup> Llansol published six books with Rolim publishing house which, according to Darlene Sadlier, 'ha[s] done much to promote works by women' since 1974. Sadlier's book only mentions Llansol once in a list of women writers. Darlene J. Sadlier, *The Question of How – Women Writers and New Portuguese Literature* (New York, London: Greenwood Press, 1989), p. xiii.

<sup>44</sup> Along with Sadlier's book, other works which ignore Llansol include, for instance: Owen's and Allegro de Magalhães's above cited works; and Ana Paula Ferreira, 'Reengineering History: Women's Fiction of the Portuguese Revolution', in *After the Revolution: Twenty Years of Portuguese Literature, 1974-1994*, ed. by Helena Kaufman and Anna Klobucka (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1997), pp. 219-242.

<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, only Cristina Robalo Cordeiro and Isabel Allegro de Magalhães acknowledge the parallels between Llansol and these writers. In *O Sexo dos Textos*, Magalhães places Llansol in the context of Portuguese women writers, whose novels present a rupture with the space-time *continuum*, emphasizing the space of the house and of domesticity reflected in the fragmentation of language and narrative. Isabel Allegro de Magalhães, *O Sexo dos Textos, e Outras Leituras* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1995). See also Cristina Robalo Cordeiro, 'Vozes Femininas no Romance Português Contemporâneo', in *Lusitânica et Romanica – Festschrift für Dieter Woll*, ed. by Martin Hummel and Christina Ossenkop (Hamburg: Buske, 1998), pp. 377-387.

<sup>46</sup> Ana Paula Ferreira, 'Reengineering History', p. 220.

who curtailed other people's sovereignty. These 'men' embody oppression in Llansol's novels, as we will see, and the *rebels* will collectively rise against them throughout her literary project. Although these images appear more relevant to the greater history of Europe than to Portugal alone, Llansol explains how Portugal and Europe share this shameful history, a perspective not unlike that of other authors, like José Saramago or Lídia Jorge.

Perhaps Llansol's exile justifies her omission from these studies, but her absence could also be explained by the fact that in Portugal, as elsewhere, access to the canon remains controlled by a series of limitations. According to Jan Gorak, these limitations are based on the complex relationship between academia, pedagogy, artistic creation, cultural valuation, the interplay of interests, and, it should be added, strategies of editorial promotion. To Gorak, canons are 'communities of beliefs'<sup>47</sup> that emphasize notions of identity, conserving the 'orthodoxies of a particular world view'.<sup>48</sup> As such, 'canonical works ally themselves with a spectrum of vested interests that include male dominance, Anglo-Catholic orthodoxy, national self-definition, and professional aggrandizement'.<sup>49</sup> The usual exclusion of women writers from male-dominated literary canons is an example of this 'world view'.

Notwithstanding her omission from studies of both male and female writing of the post-revolutionary period, there are some fascinating parallels between Llansol and other authors, enhanced by her constant questioning of the country's condition.<sup>50</sup> According to João Barrento, despite the fact that Llansol could be considered an example of a writer 'sem sexo [gender]',<sup>51</sup> her text is always affirmed 'contra uma cultura, uma língua e uma tradição'.<sup>52</sup> By 'contra', I believe, Barrento does not

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<sup>47</sup> Jan Gorak, *The Making of the Modern Canon: Genesis and Crisis of a Literary Idea* (London and New Jersey: Athlone, 1991), p. 4.

<sup>48</sup> Gorak, p. viii.

<sup>49</sup> Gorak, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> Llansol wrote in a diary entry on August 1975: 'Regressámos de Portugal, aonde não tínhamos voltado, desde 1965; [...] Por que me ocorre que em Portugal, agora, pobres e ricos já se podem odiar ostensivamente?; há nas ruas, à noite, e nas intimidades das casas, um odor violento a ajuste de contas.' *F*, p. 17. She continues, pages later: 'Quarenta anos, todo um período de opressão que termina por afirmações de poderes, e linguagens pessoais de grupo. Portugal, agora, não é o meio de uma viagem, é uma partida conseguida, a muito custo, *para uma viagem errada*. Por enquanto estão (estamos) *soltos mas ainda não livres*. As instituições, as categorias, os poderes, o saber e a ignorância epidémicos continuam a mediatizar as relações entre as pessoas; não há qualquer sinal de criação de ecossistemas. Não se fala em abolir os efeitos do poder, mas de *suscitar das velhas formas novas formas*.' *F*, pp. 52-53 (emphasis mine).

<sup>51</sup> 'Uma escritora sem "sexo", que de si mesma diz: "Há em mim uma mulher que tem sexo, e outra que não tem".' João Barrento, 'O Livro Torna o Sexo Invisível', in *Na Dobra do Mundo* (Lisbon: Mariposa Azul, 2008), pp. 112-124 (p. 118), citing Llansol, *F*, p. 32.

<sup>52</sup> Barrento, 'O Livro Torna o Sexo Invisível', p. 119.

necessarily mean ‘against’ or ‘anti’, but rather brushing ‘against the grain’, in the light of Walter Benjamin.<sup>53</sup> ‘Against the grain’ could also describe the writing of the authors who Helena Kaufman and José Ornelas consider significant in the post-1974 context. These scholars underline (at least) three significant characteristics in post-revolutionary fiction (again, they do not mention Llansol), which I believe are also present in Llansol:

(1) defining and juxtaposing the ‘official’ and ‘marginal’ discourses within history, inspired by a clear desire to recover and reclaim the margins (Saramago, Jorge); (2) theorizing about history and the questioning of historical narrative and/or representation that blurs the lines between history and fiction (Saramago, Abelaira); and (3) a specific metatextual layering of historical facts, interpretations, fictions, and parodic parables (Antunes, Cardoso Pires, Saramago, Jorge, and Abelaira).<sup>54</sup>

Llansol’s inclusion in a post-revolutionary paradigm of Portuguese literature resonates with Maria Graciete Besse’s opinion that, after the Revolution, ‘l’emergence d’une écriture au féminin s’est imposée, et il est aujourd’hui largement admis que les femmes ont bien contribué à l’élaboration d’un nouveau paysage littéraire au Portugal’.<sup>55</sup> Ana Paula Arnaut also highlights this ‘new landscape’, underlining the relevance of Portugal’s new political context to the explosion of women’s writing. However, as Arnaut suggests, if

a *escrita masculina* parece surgir em pleno regime salazarista como mais ousada e ideologicamente provocatória, a *escrita feminina* [...] assume, por entre contestações apresentadas, regra geral, de forma mais sub-reptícia (mas não menos importantes e válidas), uma evidente e reconhecida linha de vanguardismo formal.<sup>56</sup>

Indeed, in the 1960s, most male writers were still constrained by a masculine, canonical *way of writing* (a legacy of the 1920s and 1930s neo-realist paradigm),<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Benjamin’s ‘brush[ing] history against the grain’ was a way to react against the flow of history by establishing a bridge between past and present in order to alter the order of things. See Walter Benjamin, ‘Theses on the Philosophy of History’, in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), pp. 253-264 (p. 257).

<sup>54</sup> Helena Kaufman and José Ornelas, ‘Challenging the Past/Theorizing History: Postrevolutionary Portuguese Fiction’, in *After the Revolution*, pp. 145-167 (p. 147).

<sup>55</sup> Maria Graciete Besse, ‘Entre le silence et le cri: la voix des femmes dans la littérature portugaise contemporaine’, paper presented at conference *La voix des femmes dans les cultures de langue portugaise : penser la différence* (Paris, Sorbonne, 26-27 March 2007), p. 2, available at <<http://www.crimic.paris-sorbonne.fr/actes/vf/besse.pdf>> [accessed on 15 September 2008].

<sup>56</sup> Ana Paula Arnaut, ‘De la dictature à la révolution des œillets ou de la résistance d’une plume de femme’, in *Dictionnaire des Créatrices*, ed. by Antoinette Fouque, Mireille Calle-Gruber and Béatrice Didier (Paris: Éditions des femmes, 2009), forthcoming.

<sup>57</sup> The exceptions are, interestingly, Ferreira, Ruben A., Jorge de Sena and Raul Brandão, the same authors to whom Llansol pays tribute, as stated above.

yet experienced comparatively more freedom than their female counterparts. Women writers, refused a space to speak out against the regime, were forced to resort to *other* literary techniques in order to articulate a veiled critique of their subaltern condition in a dictatorship founded on a patriarchal model. According to Arnaut, Maria Velho da Costa, Fernanda Botelho, Maria Gabriela Llansol, and Eduarda Dionísio, all experimented with these techniques, corresponding to this ‘formal vanguard’, owing to an ‘(alienante) condição feminina que só começaria a alterar-se com os primeiros tempos da liberdade dos cravos’.<sup>58</sup> The socio-political context of the 1960s and 1970s provided the appropriate conditions for unprecedented innovation with the Portuguese language, inexorably marked by linguistic and literary (albeit silent) revolutions. These women were the first to present fragmented, polyphonic, multilayered texts (features often attributed to women’s writing)<sup>59</sup> in Portuguese literature. Portuguese male ‘canonical’ writers like José Saramago and António Lobo Antunes, whose novels, in a postmodern context, present those same characteristics (fragmentation or polyphony), were not yet experimenting with language to the same extent. Saramago’s first novel, *A Terra do Pecado* (1947), an ode to neo-realism when the movement was decaying, does not display the linguistic innovations which characterize his later work.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Lobo Antunes’s seminal novel *Memória de Elefante* only appeared in 1979, long after Llansol’s *Os Pregos na Erva* (1962) and *Depois de Os Pregos na Erva* (1972); Maria Velho da Costa’s *Maina Mendes* (1969); and Eduarda Dionísio’s *Comente o Seguinte Texto* (1972), all considered by Arnaut as the ‘formal vanguard’ in Portuguese literature.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, Arnaut’s comments on Llansol and Portuguese women’s writing of the 1960s and 1970s bear further relevance to both Llansol’s *oeuvre* and her framing within Portuguese literary studies more generally, as we will see below.

While I do not wish to undermine Allegro de Magalhães or Robalo Cordeiro’s readings of Llansol as ‘female writing’,<sup>62</sup> I believe Llansol as a woman writer would be more productively placed in the context of Portuguese *feminist* (rather than *feminine*) writing, and in particular, of Portugal’s post-revolutionary

<sup>58</sup> Arnaut, ‘De la dictature à la révolution des œillets ou de la résistance d’une plume de femme’.

<sup>59</sup> See, for instance, Isabel Allegro de Magalhães, *O Sexo dos Textos*.

<sup>60</sup> Saramago only published chronicles, short stories, poetry and theatre from 1947 until his second novel, *Levantado do Chão*, in 1980, the first of his texts to experiment with language and form.

<sup>61</sup> See Arnaut, ‘De la dictature à la révolution des œillets ou de la résistance d’une plume de femme’, forthcoming.

<sup>62</sup> In my opinion, Cordeiro questions Magalhães’ concept of ‘escrita feminina’ replacing it with ‘autoria feminina’, but ends up referring to the same characteristics of women’s texts as Magalhães.

feminism. There is a *lacuna* of studies dealing with *feminist*, as opposed to *feminine*, writing in Portugal, a *lacuna* Hilary Owen addresses in *Portuguese Women's Writing, 1972 to 1986*. Given Llansol's experimentation with new styles, genres and forms, it seems timely to consider her in the context of feminist writing in Portugal. Although a full reading of Llansol's work in light of feminist theory is beyond the scope of this thesis, in Chapter Four I compare Llansol and Virginia Woolf, considering existing theory on women's writing (namely Magalhães's *O Sexo dos Textos*), and *simultaneously* rejecting the existence of a 'female writing' in Llansol's text. According to Elizabeth Grosz's discussion of gender and authorship, Llansol should be read as feminist, not because she is a woman, nor due to the 'style of her text',<sup>63</sup> but precisely because

for the text to be regarded as feminist, it must render patriarchal or phallogocentric presumptions [...] visible. It must question, in one way or another, the power of these presumptions in the production, reception, and assessment of texts. [...] Whether stylistic, content-based or both, any form of commitment to feminist principles and politics involves some degree of challenge to phallogocentrism. [...] [A] feminist text must not only be critical of or a challenge to the patriarchal norms governing it; it must also help, in whatever way, to facilitate the production of new and perhaps unknown, unthought discursive spaces – new styles, modes of analysis and argument, new genres and forms – that contest the limits and constraints currently at work in the regulation of textual production and reception.<sup>64</sup>

Despite the fact that Llansol is a woman *and* a writer, reading her text as *feminist* would emphasize that, by employing new styles, genres or forms (as she does), Llansol is 'contesting' and 'challenging' phallogocentrism.

## Genre

The difficulties in placing Llansol in a genealogy also shape any attempt to frame her work within one discernible genre: diary, essay, narrative or metafiction?<sup>65</sup> The lack of consensus amongst critics enables the Llansolian text to exist beyond paradigms of reading, conventional aesthetics, and prescribed models. João Barrento affirms this when he states that the text suffers from a 'contaminação genológica' that results in an 'amplificação progressiva dos limites do "romance"', pondo a própria forma em

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<sup>63</sup> Elizabeth Grosz, 'Sexual Signatures', in *Space, Time, and Perversion* (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 9-24 (p. 17).

<sup>64</sup> Grosz, pp. 22-23.

<sup>65</sup> See Jorge Fernando da Silveira's article about the impossibility of defining a genre to describe the Llansolian text. Silveira, 'A Crise dos Gêneros e a Ficção Lférica de Maria Gabriela Llansol', *Estudos Portugueses e Africanos* [Campinas], 21 (January-July, 1993), 49-54.

causa através da enxertia de toda uma panóplia de formas e géneros “estranhos”<sup>66</sup>. This leads us to conclude that a ‘Llansolian genre’ could only exist when the text itself *generates* it:

O texto é legível pelo género se o género se transformar pelo texto. Maria Gabriela Llansol defende que *Um Beijo Dado Mais Tarde* só é romance por redefinir o género ‘romance’, levando-o a inflectir da ‘narratividade’ gasta para uma nova ‘textualidade’. Os cânones não são, pois, anteriores ao texto.<sup>67</sup>

The Llansolian text wishes, then, to ‘des-integrar[-se] do quadro canónico’,<sup>68</sup> gravitating around a ‘constelação de novas propostas estéticas’,<sup>69</sup> first presented, and then questioned, by Llansol herself when she stated that one must continue to write in order to avoid ‘the death of the novel’.<sup>70</sup>

The histories of philosophy and critical theory have witnessed many deaths: the Nietzschean ‘death of God’ or the Barthesian ‘death of the Author’, are perhaps the most prominent.<sup>71</sup> Yet, to paraphrase Mark Twain, the reports about these deaths ‘are greatly exaggerated’, and Llansol’s warning about the imminent death of the novel could also be seen as such. According to Llansol, in a speech *à propos* of the APE prize awarded to *Um Beijo Dado Mais Tarde*, in 1991, the solution to the novel’s historical dissolution is to pose the questions that will pave the way for her literary project: ‘Como continuar o humano? / Que vamos nós fazer de nós? / Que sonho vamos nós sonhar que nos sonhe? / Para onde é que o fulgor se foi?’.<sup>72</sup> The Llansolian solution to *narrativity* lies in finding a definition of the dream of the

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<sup>66</sup> Barrento, ‘O Livro Torna o Sexo Invisível?’, p. 118.

<sup>67</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 540.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, p. 540.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, p. 541.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Escrevo, para que o romance não morra’, in Llansol, ‘Para Que o Romance Não Morra’, in *L1*, pp. 116-123 (p. 116).

<sup>71</sup> The Nietzschean expression ‘God is dead’ first appeared in *The Gay Science* in 1882. See Friederich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans by. Josefine Nauckhoff and Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 120. With regards to Nietzsche, Llansol sustained that due to God’s death, her text must produce (new, different) *figures*, alternative to the constraints imposed by *narrativity*: ‘Quando deus ruiu, cada humano recebeu / quatro futurantes como trama ou rede. Não / sendo anjos, todavia, são na beleza sinal de / Uma leveza inconfundível. São figuras que / não sabem definir que figura somos e onde / se localiza a nossa humanidade, incerteza / que os enche de alegria.’ *CLP*, p. 269.

The ‘Death of the Author’ proclaimed by Roland Barthes, in 1968, was first formulated as a questioning of reading practices taking into consideration the ‘author’s intentions’, as the Romantic Hermeneutics would have it. Roland Barthes, ‘The Death of the Author’, in *Image-Music-Text*, ed. and trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Harper Rollins, 1977), pp. 142-148.

<sup>72</sup> Llansol, ‘Para Que o Romance Não Morra’, p. 120 (emphasis in the original).

human, and of *fulgor*;<sup>73</sup> this is why Llansol explains that *narrativity* is a mechanism she will henceforth reject, allowing *fulgor* to take place through *textuality*. As she puts it,

é minha convicção que, se se puder deslocar o centro nevrálgico do romance, descentrá-lo do humano consumidor social e de poder,  
operar uma mutação da **narratividade** e fazê-la deslizar para a **textualidade**  
um acesso ao novo, ao vivo, ao fulgor, / nos é possível.<sup>74</sup>

Llansol presents a new textual paradigm, *textuality*, as the solution to a decaying *narrativity*. The structure of *textuality* can only be sustained through the creation of literary or textual concepts. By dislocating the core of the novel away from the human, *textuality* gives access to the *poetic gift* ('dom poético'), which, according to Llansol, arises directly from the mystical quotidian practice of dispossession, the naked body of a 'man without qualities', barefoot before God.<sup>75</sup>

Other scholars have discussed the issue of *textuality* versus *narrativity* in Llansol; I do not wish to analyse the paradigm of *narrativity*, using scholarly works by, say, Maurice Blanchot or Roland Barthes. Instead, I break down the distinguishing characteristics of *textuality*, explaining how this paradigm hinders the textual representation of the real world, therefore annulling the element of verisimilitude that the paradigm of *narrativity* endorses. Moreover, *textuality* allows the existence of an *edenic space*, whilst *narrativity* restricts it.

Llansol calls our attention to the following premise: 'Nós estamos sempre a contar coisas uns aos outros.'<sup>76</sup> Taking this into account, *everything* becomes narrative. Humans have always told stories, from the beginning of time, from the creation of Eden, in the Bible. As Northrop Frye observes, 'early verbal culture consists of, among other things, a group of stories [...] [which] are believed to have really happened, or else to explain or recount something that is centrally important

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<sup>73</sup> From Latin *fulgore*, i.e., an intense and sudden shining, or light(ning). There is no English equivalent for this word, although Romance languages can contribute to a wider translation of the concept. I would like, therefore, to propose the usage of the word *fulgor* in its original Portuguese form, exactly as an intense and sudden light or appearance, corresponding to the concept enunciated by Llansol.

<sup>74</sup> Llansol, 'Para Que o Romance Não Morra', p. 120 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>75</sup> The notion of 'dispossession' is endorsed by Silvina Rodrigues Lopes in her seminal work on Llansol, *Teoria da Des-Possessão*. The influence of medieval mystics in Llansol is enormous: Hadewijch, San Juan de la Cruz and Meister Eckhart, among others, have become *figures* in her texts. For Llansol, the mechanism of 'dispossession' entails the baring of the body as the only path to escape mundaneness. See also Michel de Certeau, *La fable mystique: XVIe-XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1982).

<sup>76</sup> Llansol, 'Para Que o Romance Não Morra', p. 118.

for a society's history, religion, or social structure. These canonical stories are [...] "true fable or myths".<sup>77</sup> However, *textuality* is a system which rejects the existence of the Bible (or canonical religious texts) as the 'origin' of the verb – the concept of *edenic space* will explain this apparent contradiction. Instead, *textuality* employs apocryphal texts, in this case not the religious ones, but 'apocryphal' in the sense of the Greek word meaning 'the hidden' ones – rejected because unsubstantiated; rejected because, in Judeo-Christian theology, they do not belong to the *canon* since their authorship was questioned. Ultimately, apocryphal texts are *unverisimilar* texts. By admitting the apocryphal to its core, the Llansolian text is not sustained by the 'once upon the time' formula, or biblical sentences, such as 'in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, according to Llansol, 'o texto não vai escrever sereno "no princípio era o verbo"',<sup>79</sup> because the text refutes the existence of a biblical beginning altogether. As Llansol puts it:

Não não é com 'era uma vez' que eu quero começar a minha história talvez por ela não ser de fadas não obstante ter-se passado num país longínquo e desconhecido talvez por eu detestar aquilo a que chamam banal vou tomar por cenário uma aldeia miseranda que se banha monótona e taciturna nas águas pantanosas de um rio imaginário.<sup>80</sup>

In this way, *textuality* allows the novel to extend its realms beyond the human, since, following Llansol, the problem of *narrativity* does not lie in the fact that one must exploit the possibility of thought, but rather '*alargar o seu âmbito, e levá-la até ao vivo, / fazer de nós vivos no meio do vivo*'.<sup>81</sup> The Llansolian text is, therefore, inhabited by the *living*, whilst the narrative text is merely punctuated by characters. 'Vivo' has a double meaning in Portuguese and can be translated as both 'living' and 'alive'. Accordingly, *textuality* can only be accomplished when the text summons or generates the *living*. Death is an ending, and the Llansolian text is a constant (apocryphal) regeneration – there is no day of doom, no final judgement, no apocalypse. Instead, there is renovation, regeneration, the becoming of futures, or a future of *becomings*. The text enables the (re)generation of beings regardless of their realm: animals, objects, plants, artists we historically know or anonymous humans.

<sup>77</sup> Northrop Frye, *The Critical Path* (Sussex: Harvester, 1983), p. 34.

<sup>78</sup> John, 1.1-3. *The Holy Bible*, ed. by John Barton and Bruce M. Metzger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 99

<sup>79</sup> *L2*, p. 43.

<sup>80</sup> Llansol, 'E Que Não Escrevia', in *DPE*, p. 30.

<sup>81</sup> Llansol, 'Para Que o Romance Não Morra', p. 120.



The *poetic gift* is then created through the text's extraordinary ability; without it, 'a liberdade de consciência definhará'.<sup>82</sup>

Llansol thus rebels against the narrative order, understood as a system that creates a 'comfort pact' between writers and readers, within narratives of sameness. *Textuality* forces the text to migrate from *narrativity*'s constraints: 'A todo o momento, a verosimilhança [a] atrai e corrói: Mas é possível, como aprendi, fazê-la tremeluzir noutra direcção.'<sup>83</sup> The question of *migration* is essential in Llansol, not only because she was an exile herself, but also since the mystics assume this nomadic movement to be a necessary step towards a life without possessions. As Michel de Certeau suggests, the text thus becomes itself 'exilé de ce qu'il traite'.<sup>84</sup>

The text now lies *midway* between narratives of sameness that create verisimilitude, and *textualities* of the *living* which generate a migration to other *geographies*,<sup>85</sup> suspended in an interval or a gap, which Llansol calls a 'ressalto de uma frase'.<sup>86</sup> There is a reason for the long lines or the en-dashes (a visual feature obviously borrowed from Emily Dickinson):

o irritante traço contínuo.  
É apenas uma *dobra* e um *baraço*. O texto dobra, efeito de colagem. O texto *suspende o sentido*, à espera de dizer exacto. Há frases que só completei anos depois; há frases que, no limiar dos mundos, *não devem ser escritas por inteiro*; há frases cujo referente de sentido será sempre obscuro. Se eu pretendesse escrever um texto *sempre limpo* – tiraria o traço. [...]  
Julgo, deste modo, / que uma *porta dá sobre o meu texto*.<sup>87</sup>

The 'door' upon the Llansolian text is one of the key tenets of textuality: when the reader comes in, s/he will leave *narrativity* behind, and enter the womblike space of the house (Toki-alai),<sup>88</sup> the 'jardim que o pensamento permite',<sup>89</sup> which invites the reader to 'reaprender a linguagem'.<sup>90</sup> In this sense, *textuality* makes the text appear

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, p. 120.

<sup>83</sup> *SH*, p. 188.

<sup>84</sup> De Certeau, p. 9.

<sup>85</sup> Llansol, 'Para Que o Romance Não Morra', p. 120.

<sup>86</sup> *SH*, p. 234.

<sup>87</sup> *IQC*, p. 75 (emphasis mine).

<sup>88</sup> Maria de Lourdes Soares explains that *Toki-alai* (the place in the signature at the end of some of Llansol's books) 'é o nome da casa de Llansol, em Colares. Extraída do idioma basco, a expressão significa *acolhimento*'. Maria de Lourdes Soares, 'O Espaço Llansol – Sobreimpressão de Paisagens na Casa de Julho e de Agosto', in *Escrever a Casa Portuguesa*, ed. by Jorge Fernandes da Silveira (Belo Horizonte: UFMG, 1999), pp. 179-193 (p. 193).

<sup>89</sup> *FP*, p. 130.

<sup>90</sup> Manuel Gusmão, 'A História e o Projecto Humano (Que quer dizer o texto quando diz: "o que o texto tece advirá ao homem como destino")', *Ariane, Revue d'études littéraires françaises*, 18-20 (2003-2005), 119-138 (p. 120).

before the reader, but ‘não se limita a aparecer como um tecido feito mas antes como o próprio *tecer do tecido* – não um *ergon*, mas uma *energúeia* (e um *organon*)’, as Manuel Gusmão explains.<sup>91</sup>

The Llansollian text thereby proposes a new aesthetic paradigm resulting from the annulment of *narrativity* as a decaying system trapped in its own lack of solutions – it cannot generate the *poetic gift* and is thus pushed to the realm of verisimilitude. The aesthetic proposal of *textuality* could also be interpreted in the visual fragmentation of the text, not only performed by the en-dashes, or the lack of a narrative plot, but also in the linguistic jigsaw puzzles (play on words creating visual impact). The procedure of cutting the text in half or presenting gaps, omissions, and long lines, possibly to be filled by the reader or left unsaid – ‘\_\_\_\_\_ já não existe; a palavra que falta é a vossa palavra, e *vossa* está também sob o traço vazio’<sup>92</sup> – recalls the Brazilian modernist movement, Concrete Poetry. Indeed, there are interesting parallels between Augusto de Campos’s *Manifesto* for Concrete Poetry in the 1950s, and some of the physical and aesthetic features of the Llansollian text. This movement was more concerned with language than narrative structures.<sup>93</sup> The *trompe-l’oeil*, for instance, is one of the most captivating characteristics of these texts. As the name suggests, *trompe-l’oeil* is not an *imposture*, but a mechanism which defies language’s *impostures*. Kenneth David Jackson states that in order to be able to grasp a text, the reader should no longer see it according to the definition imposed by *order-words*.<sup>94</sup> Instead, s/he must ‘criar um hiper-realismo “verbivocovisual”, em que o leitor passa aleatoriamente entre as várias leituras ou faixas implícitas no olhar consciente. O objecto é visto sucessiva e simultaneamente como signo, voz, matéria, espaço e forma’.<sup>95</sup> Jackson refers to different types of

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, p. 124.

<sup>92</sup> *BDMT*, p. 13.

<sup>93</sup> See Augusto de Campos, ‘Poesia Concreta: um Manifesto’, in *Ad – Arquitetura e Decoração*, 20 (November/December, 1956), n.p., available at <<http://www2.uol.com.br/augustodecampos/poesiaconc.htm>> [accessed 3 March 2009].

<sup>94</sup> *Order-words* [‘mots’d’ordre’] is a concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari as the ‘elementary unit of language – the statement’. Every word contains an order, a command, either determined by grammatical rules, or imposed by the power apparatus. There is no connection between order-words and speech-acts. In contrast, Deleuze and Guattari explain how, through language, we ‘must define an abominable faculty consisting in emitting, receiving, and transmitting order-words.’ Language, they state, is ‘made not to be believed but to be obeyed, and to compel obedience’. See Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus – Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum, 2004), p. 84.

<sup>95</sup> Kenneth David Jackson, ‘Augusto de Campos e o *trompe-l’oeil* da Poesia Concreta’, in *Sobre Augusto de Campos*, ed. by Flora Sússekind and Júlio Castañon Guimarães (Rio de Janeiro: 7Letras, 2004), pp. 11-35 (p. 12).

'eyes' that *see* and *are seen* in Augusto de Campos's poetry: a semiotic eye, a resonant, a musical, a zen eye, or 'l'oeil, lie, eye', some of which could also be interpreted in Llansol's text.<sup>96</sup> Llansol does not write towards a meaning but a rhythm,<sup>97</sup> like a game, as the subtitle of *Parasceve* suggests ('*puzzles e ironias*'). Her text, as Sônia Piteri observes, presents

uma preocupação com as unidades mínimas da palavra: as sílabas, os acentos, as consoantes, as vogais. Como peças de um jogo [...], esses componentes, também dotados de vida própria, são objetos de brincadeira da voz narradora, que se entretém em eliminar, inserir ou substituir letras, inverter sílabas, fazendo nascer novas palavras. Evidencia-se, portanto, uma prática textual que prioriza o espaço da escrita [...] o entrelaçamento visual com as palavras, rompendo o formato tradicional de uma página de livro.<sup>98</sup>

The concrete poet, like Llansol, sees words as nuclei, as a 'campo magnético de possibilidades, [...] uma célula viva, um organismo completo, com propriedades psicofísicoquímicas tacto antenas circulação coração: viva'.<sup>99</sup> These words resemble Llansolian *figures* vibrating under *fulgor*. Consequently, the word becomes a *living*, it is alive, we can use it to fill the gaps, and to reverse its primary meanings 'contra o realismo simplista e simplório', in order to destroy 'o velho alicerce formal e silogístico-discursivo', as the Manifesto proposes.<sup>100</sup> The Concrete Poetry movement evokes a modernist questioning of the form, content, and meaning of poetry, literature and language, thus combating *impostures*, 'contra a organização sintática perspectivista, onde as palavras vêm sentar-se como "cadáveres em banquete"'.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, p. 33.

I would like to thank Prof. Sônia Helena Piteri, at UNESP, for calling my attention to the following examples in Llansol's work that I find concurrent Kenneth David Jackson's examples about Concrete Poetry. The semiotic eye: 'Vereis que pouco a pouco, as letras vão rolar do próprio nome: amor sem m. / amor sem o. / amor sem r. / amor sem a..' *BDMT*, pp. 92-93. The resonant eye: 'A palavra justa, mulher, é mar determinado. Pegará em ti e far-te-á regressar às vogais do sono de dormir. [...] "*dirmor*, dar amor, morder". Só no momento de partir / a palavra se apercebe que, sem vogais, pura simplesmente não existe [...] / no momento em que as consoantes mordem as vogais, o mar, de repente, cai no rio. Esse, o nome do irreversível raro, lembra-te?, *brincar a fazer dirmor*.' *P*, p. 90. And finally the 'l'oeil, lie, eye': 'Repara, repara no anel. Olha minha amada, para o vazio que ele encerra. / Repara no que dizes, quando dizes ele, podendo dizer elo. Repara como formámos um nó e, depois, fomos um elo / um elo anel'. *P*, p. 157. See Sônia Helena Piteri, 'A Escrita Visual na Narrativa de Llansol', unpublished paper presented at Conference Associação Portuguesa de Literatura Comparada (Braga, 6-8 November 2008).

<sup>97</sup> *P*, p. 151.

<sup>98</sup> Sônia Helena Piteri, 'O Leitor e o Multidiálogo Intratextual em Maria Gabriela Llansol', *Todas as Letras*, 10.2 (November, 2008), online at <<http://www3.mackenzie.br/editora/index.php/tl/article/viewFile/448/264>> [accessed 19 September 2009].

<sup>99</sup> Augusto de Campos, 'Poesia Concreta: um Manifesto'.

<sup>100</sup> Augusto de Campos, 'Poesia Concreta: um Manifesto'. See Chapter One for a reading of *Um Beijo Dado Mais Tarde* and the concept of *imposture*.

<sup>101</sup> Augusto de Campos, 'Poesia Concreta: um Manifesto'.

## An organic text

Manuel Gusmão's description of the Llansolian text as *energeia* and *organon*,<sup>102</sup> juxtaposed with Piteri's reading of Llansol's text as a constant play on words which privileges writing above content, echoes Augusto Joaquim's suggestion that the Llansolian text is *organic*. Paula Morão explains how the text's resistance to generic classification is reinforced by its framing in another category *beyond* genre, understood as '[a] própria obra encarada como um organismo, um todo, um sistema'.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, Joaquim's interpretation of the Llansolian text as *organic* reflects his personal interest in Physics and Mathematics. According to Joaquim, the Llansolian text is an *organic dispositive* since its *figures* require energy (information) or calories in order to exist, propagate, or connect. Given that the *figures* do not have a historical time or identity (as we will see), their textual sustenance must arise from the energy *produced* by the text vibrating in the encounter amongst beings. Consequently, the Llansolian text is *energeia* since it actually produces work or energy, and it is *organon* because, through *energeia*, it stipulates a series of tools in order to be understood.

By placing Llansol in a lineage of writers that he considers exemplary producers of the *organic* text,<sup>104</sup> Joaquim stresses how this type of text establishes an 'afinidade muito estreita entre vibração e libido do vivo',<sup>105</sup> explaining why Llansol insists 'mais no vivo do que no humano'.<sup>106</sup> The human body requires and uses

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<sup>102</sup> *Ergon* is a concept developed by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics*, usually translated as 'function', 'task', or 'work'. In Physics, *ergon* is the equivalent to 'work', as a unit for measuring heat or energy. *Energeia* derives from *ergon*, and it implies the 'act of work' or 'in work'. Joe Sachs, translator of Plato and Aristotle, translated *energeia* as 'being-at-work'. The *Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* explains that *energeia* establishes a clear distinction between the *possibility* or *potentiality* of doing something (*dunamis*) and the *actual* capacity of doing it (*energeia*). Finally, *Organon* is the name of the compendium of six works about Logic left by Aristotle. For Aristotle, *organon* are organs, tools or instruments. The concept is usually read as the method used in order that philosophical or scientific thought/reason is produced or achieved. Jonathan Barnes, *Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 95. See also Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by Joe Sachs (Newburyport, Massachusetts: Focus Publishing/Pullins Press, 2002).

<sup>103</sup> Paula Morão, 'Maria Gabriela Llansol – Notas Sobre uma Ficção Luminosa', *Letras & Letras*, 29 (Maio, 1990), 9.

<sup>104</sup> 'A linhagem: Pessoa, Vergílio Ferreira, Gabriela Llansol é, de facto, um efeito de leitura, mas não é uma invenção.' Joaquim, 'Algumas Coisas', p. 193. Other writers of *organic* texts cited by Joaquim include: Rui Nunes, Hélia Correia, Teresa Salema, Teolinda Gersão, Pessoa or Silvina Rodrigues Lopes (Portuguese), and Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Joyce, Musil or Rilke (European). See Augusto Joaquim, 'Não Tem Esse Nome', *Público*, section Leituras, 11 September 1999, pp. 4-5 (p. 4).

<sup>105</sup> Augusto Joaquim, 'Nesse Lugar', in *Livro de Asas para Maria Gabriela Llansol*, ed. by Lúcia Castello Branco e Vânia Baeta de Andrade (Belo Horizonte: UFMG, 2007), pp. 193-225 (p. 212).

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, p. 213.

energy, though it does not produce or replace it. As such, humans *consume* energy from other sources. Instead, the *living*, as it appears in the text through *fulgor*, is generated *in* the text, and the interaction between the different *figures* acts as a catalyst for the propagation of energy or *fulgor*. By consuming energy, the *living* is *transforming* it into new energy. What interests Joaquim is how the *organic* text ‘produz, com os meios concretos de que dispõe, os seus próprios actantes’.<sup>107</sup> In other words,

o texto orgânico não obedece ao princípio da verosimilhança, mas da fulgorização. Cria figuras e não personagens. A sua temporalidade não se inscreve numa linha de continuidade entre passado-presente-retorno ao passado, mas do futuro (por vezes, muito longínquo) para o presente. [...] Não obedece a uma ordem de construção narrativa fixa, não distingue praticamente entre prosa e poesia, nem respeita géneros literários.<sup>108</sup>

However, according to Joaquim, the *organic* text ‘convida-nos a mudar de cultura literária, e do que esta nos inculcou como paradigma da forma esteticamente correcta’, challenging our thoughts in order to subvert the dominant paradigm, questioning the *status quo* of the novel, and thus rebelling against an imposed *narrativity*. Therefore, if the realist/narrativity paradigm is doomed by entropy, the *organic/fulgorian/textuality* paradigm is bound to mutate. If entropy is the future of the novel, metamorphosis is the future of the Llansolian *organic* text: ‘Isto significa que as figuras crescem e evoluem, criam e metamorfoseiam-se, cultivando a densidade virtual.’<sup>109</sup> The Llansolian novel, as Rui Miguel Amorim suggests, thus becomes a ‘género quase sem qualidades, o género cuja qualidade é ser *desqualificado*’.<sup>110</sup>

### ***Os Pregos* and *Depois de Os Pregos* – rejecting a Llansolian exceptionalism**

*Os Pregos na Erva* and *Depois de Os Pregos na Erva* are two of Llansol’s less-studied works. The editions are rare and old, and Llansol never wanted to republish them. The writer purportedly rejected these books as too conventional, in the *narrativity* sense, and reaffirmed *O Livro das Comunidades* (1977), her third *opus*, as the origin of her literary conjecture. Jorge Fernandes da Silveira suggests that these

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, p. 222.

<sup>108</sup> Joaquim, ‘Não Tem Esse Nome’, p. 4.

<sup>109</sup> Joaquim, ‘Algumas Coisas’, p. 196.

<sup>110</sup> Rui Miguel Amorim, ‘Da Ampliação de Nuvens à Literatura Tangencial (Esboço de uma Leitura de *O Livro das Comunidades*)’ (unpublished MA dissertation, Braga, Universidade do Minho, 1999), p. 33.

two books are, 'até hoje, e é preciso ter a coragem da suspeita, os menos citados porque os menos lidos'.<sup>111</sup> There is, indeed, little scholarly research on these books,<sup>112</sup> yet I will conclude this section by reading *Os Pregos* and *Depois de Os Pregos* as seminal works in Llansol's *oeuvre*, in order to contest the persistent treatment of Llansol as 'a case apart', the exception to the rule in Portuguese literary studies, a position which I will call Llansol's 'exceptionalism'.

In my mind, Llansol's first two books present an embryonic form of some of Llansol's later concepts and comprehensively demonstrate her radical textuality. The lack of publications on these books can only be explained as a result of the proximity between Llansol herself and the researchers who gravitated around her.<sup>113</sup> Since Llansol 'rejected' these books, the Llansolian scholars ignored them. By acquiescing to Llansol's own views on her early texts, her loyal readers perpetuate her exclusive status on the fringes of the Portuguese literary canon. Indeed, as Arnaut pertinently suggested, *Os Pregos* and *Depois de Os Pregos* might be fruitfully considered alongside wider developments in Portuguese literature of the time, irrespective of Llansol's gender. Llansol's work could thus be inscribed in a genealogy of other *extraordinary* Portuguese or European writers. These books simultaneously confirm Llansol's literary quality, and her original (though not unique) literary project.

According to Joaquim, who wrote the afterword to *Os Pregos na Erva*, twenty years after its first publication: 'Eu, e a cultura em que pensava, não estávamos preparados para estes textos. [...] Porque esta é uma obra que "obriga" a pensar e, por vezes, a mudar de pensamento.'<sup>114</sup> Although Joaquim affirms Llansol's exceptional status, he also explains how these two 'rejected' books paved the way for Llansol's literary project. Indeed, from the beginning, Llansol compelled the reader to re-think the way literature and text should be perceived.

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<sup>111</sup> Silveira, *O Beijo Partido*, p. 18. For an analysis of *Os Pregos* and *Depois de Os Pregos* in the light of the concept of *edenic space*, see Raquel Ribeiro, 'Maria Gabriela Llansol meets George Steiner', *Ellipsis*.

<sup>112</sup> Scholars have followed the same principle, largely ignoring the existence of *Os Pregos* and *Depois de Os Pregos*. For instance, in his latest book on Llansol, João Barrento does not mention these two books. He states that 'o terreiro deste grande festim [i.e., the object of this study] eram as muitas páginas, abertas e estendidas no chão, *de todos os livros, d'O Livro das Comunidades a Os Cantores de Leitura*.' See João Barrento, 'A Consciência, Envolta em Cálice, De que o Dia Nasce...', in *Na Dobra do Mundo*, pp. 9-10 (p. 10) (emphasis mine).

<sup>113</sup> As Eduardo Lourenço stated, 'os amigos e os admiradores dela [Llansol] são uma espécie de seita'. Vaz Marques, p. 38.

<sup>114</sup> Augusto Joaquim, 'O Limite Fluido', in Llansol, *PE*, pp. 179-219 (p. 179).

By creating literary concepts – even if some arise from other linguistic, philosophical or literary terms – Llansol questions the literary text in its entirety, its linguistic *topoi*, its literary meaning, its intentions, and ways of expression. As such, we could argue that her *oeuvre* attempted to resolve her doubts about *narrativity* and its techniques, in a continuous effort to answer the questions raised by her own writing. As she explains:

Demorei praticamente quinze anos a encontrar uma saída viável para os diversos realismos. [...] Tentei quase todas as estéticas [...]. Sei que criar um outro modo de significar é muito mais do que uma questão de escrita, envolve uma *mudança radical do modo de vida*. É preciso desejar ardentemente – é praticamente uma questão vital – um outro mundo que se acrescente aos demais. É preciso *deitar fora* a maior parte das armas e bagagens que herdámos da literatura, do pensamento, da cultura e do meio social. Compreendo muito bem os que tentaram sair do realismo, e voltaram ao seu redil.<sup>115</sup>

In order to resist this ‘realismo exangue’,<sup>116</sup> Llansol also followed the paradigm of *textuality* as a mode of living, therefore allowing the *figures, fulgor* and lack of narrative coherence to punctuate her daily life.<sup>117</sup> Despite the fact that Llansol ‘deserted’ these texts, I have purposely used fragments from *Os Pregos* or *Depois de Os Pregos* as examples of the clash between the paradigms of *narrativity* and *textuality*. I will discuss the concepts further below, but we can see already how these stories no longer follow the ‘once upon the time’ path or the realist model. As Paula Morão explains,

o que se lê são histórias de pobres, de gente comum mas excluída, vivendo num universo escasso e essencial, de indiferenciação entre o masculino e feminino, como se os sentimentos e as palavras que circulam estivessem, para além de categorias estabelecidas. Não será difícil reconhecer nestes elementos os *embriões de temas centrais* em toda a restante obra da autora, a fazer as suas primícias, um volume surpreendente *para o contexto do tempo que o viu surgir*, resistindo à leitura comum mas fascinado pela sua estranheza e novidade.<sup>118</sup>

According to Joaquim, the short stories of *Os Pregos* and *Depois de Os Pregos* leave ‘resíduos de leitura’,<sup>119</sup> owing to the fact that ‘à medida que os lugares se distribuem pela periferia da polis, as relações de contiguidade aumentam, enquanto que as

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<sup>115</sup> SH, p. 160 (emphasis mine).

<sup>116</sup> SH, p. 188.

<sup>117</sup> Llansol’s diaries are a supreme example of that strange penetration of the fictional world into the real life, an issue that will be discussed in Chapter Four.

<sup>118</sup> Morão, p. 9.

<sup>119</sup> Joaquim, ‘O Limite Fluído’, p. 188.

relações institucionais progressivamente se diluem'.<sup>120</sup> This suggests that Llansol is already escaping power, impostures, and history pushing her figures towards a new *community* of contiguities. In fact, from *Os Pregos* onwards, Llansol maps the first lines of a transnational and a-historic process where textual borders are flexible and sustained by a complex *corpus* of concepts. Although these books still follow a traditional structure of narrative – probably why Llansol later rejected them – they show the first traces of a Llansolian eroticism, love triangles and voluptuous bodies inhabiting geometric spaces. The experimentation, the suspended sentences, the narrative cuts, and the figurative beings (dogs and animated nature) that will appear in future works already exist in these earlier books. There is, then, no reason for critics to dismiss these works, so clearly foundational texts for the *edenic space*.

The characters of *Os Pregos* and *Depois de Os Pregos* walk barefoot 'perante o perigo dissimulado de pregos camuflados na erva, confundidos na aparência de segurança'.<sup>121</sup> The translation of *Os Pregos na Erva* as 'nails in the grass' could represent the obstacles or *impostures* faced by these characters. These cuts exemplify the early stage of Llansol's literary project, since these characters have not yet become *figures* in the proper sense, but are literally walking towards that condition. They are still not prepared to walk barefoot, to be naked, dispossessed, free from *impostures*. Indeed, as Llansol explained, 'todos os personagens desses contos foram escritos na fronteira do realismo. Sem o saber, estava a despedir-me'.<sup>122</sup> Ultimately, these *figures* must still learn, like Témia, how to 'ler, lendo, antes de ler, a ler, depois de ler, lembrando que estava a ler, lembrando a leitura'.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, p. 196.

<sup>121</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 592.

<sup>122</sup> *SH*, p. 159.

<sup>123</sup> *BDMT*, p. 117. Témia, 'a rapariga que temia a impostura da língua', is the main character of *Um Beijo Dado Mais Tarde*.



## PART II

### EUROPE, *EDENIC SPACE* – EUROPE IN LLANSOL'S WORK

'Desde el primer Adán que vio la noche  
Y el día y la figura de su mano,  
Fabularon los hombres y fijaron  
En piedra o en metal o en pergamino  
Cuanto ciñe la tierra o plasma el sueño.  
Aquí está su labor: la Biblioteca. [...]   
Declaran los infieles que si ardiera,  
Ardería la historia. Se equivocan.  
Las vigilias humanas engendraron  
Los libros infinitos. Si de todos  
No quedara uno solo, volverían  
A engendrar cada hoja y cada línea,  
Cada trabajo y cada amor de Hércules,  
Cada lección de cada manuscrito.'<sup>124</sup>  
Jorge Luis Borges

In this second part, I propose a reading of Llansol's concept of *edenic space* in comparison with George Steiner's *Idea of Europe*,<sup>125</sup> stressing how Europe is facing the collapse of politics which seems to 'traverse[r] un éclipse persistente'.<sup>126</sup> Bearing this in mind, Llansol proposes a re-writing of history and memory through enunciating an alternative paradigm that incites rebellion as the solution to the decadence of politics, philosophy and literature. Chapter One demonstrates that Llansol's idea of Europe as an *edenic space* is also an idea for Portugal. Here I introduce Llansol's relationship with Europe as a reflection of her own exilic condition, but also as an ontological preoccupation of her literary project as 'reconfiguração poética do humano'.<sup>127</sup> Along the way, I will introduce some key Llansolian concepts which will be further elaborated in the body of the thesis.

#### *The Idea of Europe versus core Europe*

Europe is a map of *cafés*:<sup>128</sup> if there were no *cafés*, if the bourgeoisie had not invaded the *café* and created the public space in the nineteenth century, today Europeans could not openly, discuss politics, poetry, philosophy or other people's lives. Nowadays, however, *cafés* have become busy, noisy places for tourists to have a

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<sup>124</sup> Jorge Luis Borges, *Alejandro, 641 A. D.*, in *História de la noche* (Buenos Aires: EMECE, 1977), pp. 13-14.

<sup>125</sup> George Steiner, *The Idea of Europe* (Tillburg: Nexus Institute, 2004).

<sup>126</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Moyens sans fins – notes sur la politique* (Paris: Payot et Rivages, 2002), p. 7

<sup>127</sup> Gusmão, 'A História e o Projecto Humano', p. 132.

<sup>128</sup> Steiner, *The Idea of Europe*, p. 17.

*cappuccino*, take pictures with their arm around Fernando Pessoa's statue at the Brasileira, in Lisbon, or sit at the table at Deux Magots, in Paris, where Sartre and Beauvoir used to write. What does this say about Europe?

In *The Idea of Europe*, Steiner suggests that the continent may be described through the following key concepts: besides a map of *cafés*, Europe is a territory that can be *crossed by foot*,<sup>129</sup> thus becoming a *cartography of history and memory*.<sup>130</sup> Europeans 'inhabit literal echo-chambers of historical, intellectual, artistic and scientific achievements', Steiner states.<sup>131</sup> Europeans must reconcile the dichotomous *legacy of Athens and Jerusalem*,<sup>132</sup> by finally facing the unbearable *eschatological awareness* of the death of their own civilization, as if Europe 'had intuited that it would one day collapse under the paradoxical weight of its achievements and the unparalleled wealth and complication of its history'.<sup>133</sup>

The fact that we can walk across Europe contributes to the shaping of our identity. Philosophers in the polis, merchants, pilgrims, thieves, soldiers, all crossed Europe by foot, from Roman road-building to the Christian crusades, from the Napoleonic invasions to the World Wars. Llansol concurs, by placing Portugal on the European map: 'Portugal é um território de viagem, estelado, [...] pelos itinerários dos portugueses, fugitivos, judeus, comerciantes, emigrados, navegadores; tal é a árvore genealógica desenhada à margem da literatura portuguesa.'<sup>134</sup> This view of Europe as a space of vagabondage is corroborated by the Slovakian writer Milan Richter, who stretches the limits that define the European as a pilgrim:

Das planícies sempre cobertas com neve dos Svalbard ou vales vulcânicos da Islândia, com os seus *géisers* que jorram com força, às quentes ruelas de Istambul, no Bósforo. Da *saudade* do cabo da Roca, contemplando os Açores, da rocha gigantesca de Gibraltar que vê o seu reflexo no estreito com o olhar posto no Tânger marroquino, essa vanguarda da África, aos palácios imperiais de São Petersburgo – tudo isto é terra e água, montanhas e vales férteis, em que caminhou e caminha o europeu.<sup>135</sup>

Even if there is no obvious connection between Iceland and Portugal, Turkey and Gibraltar, the fact is that, despite linguistic or cultural differences, European

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<sup>129</sup> *Ibid*, p. 18.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, p. 21.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, p. 21.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid*, p. 24.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid*, p. 28.

<sup>134</sup> *FP*, p. 10.

<sup>135</sup> Milan Richter, 'Quem é Europeu na Literatura Europeia?', trans. by Zuzana Grešová Leal, in *Cartas da Europa – O que é o Europeu na Literatura Europeia?*, pref. by Eduardo Lourenço (Lisbon: Fim de Século, 2005), pp. 35-41 (p. 35).

literature remains a common roof 'que nos abriga a todos'.<sup>136</sup> However, it is becoming slighter for writers of languages beyond Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida's conceptualization of the *core Europe*.<sup>137</sup>

Today Europe represents both a synonym for economic exchange and a cultural, free and translingual market, but despite differences between the countries, artists speak a shared language, quoting the same references, or, following Steiner, going to the same *cafés*, living in streets with identical names, carrying the burden of history. Yet, one of the biggest limitations for European artists is cacophony. Cacophony confirms how artistic creation is becoming conditioned by European *auctoritas*, political and economic institutions that determine which language to speak, which television programmes to watch, which books or films to support, and which products suit the standardized market. Artistic creation leads to a process of impoverishment that places the artist in an enormous melting pot of quotations, most uttered in the same dominant languages. There is no linguistic balance in Europe: 'Especialmente no âmbito da literatura trata-se de uma rua em princípio de sentido único, partindo das grandes línguas rumo às pequenas línguas', posits Jörn Donner.<sup>138</sup> Although Donner is Finnish he writes in Swedish because he belongs to Finland's Swedish-speaking community. 'Neste contexto, ao falar da Europa, sou obrigado a utilizar uma terminologia política para descrever uma comunidade imaginária', he explains.<sup>139</sup>

This imaginary community haunts European artists who do not belong to *core Europe* (*Kerneuropa*), the concept created through a reflection on Europe in the aftermath of the Iraq war, which sparked vigorous responses by many European intellectuals, both for and against its premises. Habermas and Derrida state that 'for the moment, only the core European nations are ready to endow the EU with certain qualities of a state'.<sup>140</sup> *Core Europe* (essentially comprised of France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the Benelux countries) should take a leading role and this

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<sup>136</sup> Ramiro Fonte, 'A Literatura Europeia, a Solidão', trans. by Inês Figueira, in *Cartas da Europa*, pp. 53-56 (p. 53).

<sup>137</sup> Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida, 'February 15, or, What Binds Europeans Together: Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in Core Europe', in *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe – Transatlantic Relations after the Iraq War*, ed. by Daniel Levy, Max Pensky, and John Torpey (New York, London: Verso, 2005), pp. 3-20.

<sup>138</sup> Jörn Donner, 'A Europa Vista da Periferia', in *Cartas da Europa*, trans. by Mika Palo, pp. 69-79 (p. 72).

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid*, p. 79.

<sup>140</sup> Habermas and Derrida, 'February 15', p. 5.

‘does not mean excluding’, but rather ‘be[ing] the locomotive’ for Europe.<sup>141</sup> Yet, the concept of a *core Europe* blatantly contradicts the idea that Europeans must “‘build up” their national identities, and add to them a European dimension’, so that ‘the citizens of one nation must regard the citizens of another nation as fundamentally “one of us”’.<sup>142</sup> If there is a *core Europe* there is, syllogistically, a peripheral one, and core-citizens certainly do not regard non-core citizens as ‘one of us’. This is obviously a weakness in Habermas and Derrida’s theory, perhaps useful to foreign policy, yet highly questionable in terms of identity.

The suggestion of a *core Europe* should not be taken out of context – the aftermath of the Iraq war, a conflict which divided Europeans (citizens and nations), challenging the unity unquestioned since the creation of the European Community. However, many contributors to this anthology underline its dangers. The Hungarian writer Péter Esterházy is one of the detractors of *core Europe*, speaking from the ‘periphery’ – a ‘double periphery’, given that the *core* is constituted by those aforementioned countries, the Western democratic winners of the 1939-45 conflict, thus excluding the Eastern ones. Esterházy ironically states that if once he was an Eastern European, ‘I have now become a non-core European’.<sup>143</sup> One must agree: Habermas-Derrida’s concept creates a ‘first-class’ versus a ‘second-class’ duality which Esterházy refuses to accept, for what binds Europeans together is exactly what excludes Eastern Europeans from the *core*: ‘In our eyes, the United States has never been a great power; it has always been a dream. [...] There was no 1968 here; there was no student movement and no reappraisal of the past. In a dictatorship there is nothing but the dictator. And people.’<sup>144</sup> Consequently, Esterházy posits that what binds Europeans together is neither the *core*, nor Europe’s identity crisis, but the fact that ‘up to now Europe has been united, spiritually, by dictatorships’.<sup>145</sup> We are experiencing an armistice whose length could never have been imagined before, perhaps this is why ‘we are afraid, and rightly so, afraid of visions’, and of dreams.<sup>146</sup> We are now in a ‘calm helplessness’ and this is a void, Esterházy states, a dangerous

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<sup>141</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6 and p. 7.

<sup>143</sup> Péter Esterházy, ‘How Big is the European Dwarf?’, in *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe*, pp. 74-79 (p. 74).

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid*, p. 77.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, p. 78.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, p. 78.

and silent absence. The only solution is rebellion, or as the Hungarian argues (like Llansol), ‘the first step would be to become restless’.<sup>147</sup>

### Llansol and Europe

The Llansolian *oeuvre* has always been closer to European landscapes, than to the metaphor of the sea which moulds Portuguese literature. This distance from Portugal may have cost Llansol’s exclusion from a ‘canonical’ history of Portuguese literature, but despite its physical proximity with a European *core*, the Llansolian text was always attached to Portuguese language and culture. Note the title of Llansol’s second trilogy: *O Litoral do Mundo* (1984-1988),<sup>148</sup> three books in which ‘as duas Europas se começam a revelar como uma única’ because there are “‘raízes ocultas’ que ligam esses dois mundos’.<sup>149</sup>

Undoubtedly, Llansol’s exile determined the presence of European *figures* in her texts which could be seen, in her own words, as an ‘armazém de sinais’,<sup>150</sup> a warehouse of references driving the embodiment of ‘real spectral encounters’ amongst the *living*.<sup>151</sup> Llansol explained who these *figures* are, how they appeared in her life and writing, and how they resulted from her reflection about Europe:<sup>152</sup>

Estava eu no béguinage de Bruges, com o sentimento fortíssimo de que já ali teríamos estado. Nós, não era eu. Já ali tínhamos sido alguém, alguém daquele lugar, e agora, inexplicavelmente, não havia ali, excepto na minha impressão, nenhuma memória de nós. Nem sequer o esquecimento. Data de então **a presença constante, invasora e quase exclusiva, de certas figuras europeias nos meus livros [...]**. Fez-se ali o nó de que depois desfiei o texto. Comecei nas beguinhas; destas, passei a Hadewijch, a Ruysbroeck. Destes, a João da Cruz e a Ana de Peñalosa. Fui conduzida por todos eles a Müntzer, à batalha de Frankenhausen e à cidade utópica de Münster, na Vestefália. Nos restos fracassados destes homens encontrei Eckhart, Suso, Espinosa, Camões e Isabel de Portugal. E foi por sua mão que fui até Copérnico, Giordano Bruno, Hölderlin, que todos eles anunciavam Bach, Nietzsche, Pessoa, e outros que a nossa memória ora esquece, ora lembra.<sup>153</sup>

Llansol thereby exposes the legacy of a *lineage* of writers in her project, from the beguines to nineteenth-century German writers, not forgetting core figures of

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<sup>147</sup> *Ibid*, p. 79.

<sup>148</sup> Comprised of the books *Causa Amante* (1984), *Contos do Mal Errante* (1986) and *Da Sebe ao Ser* (1988).

<sup>149</sup> João Barrento, ‘Herbário de Faces’, in *CJA*, pp. 171-191 (p. 183).

<sup>150</sup> *IQC*, p. 140.

<sup>151</sup> Eduardo Prado Coelho, ‘Maria Gabriela Llansol, o Texto Equidistante’, in *A Noite do Mundo*. (Lisboa: INCM, 1988), pp. 99-103 (p. 100).

<sup>152</sup> Llansol, ‘Nós Estamos de Volta’, in *LI*, pp. 88-93 (p. 88).

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 88-89 (emphasis in the original).

Portuguese culture, such as Camões, Queen Isabel, Fernando Pessoa, or even Jorge de Sena, Vergílio Ferreira, Vasco da Gama, or King Sebastião, who are not mentioned in this fragment, but could certainly be.<sup>154</sup>

According to Llansol, Portugal and Europe share a common history, but have two different ways of writing it. Humanism, freedom of thought and the *poetic gift* are three of the main features of the Renaissance period, but Portugal (or rather, Iberia) and Central Europe chose different responses to the revolutionary innovations of the time. If Central Europe endured several social, religious and cultural sea changes, ‘de que Copérnico e as guerras de camponeses são prováveis emblemas’, the Iberian Peninsula, on the contrary, saw in the Discoveries the possibility of a ‘desvenda[r] de novos espaços, simultaneamente virgens de condicionalismos europeus (e onde tudo, pois, pudesse recomeçar de novo)’.<sup>155</sup> Nevertheless, Llansol explains that these events cannot be simplistically exposed in this way. In what could be seen as a postcolonial or post-imperial vision of Europe, Llansol accurately asserts that the legacy of religious intolerance, for instance, which culminated in the Battle of Frankenhausen (1525), in Germany, could have reached the world through the spirit of the Discoveries. ‘Foi essa batalha [Frankenhausen], esse intento quebrado no modo, que exportámos nas caravelas.’<sup>156</sup> Religious intolerance and the belief in the superiority of the European man led to the devastating history of slavery, colonialism and exterminations, in Europe and throughout the world, from the Renaissance until today.

By recognizing the European’s responsibility in such history – which, in the end, unites Iberians with Europeans – Llansol proposes the return of the European to Europe: ‘A Europa voltou ao seu espaço de partida.’<sup>157</sup> Here lies the European man, back in his cradle of knowledge and humanism, forced to deal with his own history, compelled to face the ‘rasto de retorno, [que] deixámos atrás de nós e connosco’.<sup>158</sup> This is the legacy that underpins the Llansolian text and its original notion of

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<sup>154</sup> Jorge de Sena is a figure in *Um Falcão no Punho* (1985) and *Causa Amante*. Vergílio is a figure in *Inquérito às Quatro Confidências* (1996), and Queen Isabel (also known as Rainha Santa Isabel) is one of the main figures in *Contos do Mal Errante*. King Sebastião is metamorphosed into Dom Arbusto in *Causa Amante*. *O Litoral do Mundo* is clearly a trilogy rooted in Portuguese historical figures.

<sup>155</sup> Llansol, ‘Nós Estamos de Volta’, pp. 89-90.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid*, p. 90.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid*, p. 90.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, p. 90.

humanism: how can one tell this history again, ‘como reconduzir essa herança ao seu ponto de partida’?<sup>159</sup>

Llansol regrets the near absence of these topics in contemporary European literatures, and especially, in Portuguese literature, ‘[que] pouco tem escrito sobre as outras Europas’.<sup>160</sup> For Portuguese writers, Llansol asserts, ‘a Europa não é um tema positivo, não é casa nossa; o seu futuro não é ainda também pertença nossa’.<sup>161</sup> The lack of reflections about Europe in Portuguese literature is not recent. Eduardo Lourenço has been addressing this issue for over forty years, underlining the ‘diálogo precário da cultura portuguesa consigo mesma e com o contexto europeu’.<sup>162</sup>

Llansol’s project aims at acknowledging that legacy and, through a constant reworking of language, finding the words that ‘darão outro desfecho à batalha de Frankenhäusen’,<sup>163</sup> compensating for a loss of an *idea of Europe* that can be thereby recuperated: ‘O ciclo do Renascimento não está concluído; ainda há tempo para voltar ao seu começo, e reescrever-lhe um novo sentido.’<sup>164</sup> In her view, this should be the goal of contemporary European writers: ‘Pôr-se de novo a caminho é o único caminho. Gostaria que os compatriotas europeus, ensinados por tantas batalhas perdidas, se reencontrassem para isso.’<sup>165</sup> Both Portuguese and European writers should embrace this responsibility towards their language and identity, integrated in a common European legacy of humanism and oppression, attempting, through literature, to find a way to write a different future for European peoples and literatures. As Eduardo Lourenço posits, ‘o futuro de Portugal foi, desde cedo, o “lá fora”, a distância, nossa ou alheia’, as Llansol’s personal history shows.<sup>166</sup> ‘Hoje, é a primeira vez que Portugal e os portugueses têm de desenhar, de conceber, de inventar e se dar um futuro, a partir de si mesmos.’<sup>167</sup> The Llansolian concept of Europe proves that Portugal and the core of the continent have never shared such close proximity. This closeness underscores how European and Portuguese writers should be building a common roof, a cartography of voices, after Babel and beyond the

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<sup>159</sup> *Ibid*, p. 90.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91.

<sup>162</sup> Silvina Rodrigues Lopes cited by Maria de Lourdes Soares, ‘Encontros de Confrontação que nos Faltam (I): Eduardo Lourenço e Maria Gabriela Llansol’, *Colóquio-Letras*, 170 (January/April 2009), forthcoming.

<sup>163</sup> Llansol, ‘Nós Estamos de Volta’, p. 93.

<sup>164</sup> *F*, p. 23.

<sup>165</sup> Llansol, ‘Nós Estamos de Volta’, p. 93.

<sup>166</sup> Eduardo Lourenço, *Nós Como Futuro* (Lisbon: Assírio & Alvim, 1997), p. 25.

<sup>167</sup> Lourenço, *Nós Como Futuro*, p. 25.

Llansolian *communities*. On this map, Llansol's project remains at the fringes of Europe – not in its *core*, even if most of her literary work was produced in Belgium, a fact which tellingly dissolves the relevance of a *core* versus a non-*core* Europe. Here, fringe means, as it does to Jörn Donner, regarding Europe as an 'imaginary community', in Llansol's case, a group of rebels in exile, nomadic figures walking towards the Tower of Babel.

### ***Lectant, scriptor, superimpositions and palimpsests***

If *Os Pregos* and *Depois de Os Pregos* contained the seed of a paradigm shift, *O Livro das Comunidades*, the first volume of the trilogy *A Geografia dos Rebeldes*, became a 'livro-fonte', a book like no other.<sup>168</sup>

O livro que escrevi faz-me escrever; / [...] **O Livro das Comunidades**: como este livro é belo; releio-o ao corrigir as últimas provas; alguém o escreveu que não sou só eu; se assim foi, tornei-me profundamente seu amigo [...] / scriptor. Sobre **O Livro das Comunidades** *desejava uma escrita viva que pudesse tomar por um encontro.*<sup>169</sup>

*O Livro*, dated November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1974, holds, as Paulo de Medeiros shows, 'a multitude of dates and places that would already form part of that attempt to unmoor itself from traditional notions of linear time and yet, cannot but pull the text back into it, even as we read it now, thirty years onwards'.<sup>170</sup> This foreseeing of a future-to-be, waiting for the Salazarian *khora* to explode, or, rather, implode (the structure of Portuguese society),<sup>171</sup> is the basis of this book, a book of futures, of *becomings* ('avenir', in French; 'devir' or 'admir', in Portuguese). The *becoming*, Gusmão suggests, 'deixa supor uma modificação ou transformação do ir sendo do homem e deixa então aparecer o texto como destinação, como doação de sentido ao outro'.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> *F*, p. 181. *A Geografia dos Rebeldes* is comprised of *O Livro das Comunidades* (1977), *A Restante Vida* (1983) and *Na Casa de Julho e de Agosto* (1984).

<sup>169</sup> *F*, pp. 181-182 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>170</sup> Medeiros, 'Uncommon Community', n.p.

<sup>171</sup> Llansol stated that her personal experience with teaching children led her to write *O Livro das Comunidades*: 'Nenhum deles [textos] é à imagem das crianças de então. Mas são algumas das imagens do destino humano que certamente lhes viria bater à porta, no dia em que a khora salazarista explodisse em estilhaços.' *SH*, p. 159. In the afterword to *O Livro*, Llansol describes her experiences in Ferme Jacobs, in Belgium, a school created for the children of foreign students. These children, who cannot communicate completely with each other due to the lack of a linguistic *ethos*, will learn how to read, to write, to plant or to sew in the school. This is the first vision of the polyphonic, multi-linguistic, transnational Llansolian *community*. Llansol, 'Apontamentos Sobre a Escola da Rua de Namur', in *LC*, pp. 77-105 (p. 78).

<sup>172</sup> Gusmão, 'A História e o Projecto Humano', p. 127.



The text as ‘offering’ opens its meaning towards the enunciation of a *lectant* (‘legente’, Llansol’s concept to replace ‘reader’),<sup>173</sup> who will inevitably become its *scriptor*. In the light of Roland Barthes, Maria Etelvina Santos describes the *scriptor* as

a figura do copista, aquele que reúne quem escreve e quem lê, sobrepondo em si os dois momentos de um texto – o da representação e o da recepção; é, portanto, uma figura da completude e o melhor comentador de um texto. Ao substituir o autor pelo *scriptor*, Barthes [...] anuncia[r] a metamorfose do autor, a sua ressuscitação, acrescentando-lhe mais um ponto de vista.<sup>174</sup>

The *lectant* comprises within him/herself ‘quem escreve e quem lê’, as a double appearing in the moment of reading, but also of writing. The writer ‘espera, explicitamente, pelo outro que virá ler – está do lado da escrita e da leitura, é um híbrido, escrevente e legente do texto’.<sup>175</sup> Llansol is, thus, a reader-writer of her own text, a *lectant*. However, by ‘offering’ the text to a *scriptor*, they become readers-writers as well, or, rather, readers-in-the-process-of-writing (*lectants*). Llansol calls this *superimposition* (‘sobreimpressão’), a procedure to skip from one text to another that is more than mere intertextuality.

The originality of the Llansolian text could be described as the *simultaneous* existence of the intertextual relations presented by Gérard Genette, especially the following three:<sup>176</sup>

La *métatextualité* est la relation de commentaire qui ‘unit un texte à un autre texte dont il parle, sans nécessairement le citer (le convoquer), voire, à la limite, sans le nommer’. [...] ‘Je définis [*l’intertextualité*] para une relation de coprésence entre deux ou plusieurs textes, c’est-à-dire, eidétiquement et le plus souvent, par la présence effective d’un texte dans un autre.’ [...] L’*hypertextualité* [...] définit toute relation unissant un texte B (l’hypertexte) à un texte A (hypotexte) dont il dérive: elle renvoie à une relation non pas d’inclusion mais de greffe.<sup>177</sup>

First, Llansol’s text is *metatextual* through the practice of commentary or paraphrasing, thus projecting the text into its future rather than its hypotext: ‘Porque

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<sup>173</sup> In Portuguese, the suffix *-ente* means ‘aquele que + mais verbo’. *Legente* is composed of *legere* (Latin for ‘to read’) plus *-ente*, as ‘the one who reads’. The same principle is followed in English: the suffix *-ant* can be applied to an adjective deriving from a similar noun: *lectore* + *-ant* = *lectant*, understood as the one who *reads*, or who *is* reading. See Ciberdúvidas da Língua Portuguesa, <<http://www.ciberduvidas.com/pergunta.php?id=13721>> [accessed 15 April 2009].

<sup>174</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, ‘Como Uma Pedra-Pássaro Que Voa’, p. 31.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31 (emphasis mine).

<sup>176</sup> See Gérard Genette, *Palimpsestes – la littérature au second degré* (Paris: Seuil, 1982).

<sup>177</sup> Genette cited in Nathalie Piégay-Gros, *Qu’est-ce que c’est l’intertextualité* (Paris: Dunod, 1996), pp. 13-14.

copiar um texto / o abre sem o violar e, quando pensamos que o sabemos de cor, muitas vezes *adulteramos* o que está escrito / mas esse adultério é *pleno de ensinamentos*.<sup>178</sup> The following citations display *intertextuality* and *hypertextuality* in the Llansolian text, listing different instances of *superimposition* that will be the norm in most of her books:

[Juan] colocou ‘A Viva Chama’ sobre ‘A Noite Obscura’ e ‘A Noite Obscura’ sobre ‘O Cântico Espiritual’; [...] escreveria um novo livro ‘O Livro das Comunidades’, desconhecido das suas Obras Completas.<sup>179</sup>

[Nietzsche] Abre um dos seus livros e os dois copiamos o que lá está escrito, como se fosse texto por escrever.<sup>180</sup>

Leio um texto e vou-o cobrindo com o meu próprio texto [...].<sup>181</sup>

Situo-me historicamente ao lado de outras mãos que bordaram tecidos de outra época. [...] Passo da escrita ao bordado traduzindo como se ambos fossem a minha palavra [...]. Com um livro se escreve outro livro.<sup>182</sup>

Eu escrevo, depois leio o que escrevo como se não o tivesse escrito.<sup>183</sup>

Juan *places* one text over another, continuously, until he ends up writing *O Livro das Comunidades*; Nietzsche and the narrator *copy* the philosopher’s text *as if* it were written for the first time; she writes *as if* she were sewing; and she reads *as if* she were writing. These ‘as if’ are decisive, since possibility (*as if* it could happen, *energeia*) generates text. The *possibility* of covering a written text with a new one, of placing one text underneath another creates a ‘transparent palimpsest’ of references.<sup>184</sup> This is pure *hypertext*: rather than the *inclusion* of a previous text in a future/present one, this text performs a *transplantation* of ‘tissue’ (Genette’s ‘greffe’ as in graft), that could be understood as a transparent veil superimposed over the text to allow *intertextuality*. Yet, *tissue* can also represent the see-through quality of a text, which can now be literally *brought to light* by the reader. Genette coincidentally remarks how it is the reader who brings forth the relationship of *intertextuality*. Palimpsest is less ‘un élément produit par l’écriture mais [comme] un effet de lecture. Ce qui est en jeu, ce n’est plus l’identification de l’intertexte, mais la manière dont il peut ou doit être lu: car c’est alors *la lecture qui définit l’intertextualité*’.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> *OVDP*, p. 144 (emphasis mine).

<sup>179</sup> *LC*, p. 49.

<sup>180</sup> *LC*, p. 55.

<sup>181</sup> *LC*, p. 57.

<sup>182</sup> *LC*, p. 58.

<sup>183</sup> *LC*, p. 72.

<sup>184</sup> Gusmão, ‘A História e o Projecto Humano’, p. 123.

<sup>185</sup> Piégay-Gros, p. 15 (emphasis mine).

### **The figure and the scene of fulgor**

By re-writing the text, the *lectant* annuls the need for a *beginning*. The text is presented *in medias res*, without preamble, without preconceptions: ‘Permanecia no princípio, mas não tinha princípio; era o próprio princípio.’<sup>186</sup> In Llansol, the absence of a beginning could be related to Nietzsche’s ‘eternal return’ (which Llansol laboriously transformed, in Portuguese, into ‘eterno retorno do mútuo’).<sup>187</sup> The ‘eternal return’ suggests that time is *cyclical*, rather than *linear*; events recur periodically, repeatedly instead of sequentially. Although many scholars see the ‘eternal return’ as *existential* (measuring men’s attitude towards life) or as an *aesthetical* theory,<sup>188</sup> others interestingly read it as a *cosmological* theory, following Nietzsche’s notes on ‘scientific’ accounts of the infinite recurrence of time against energy’s finitude. Time *versus* energy ultimately defines the evolution of a cosmogony, not in the sense of human existence, but rather focusing on an ‘entire structure and content of the universe’.<sup>189</sup>

In *Finita* (1987), Llansol underlines the necessity of writing a diary to counterbalance time’s finitude: ‘Escrevo nestes cadernos para que, de facto, a experiência do tempo possa ser absorvida. Pensei que, um dia, ler estes textos, provenientes da minha tensão de esvair-me e cumular-me em metamorfoses poderia proporcionar-me indícios do **eterno retorno do mútuo**.’<sup>190</sup> In order to offset the influence of time over the human *body*, the Llansolian text generates tensions, dislocations or disposessions cumulated in metamorphosis of beings, which are beyond mere *anamorphosis*: they are monstrous creations generated by the *mutual*. The Llansolian text, ‘não só coloca o mútuo no lugar do “mesmo”, mas mostra-o na vida afectiva dos homens, tornando assim o lugar catastrófico de toda a metamorfose humana.’<sup>191</sup> In my mind, Augusto Joaquim is not referring to the apocalyptic end of time, but to the Nietzschean ‘eternal return’: if time is cyclical, catastrophe will generate metamorphosis. Instead of linearity we have cuts or fragments promoting

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<sup>186</sup> *LC*, p. 33.

<sup>187</sup> *F*, p. 12.

<sup>188</sup> Bernd Magnus and Kathleen M. Higgins (eds.), ‘Nietzsche’s Works and Their Themes’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 21-68 (p. 37).

<sup>189</sup> Magnus and Higgins, p. 38.

<sup>190</sup> *F*, p. 12 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>191</sup> Augusto Joaquim, ‘Conversação Espiritual’, in Llansol, *Finita*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Lisbon: Assírio & Alvim, 2005), pp. 237-242 (p. 239). NB: all the citations from *Finita* concern Rolim’s edition of 1987. The second edition will only be quoted due to Joaquim’s afterword, as this note exemplifies.

the appearance of *figures*, which are no longer the same (*narrativity* propels sameness, whilst *textuality* generates otherness). The *figures* recur repeatedly in time and in space, out of the catastrophic creativity (*energeia*) of the text.

The concept of the *figure* is originally outlined in the diary *Um Falcão no Punho* (1985):

Identifiquei progressivamente ‘nós construtivos’ do texto a que chamo figuras e que, na realidade, não são necessariamente pessoas mas módulos, contornos, delineamentos. Uma pessoa que historicamente existiu pode ser uma figura, ao mesmo tempo que uma frase [...], um animal, ou uma quimera. [...] [O]s contornos a que me referi envolvem um núcleo cintilante.<sup>192</sup>

The *figure* appears in the Llansolian text as a result of the encounter between the (supposedly) autobiographical text of the diaries and the (apparently) fictional text of the novels. *Um Falcão* is a diary and should thus be taken as a biographical account of its author’s daily life. However, the fact that the *figures* appear also in Llansol’s diaries reveals the Llansolian paratext’s challenge to the limits of literary genres.<sup>193</sup> In *Finita*, Llansol reveals that, ‘como a noite de ontem, esta noite foi dedicada às figuras, que eu vejo como reino’.<sup>194</sup> A few pages later, she describes that, in her house, ‘hoje, estiveram presentes muitas figuras de livros a abrir’.<sup>195</sup>

The figurative kingdom, as Llansol puts it, is a kingdom-to-come towards the creation of a *community*. The *figures* are future beings, ‘futurantes’,<sup>196</sup> rather than past or present ones. ‘Não se trata de uma fonte absoluta de ser, mas de uma matriz autónoma de inesquecíveis seres que estão aqui e estão por vir.’<sup>197</sup> Repeatedly, Llansol rejects a Biblical source, i.e., *figures* created at the beginning of time, as the Bible would have it. Instead, by affirming the autonomous matrix of the *figure* as an independent, glittering nucleus of energy generated through *energeia*, Llansol retracts her responsibility for the creation of such beings. This is one of the basic principles which distinguishes a Llansolian *figure* from a *character*: *characters* are

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<sup>192</sup> *FP*, p. 130.

<sup>193</sup> In Chapter Four, the contradictory instances of Llansol’s diaries as both autobiography and fiction will be discussed.

<sup>194</sup> *F*, p. 84.

<sup>195</sup> *F*, p. 104.

<sup>196</sup> ‘Futurantes’ could be translated as ‘faturings’, since in English the suffix *-ing* corresponds to the Portuguese suffixes *-ante* and *-or*, which express the action of an agent. See *Ciberdúvidas da Língua Portuguesa*, <<http://www.ciberduvidas.com/index.php>> [accessed 19 December 2008].

<sup>197</sup> *OVDP*, p. 198.

the author's responsibility (here understood as an original creator); while *figures* are generated by an energy emanating from the text.

Llansol explains that the *figures* appeared when her text began to move beyond *narrativity*: 'Sentia-me infantil em dar vida às personagens da escrita realista porque isso significava que lhes devia igualmente dar a morte.'<sup>198</sup> *Figures* became *livings* ('vivos'), no longer necessarily people, but shapes. Anyone or anything can be a *figure*, as long as it is invited into the text, and renounces its previous canonized biographical existence.

Silvina Rodrigues Lopes's statement – 'a primeira coisa a compreender é que não há personagens nos livros de Maria Gabriela Llansol'<sup>199</sup> – is probably one of the most cited about this text. However, few scholars have emphasized the real differences between a Llansolian *figure* and a narrative character, simply considering them in opposition. If a *figure* is not a character, as Llansol states, and a character is *not yet a figure*, it is essential to ask: what *is* a character and what prevents it from accomplishing *figuration*?

In the light of studies in *narrativity*, a character is a 'fictional representation of a person' usually connected with 'the personalizing or humanizing dimension of literature'.<sup>200</sup> For that reason, a character is

the most mimetic term in the critical vocabulary, and hence one of the most difficult to contain within the fictional environment; yet, it is an essential condition of fictional existence that a character is so contained. In this sense the representation of persons in literature is a simultaneous process of their humanization and their dehumanization.<sup>201</sup>

Bradbury refers to a character as a 'person' even if it undergoes a process of *dehumanization*, like Gregor Samsa in Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (1915), who remains a character even if (and when) he is mutated into a bug. Roland Barthes also addresses the conflictive nature of a character as a 'person,' describing the reluctance of structuralism 'to treat the real character as an essence', as when Vladimir Propp reduced the character to a 'simple typology based not on psychology but on the unity of the actions assigned them by the narrative'.<sup>202</sup> For Barthes, characters cannot be

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<sup>198</sup> *FP*, p. 130.

<sup>199</sup> Lopes, *Teoria da Des-Possessão*, p. 42.

<sup>200</sup> Malcolm Bradbury, 'Character', *Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms*, ed. by Peter Childs and Roger Fowler (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 23-25 (p. 25).

<sup>201</sup> Bradbury, p. 25.

<sup>202</sup> Roland Barthes, 'Structural Analysis of Narratives', in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Haper Collins, 1977), p. 105.

classified as 'persons'.<sup>203</sup> Even if the character is described according not to what it is but to its actions or *praxis* (or, as suggest by Greimas, *actants*),<sup>204</sup> this notion, Barthes states, 'fails adequately to account for the multiplicity of participations as soon as these are analysed in terms of perspectives and that when these perspectives are respected [...] the system of characters remains too fragmented'.<sup>205</sup> Barthes suggests that the problem of the character is the *subject* that lies beneath its creation (by the author, the narrator or the reader), which defines the 'actantial matrix' of the narrative. Linguistics, then, will be able to provide instances (grammatical representations of the person: the pronouns) that aid the possibility of 'describing and classifying the personal (*je/tu*, first person/second person) or apersonal (*il*, third person), singular, dual or plural, instance of the action'.<sup>206</sup> Accordingly, characters are not persons because they are textual entities. They can only find 'their intelligibility'<sup>207</sup> if integrated in the communicational and exchangeable levels of the narrative: not only from the perspective of the 'hero' versus other characters, but also (most importantly), from the code shared by the narrator and the *narratary* (in French, *narrataire*), or from the opposition between author and reader.

It is in turning to these linguistic instances (author, reader, narrator, and *narratary*) that Barthes's analysis of the character essentially differs from the Llansolian *figure*. Structural analysis cannot grasp the totality of a *figure*, but neither can post-structuralism (following Barthes) contribute to its definition.

Although Llansol also employs these linguistic instances to challenge the process of analysing a text, she does not develop an alternative linguistic analysis system simply to restrict it to fiction. As Llansol affirmed, in the above citation, 'mais do que uma questão de escrita, [este paradigma] envolve uma mudança radical do modo de vida'.<sup>208</sup> Consequently, concepts like the *figure* or *scene of fulgor* are not pointless possibilities that seek to convey something previously defined by literary analysis. Instead, Llansol's conjecture is enacted through the *process of* (and not *in*) writing, and she uses these terms to express what existing concepts cannot explain.

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<sup>203</sup> *Ibid*, p. 105.

<sup>204</sup> A. J. Greimas, *Sémantique Structurale* (Paris: Larousse, 1966).

<sup>205</sup> Barthes, 'Structural Analysis of Narratives', p. 108.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid*, p. 109.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid*, p. 109.

<sup>208</sup> *SH*, p. 160.

The *figure* seldom *appears* in the course of a *scene of fulgor*, and it remains in an interstitial space that Llansol calls a state of *interbeing* ('entresser').<sup>209</sup> I chose the verb 'appear' carefully here, since its meaning could be amplified by several other actions that occur when *fulgor* takes place: 'to reveal', in its biblical sense, as God was revealed to mankind through the *figure* of Jesus; 'to materialize', defined by the English dictionary as 'to take bodily form' or 'to become visible'; and finally, 'to bring to light', in this sense, not only to make known, but truly to make something appear *through* light. *Fulgor* is related neither to the real nor to the metaphor; it is directly linked to the birth of a being inside the text, in a scene/space that results from a collision of worlds and possibilities, like the dog Jade, whose birth in *Amar um Cão* (1990) exemplifies a *scene of fulgor*:

\_\_\_\_\_ houve uma breve hesitação da parte de quem transportava o recém-nascido \_\_\_\_\_ o meu cão Jade, há muito tempo; muito, e com grande intensidade, aconteceu durante esse tempo breve em que Jade foi deixado suspenso sobre um medronheiro, sem mãe visível,  
 num berço nem celeste,  
 nem terrestre. No lugar \_\_\_\_\_ que toda a planta acolhe.<sup>210</sup>

Jade's birthplace is inscribed with a textual and visual space between 'lugar' and the rest of the sentence, as if Jade was born after that brief hesitation, also marked by a continuous line in the text. This line is a carefully chosen space opened by the author, an improvised cradle in which only *fulgor* is allowed. It is both the impossibility of naming the place where Jade was born, and the strange appearance of the motherless figure in a tree, that could make this section an exemplary description of a *scene of fulgor*.

Karin Hopfe accurately asserts that the *scene of fulgor* is the 'ponto culminante do sistema poético' in Llansol.<sup>211</sup> It is always ontological since it establishes a relationship between the simultaneous presence and absence of a being, propelled by the writing.<sup>212</sup> The *scene of fulgor* opens a gap in the text to ontologically generate a figure, literally, like Jade's birth in a visual space or a line such as this \_\_\_\_\_. This is the virtual space of the *community*.

<sup>209</sup> *Entresser* is an interstitial space that folds the space-time frame of the text. *F*, p. 107.

<sup>210</sup> *AC*, p. 39.

<sup>211</sup> Karin Hopfe, 'A escrita no diário / o diário na escrita: Diário, de Maria Gabriela Llansol', in *Metamorfoses do Eu: O Diário e Outros Géneros Autobiográficos na Literatura Portuguesa do Século XX*, ed. by Maria de Fátima Figueiredo and Karin Hopfe (Frankfurt: TFM, 2002), pp. 175-185 (p. 181).

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid*, p. 181.

Llansol explains that *fulgor* is a 'fonte de ser' intrinsically related to poetics.<sup>213</sup> Her books are neither things, nor metaphors, but *living*, since her text "“cria” seres futuros que não são projecções imaginárias".<sup>214</sup> The text, then, 'não avança por desenvolvimentos temáticos, nem por enredo, mas segue o fio que une as diferentes cenas fulgor'.<sup>215</sup> 'Fulgor ou verosimilhança?',<sup>216</sup> that is the question posed throughout her texts.<sup>217</sup>

Llansol's *fulgor* resembles Deleuze and Guattari's concept of *becoming*, the mechanism used by Kafka to *metamorphose* his characters. For Ronald Bogue, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of *becoming* arises from Nietzsche's 'eternal return', since, like in Llansol, the 'eternal return must be a return, not of being and the same, but of becoming and difference'.<sup>218</sup> The affirmation of the 'eternal return of the mutual' employs this aspect of *becoming*: in the Llansolian text, *figures* no longer correspond to sameness, but rather *become someone/something* else. As Deleuze writes, 'destruction becomes active to the extent that the negative is transmuted and converted into affirmative power: "the eternal joy of becoming".'<sup>219</sup>

In this sense, only writing and literature can attain a state of illumination or revelation in the text: *fulgor*. Only through writing can humans achieve *fulgor*, the *becoming-other* or *becoming-invisible* of literature.<sup>220</sup> For both Deleuze and Llansol, a writer must become foreign to his/her own way of writing – and Llansol accomplishes this process of foreignness, I believe, by rejecting *narrativity* and its linguistic *topoi*, in order to inscribe *textuality* and her own concepts in its place. By doing this, however, Llansol is not rejecting language altogether. Rather, she is challenging its limits and structures, in order to push language to 'a state of boom, close to a state of bust'.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> *OVDP*, p. 197.

<sup>214</sup> *ODVP*, p. 198.

<sup>215</sup> *FP*, p. 130.

<sup>216</sup> *OVDP*, p. 198.

<sup>217</sup> *ODVP*, p. 194.

<sup>218</sup> Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze and Guattari* (New York, London: Routledge, 1989), p. 29. See Chapter Three for a reading of Kafka and Llansol using Deleuze and Guattari's concept of *becoming*.

<sup>219</sup> Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, cited by Constantin Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski, 'Editors' Introduction', in *Gilles Deleuze and the Theatre of Philosophy*, ed. by Boundas and Olkowski (New York, London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 1-22 (p. 7).

<sup>220</sup> See the different instances of *becoming* in Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 256-341.

<sup>221</sup> Gilles Deleuze, 'He Stuttered', in *Gilles Deleuze and the Theatre of Philosophy*, pp. 23-29 (p. 25).



### **Llansolian communities, lessons in history**

*O Livro das Comunidades* introduces the primary figures of the community (Ana de Peñalosa, San Juan de la Cruz, Nietzsche and Thomas Müntzer) who do not appear chronologically, but become visible as the text progresses. After several *superimpositions*, San Juan and Nietzsche become the textual ‘father’ figures of the community. Yet, the appearance of the beheaded Müntzer (carrying his head under his arm) is crucial to understanding the interweaving of history, memory and time in Llansol.

Müntzer, a German reformer during the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, was a follower of Luther’s theology, until he was influenced by mysticism, thus rejecting the Bible and its influence upon men. Müntzer’s theology led to Anabaptism, a ‘sect’ deviating from Lutheranism, which considered that baptism should only be performed on adult believers. The separation between Müntzer’s and Luther’s theologies is based on a specific issue. According to Luther, since mankind was inexorably doomed, a fierce faith in God was the only way to attain salvation. God’s power on earth was personified by the father in a family, or the Prince, according to the pyramidal structure of society. To Müntzer, Luther’s principle of authority barely differed from the rule of the Roman Catholic Church over its followers. In Müntzer’s view, Luther ‘attacked only helpless enemies such as priests and monks and merchants, while he flattered the feudal ruling class, the lords and princes’.<sup>222</sup>

The peasants’ revolt incited by Müntzer transformed him into one of the most significant revolutionary figures in religious and social history, later regarded by nineteenth- and twentieth-century Marxists, ‘as a leader in an early bourgeois revolution against feudalism and the struggle for a classless society’.<sup>223</sup> Müntzer saw the peasants as ‘victims of a system created by clerics and aristocrats for their own purposes’.<sup>224</sup> Llansol regards Müntzer analogously, as the revolutionary, religious and military leader of the Peasants’ War in 1524–25, during the fiery decades of Reformation. After the peasants’ defeat in the Battle of Frankenhausen (1525),

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<sup>222</sup> James M. Stayer, *The German Peasants’ War and Anabaptist Community of Goods* (Montreal, London: McGill – Queen’s University Press, 1994) p. 108.

<sup>223</sup> Manfred Bensing, ‘Thomas Müntzer’, in *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/397713/Thomas-Muntzer>> [accessed 15 April 2009].

<sup>224</sup> Stayer, *The German Peasants’ War*, p. 109.

Müntzer was imprisoned, tortured and later decapitated.<sup>225</sup> During the interrogation before his beheading, Müntzer stated that ‘he undertook the uprising so that all Christians should be equal, and to drive out or kill the princes and lords who would not support the Gospel’.<sup>226</sup>

Although Stayer affirms that the siege of the city of Münster (1534-35), ten years after Müntzer’s decapitation, is not a direct legacy of the Revolution of 1525, Llansol chose the siege as another example of an attempt to exterminate a religious community in the name of God. The Münster siege resulted from a confrontation between Lutherans and Anabaptists. The massive migration of Anabaptists, who were being persecuted in other areas of Europe, to Münster, drove the Lutheran blockade. After a sixteenth-month resistance, the Anabaptists were defeated and executed.<sup>227</sup>

In my opinion, Llansol employs the *figure* of Müntzer and the Münster siege to show how history did not change the statutory condition of the peasants *vis-à-vis* the prince and, later, the bourgeois. Frankenhausen marks the moment when ‘*aqueles de quem gosto vão perder, já perderam*’.<sup>228</sup> The peasants’ defeat leads to a future with no hope, and this is what Müntzer says to San Juan: ‘A minha batalha já está perdida, posso lançar ao rio a minha cabeça decapitada.’<sup>229</sup> San Juan disagrees: like a hermit, a mystic, one must become nomadic and traverse the *dark night of the soul*, attaining a new communion with God.<sup>230</sup> Juan orders the departure – ‘partamos para o exílio’<sup>231</sup> – and the *communities* are thus created: Ana, Juan, Nietzsche, and Müntzer must depart

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<sup>225</sup> Bensing, ‘Thomas Müntzer’.

<sup>226</sup> Stayer, *The German Peasants’ War*, p. 107.

<sup>227</sup> Llansol might have been inspired to write about the siege of Münster by Marguerite Yourcenar’s novel *L’oeuvre au noir* (1968), which takes place in that period. Zénon, the main character, is a ‘personagem paradigmática de Yourcenar: o homem livre, sem possessões e sem preconceitos (tão próximo dos “marginais” de Llansol) que traz consigo uma lição que a corrente da História, de todos os tempos, sempre se encarregou de calar’, António Guerreiro wrote *à propos* of the publication of Llansol’s letter to Yourcenar. See António Guerreiro, ‘A Lição da História’, *Vida Mundial*, December 1997, p. 85. See also Maria Gabriela Llansol, ‘Uma Carta Todos os Dias’, *Vida Mundial*, December 1997, pp. 86-87. For a literary re-enactment of the Münster siege in Portuguese literature, see José Saramago’s play *In Nomine Dei* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1993). A comparative reading of Llansol’s and Saramago’s views of the siege is beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet, it should be suggested, both interpretations bear interesting parallels to be explored in future readings of the Llansolian text.

<sup>228</sup> *F*, p. 30.

<sup>229</sup> *LC*, p. 36.

<sup>230</sup> *The Dark Night of the Soul* is the second of the four main poems by mystic medieval Spanish poet San Juan de la Cruz. See San Juan de la Cruz, *La Noche Oscura*, in *Obras Completas* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 2002), pp. 483-585.

<sup>231</sup> *LC*, p. 48.

in order to wander about the European continent, since ‘a ilha para onde nos dirigimos tinha sido riscada do mapa’.<sup>232</sup>

If, from an external perspective, the Llansolian text provides a palimpsest of voices and citations, internally, the *figures* are guided by the voices of those whom history has tried to silence, since history is written by the powerful. Llansol is therefore following Walter Benjamin’s thesis VII on the *Philosophy of History*, regarding the sadness and misery which fills the hearts of the oppressed: ‘The nature of this sadness stands out more clearly if one asks with whom the adherents of historicism actually empathize. The answer is inevitable: with the victor. And all rulers and the heirs of those who conquered before them.’<sup>233</sup> Llansol is, then, ‘brush[ing] history against the grain’ since her text concedes that ‘there is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism’.<sup>234</sup> By acknowledging this, the Llansolian text attempts to give voice to the victims of barbarism: ‘A escrita / era as vozes / em coro / dos trinta mil camponeses / que depois de abolirem os juízes / se dirigem para o massacre de Frankenhausem / e cujas pegadas ficaram perdidas no deserto.’<sup>235</sup> Ana, Juan and Nietzsche write *the voices* of the vanquished of Frankenhausem, who were pushed to the silent shelves of history; only their footprints now prove they once existed. They are *remnants*: ‘Há um resto que foi deixado e que, sob a forma de **mútuo**, se enuncia. / O que é perder? / Quem perde, que deixa escrito no campo de batalha?’<sup>236</sup> The Llansolian text, then, makes an effort to re-inscribe the footprints of the losers by re-writing history altogether. Llansol ‘não suport[a] a palavra História’,<sup>237</sup> she states, because ‘como ser civil conheço o presente, o passado, e o futuro. Mas como escritor tenho um olhar que toca sobretudo o espaço, livre de tempo. Nele não há poder.’<sup>238</sup> Llansol fought for decades to design a text ‘capaz de conferir uma expressão actual a gritos humanos e não humanos, abafados pelo “assim é” da história, do mundo, do poder de espezinhar’.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> *FP*, p. 38.

<sup>233</sup> Benjamin, p. 256.

<sup>234</sup> Benjamin, p. 257 and p. 256.

<sup>235</sup> *LC*, p. 42.

<sup>236</sup> *F*, p. 30 (emphasis in the original). I will thereby use the concept *remnants* when referring Llansol’s concept of ‘resto or ‘restante vida’, in the light of Agamben’s ‘remnant’ of Israel, ‘that is, of the righteous who are still alive at the moment of the Messiah’s coming’. Giorgio Agamben, *The Open – Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 2.

<sup>237</sup> *F*, p. 47.

<sup>238</sup> *FP*, p. 132.

<sup>239</sup> *SH*, p. 323.

As such, Llansol seems to follow the dichotomous relationship between historicism and historical materialism proposed by Benjamin. A historian (sustained by *narrativity*) provides an “eternal” image of the past’, as a continuum or a perpetuation of power structures; whilst a historical materialist (creator of *textuality*) ‘leaves it to others to be drained by the whore called “Once upon a time” in historicism’s bordello’.<sup>240</sup> In refusing the ‘once upon a time’ formula, Llansol ‘blast[ed] open the continuum of history’.<sup>241</sup>

The Llansolian *communities* are, following George Bataille, negative communities, understood as ‘la communauté de ceux qui n’ont pas de communauté’.<sup>242</sup> Llansol’s text advocates hospitality as the sole principle of writing. ‘A escrita, os animais, fazem parte dessa orla, e são tais seres excluídos pelos homens, que eu recebo. Trabalhar a dura matéria, move a língua; viver a sós atrai, pouco a pouco, os absolutamente sós.’<sup>243</sup> These absolutely lonely beings inhabit the margins; they are displaced, foreigners, or bandits,<sup>244</sup> rebelling against a fixity which subjugates them to the state apparatus. According to Maurice Blanchot, drawing on Bataille and Jean-Luc Nancy, the value of a community is to challenge the inevitability of finitude, that is, ‘rendre présent le service à autrui jusque à la mort, pour qu’autrui ne se perde pas solitairement’.<sup>245</sup> ‘To give’ or ‘to offer’ the ‘other’ a state of belonging: Silvina Rodrigues Lopes explains that ‘ser o outro do outro é a lógica nómada’<sup>246</sup> of Llansol’s writing based on the existence of a non-biblical beginning, rejecting a ‘God’ and assuming the ‘Subject’ in its place. ‘Decido, nessa altura natalícia, tirar o d de deus, e chamar eus ao que for a diferença que o prive de ser a sua vontade.’<sup>247</sup>

The fragmentation of the *community* in several ‘eus’ annuls any possibility of sameness, becoming rather inscribed through the enunciation of the mutual. Yet, the Llansolian community is not *decentred* or *acentred*,<sup>248</sup> but rather, following Blanchot, *acephalous*. Each of its members do not comprise the *community* as a whole,

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<sup>240</sup> Benjamin, p. 262.

<sup>241</sup> Benjamin, p. 262.

<sup>242</sup> Bataille cited by Maurice Blanchot, *La communauté inavouable* (Paris: Minuit, 1983), p. 45.

<sup>243</sup> *F*, p. 53.

<sup>244</sup> See Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (London: Abacus, 2004).

<sup>245</sup> Blanchot, *La communauté inavouable*, p. 24.

<sup>246</sup> Lopes, *Teoria da Des-posseção*, p. 64.

<sup>247</sup> *FP*, p. 16.

<sup>248</sup> This is ‘uma comunidade acentrada [...] [que] assenta na ligação, no mútuo, na geração’. José Augusto Mourão, *O Fulgor é Móvel – Em torno da Obra de Maria Gabriela Llansol* (Lisbon: Roma, 2003), p. 92.

mais l'incarnation violente, disparate, éclatée, impuissante, de l'ensemble d'êtres qui [...] ne forme groupe que par l'absolu de la séparation qui a besoin de s'affirmer pour se rompre jusqu'à devenir rapport, rapport paradoxal [...] s'il est rapport absolu avec d'autres absolus qui excluent tout rapport.<sup>249</sup>

In the *acephalous community* each member holds 'non plus la seule responsabilité du groupe mais l'existence de l'humanité intégrale'.<sup>250</sup> *Acephalous* is the experience of a community that can exist through movement: withdrawal, exile, nomadism, rejecting 'la mesure et le pouvoir'.<sup>251</sup> This rejection, Blanchot explains, is 'délibéré et souverain', it performs an act of unchaining the community from power: 'La décapitation qui devait rendre possible "le déchaînement sans fin [sans loi] des passions", ne pouvait s'accomplir que par des passions déjà déchaînées.'<sup>252</sup>

Müntzer's decapitation is, then, crucial. It could be associated with the death of a father figure, or a regression to a womb-like condition, birth or origin, as Silvina Rodrigues Lopes suggests. However, 'aquilo que aproxima Müntzer de Nietzsche e São João da Cruz é a ideia de comunidades fraternas, as dos que não temem perder, e por isso não são reactivas, não assentam no domínio e suas consequências, a posse, a acumulação, o reforço do mesmo.'<sup>253</sup> The Llansolian fraternal *communities* are based on the dispersion, the transhumance of rebels.

*Transhumance* is another concept used by Llansol to describe the movement of the *communities*.<sup>254</sup> *Transhumance* means they are not bound to fixity, but compelled to move towards fertile lands where they can connect and communicate (a word which, obviously, echoes *community*). First, 'connection' is sustained through love or affection, so that Blanchot calls it 'la communauté des amants' who share the *poetic gift*.<sup>255</sup> Llansol explains that the *community* evokes proximity amongst the beings, 'uma sensação de calor difundindo-se, um reconhecimento que se anuncia, um outro que vem brincar contigo, o abrir-se que tu dás a esse jogo, o envolver crescente que nos chama ter corpo'.<sup>256</sup> This is the game played by the *poetic gift*, a game of affection and bestowal amongst the *figures*, but also between author and

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<sup>249</sup> Blanchot, *La communauté invouable*, p. 28.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29 (emphasis mine).

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid*, p. 31.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32.

<sup>253</sup> Silvina Rodrigues Lopes, 'A Comunidade Sem Regra', in *Exercícios de Aproximação* (Lisbon: Vendaval, 2003), pp. 201-235 (p. 232).

<sup>254</sup> See *SS*, p. 70 or *CA*, p. 164.

<sup>255</sup> Blanchot, *La communauté invouable*, pp. 51-93.

<sup>256</sup> Llansol, 'O Espaço Edénico', in *CJA*, pp. 141-168 (p. 147).

*lectant*, establishing yet *another* community, that of reading and writing. Anne Dufourmantelle describes this community as *displaced* because it is based in a *place* which originally belongs to ‘neither host or guest, but to the *gesture* by which one of them welcomes the other’.<sup>257</sup>

Secondly, the notion of *communication* involves both language and exile. As Jacques Derrida points out, ‘displaced persons, exiles, those who are deported, expelled, rootless, nomads, all share [...] two nostalgias: their dead ones and their languages’.<sup>258</sup> On the *one* hand, these nomads want somehow to return to ‘the places where their buried dead have their last resting place [...], that is the place of immobility from which to measure all the journeys and all the distancings’.<sup>259</sup> They want to be rooted in a permanent place of belonging – *oikos*. On the *other* hand, Derrida continues, these nomadic people often ‘recognize the language [...] as their ultimate homeland, and even their last resting place’. All ‘the wandering Jews’ carry their language as a native land:<sup>260</sup> ‘Language resists all mobilities because it moves about with me. It is the least immovable thing, the most mobile of personal bodies.’<sup>261</sup> Although Derrida mentions the relevance of the mother tongue, the Llansolian text no longer refers to idiom, but to *ethos*, a shared book, or as George Steiner puts it, ‘our homeland, the text’.<sup>262</sup>

The permanent state of exile of the Jew as an ‘ontological foreignness’,<sup>263</sup> can only be explained by the existence of a book, the Torah, which embraces an ‘unhoused at-homeness in the text, between the dwelling-place of the script on the one hand’, and the mystery of the promised land, on the other.<sup>264</sup> Obviously, I do not mean that *O Livro das Comunidades* shares any likeness to a canonical religious text such as the Torah.<sup>265</sup> Yet I *do* want to underline how the Llansolian *communities*

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<sup>257</sup> Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality, Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*, trans. by Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 62 (emphasis mine).

<sup>258</sup> Jacques Derrida, ‘Step of Hospitality’, in *Of Hospitality*, pp. 75-155 (p. 87).

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid*, p. 87.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid*, p. 89.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91.

<sup>262</sup> George Steiner, ‘Our Homeland, The Text’, in *No Passion Spent: Essays 1978-1996* (London, Boston: Faber and Faber, 1996), pp. 304-327.

<sup>263</sup> Hegel, cited by Steiner, ‘Our Homeland, The Text’, p. 307.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid*, p. 305.

<sup>265</sup> The influences of Hebraic texts in Llansol’s *oeuvre* are beyond the scope of this thesis. It is important to underline, however, that both Hebraic and Catholic religious texts are relevant in Llansol. For instance, the concept *ruah* in *Parasceve* (2001), or the word *parasceve* itself. *Ruah* [*rūah*] denotes in a primary instance ‘empty “air”’, or ‘air in motion or “wind”’, and ‘it came to mean “breathing” as a sign of life and hence “spirit” and “life”’. *The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. by G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, vol. 22 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

show a similar dichotomous condition of foreignness and at-homeness, displacement and rootedness.

The Llansolian literary project is sustained by a book, or a *community* of books, supported by the development of concepts, superimpositions of texts, and the transhumance of *figures*. Exile and fixity can only exist in relation to an ulterior concept of language without impostures, freed from political-ideological constraints, a language that is re-enacted *every time* it is read by a *lectant*. 'The text is home; each commentary a return.'<sup>266</sup> Therefore, in Steiner's words, the *community* is defined 'as a concentric tradition of reading'.<sup>267</sup> Jews establish a cohesive community based on a *single book* which establishes their destiny, affirming the diaspora as a necessity. This community has 'read, reread without cease, learnt by heart or by rote, and expounded without end the texts which spell out its whole destiny. These texts, moreover, are felt to be of transcendent authorship and authority'<sup>268</sup> – they are oracular, a collective offering of affection that generates the *poetic gift*.

In this sense, the Llansolian *community* is inexorably nomadic, and the movement of the rebels coincides with *nomadology* as the 'war machine', prescribed by Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>269</sup> The 'war machine' is not related to the state apparatus: it seems to be 'outside its sovereignty and prior to its law'.<sup>270</sup> Steiner states that 'nation-states live by the sword'.<sup>271</sup> As such, the 'war machine' relies on banditry to perform its anonymous, collective force of derritorialization – a movement *within* the same territory challenging the notion of territory in itself.<sup>272</sup> Deleuze and Guattari posit that, since its primary creation, the State always implied a conservation of power.<sup>273</sup> This perspective reinforces the definition of bands or nomads as outlaws, and as 'rudimentary, less organized, social form[s]'.<sup>274</sup> These are the soul figures of the 'war

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1974), pp. 365-402 (p. 368). In Llansol, *ruah* is origin, breath of life that does not come from a body or from God, but from a *living*, a *figure*. Llansol creates the child-*ruah*: s/he is origin, the Messiah, not in the sense of Jesus, or the One longed for, in Judaism, but as the deliverer of the message. To Llansol, *ruah* is 'a parte mais íntima e activa do som. [...] Somos suas causas longínquas, sem que ela seja, no entanto, nosso efeito.' *P*, p. 177. *Parasceve* is the 'preliminary ritual' or the preparations before the Sabbath, the novel in which, precisely, the child-*ruah* is the main *figure*. See *New Advent*, <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11476a.htm>> [accessed on 2 March 2009].

<sup>266</sup> Steiner, 'Our Homeland, The Text', p. 307.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid*, p. 307.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid*, p. 312.

<sup>269</sup> See Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 387-467.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid*, p. 388.

<sup>271</sup> Steiner, 'Our Homeland, The Text', p. 326.

<sup>272</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 392 and p. 390.

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid*, p. 394.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid*, p. 395.

machine'. These bands of the marginalized, deportees, or pirates proclaim the emergence of a stateless society, affirming a *community* which dismantles notions of fixity, power structure, princely authority, or father figure. These former instances perpetuate names, identities, families, genealogy, and history, conditions of belonging which define territories and nationalities. The 'war machine' is therefore displaced, creating an 'anti-community'<sup>275</sup> that counters the prescribed notion of community itself.

The state apparatus attempts to incorporate the *community*, transforming it into its form of sustenance (note how the *communities* are, today, the kernel of political speeches). Contrarily, the 'war machine' is propelled by a group of 'ambushed' (Ernst Jünger's description of those who do not conform with the majority),<sup>276</sup> 'primitive rebels', in Hobsbawm's words, a man who 'becomes a bandit because he does something which is not regarded as criminal by his local conventions, but is so regarded by the State or the local rulers'.<sup>277</sup>

There is, then, no coincidence between these notions of *community* or *nomadology*, and the fact that the last important *figure* of the Llansolian text, *A. Nómada*, is enunciated in the penultimate book *Amigo e Amiga* (2006): 'A., a primeira letra, e depois Nómada, a sua essência, como a do próprio texto nómada de Llansol.'<sup>278</sup> After the increasingly anonymous *figures* from *Parasceve* (2001), although still unnamed, *A. Nómada* appears as a *man* in counterpoint to a *woman*, whose fragmented texts 'contêm a maior experiência de dor de uma mulher resistente'.<sup>279</sup> In spite of the biographical premise of *Amigo e Amiga* (the death of Llansol's husband), and the fact that the book enacts, as its subtitle indicates, a *course of silence* (a 'travessia dolorosa e decidida das trevas para a luz'),<sup>280</sup> it is essential to consider how the *figure* of *A. Nómada* is a *concept* in itself. Indeed, *A. Nómada* ultimately affirms the future of all Llansolian *figures* as both *A.* (primordial letter, of the beginning, and yet of 'eternal return of the mutual') and *Nómada*

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<sup>275</sup> Irving Goh, 'The Question of Community in Deleuze and Guattari (1): Anti-Community', *Symploke*, 14.1-2 (2006), 216-231.

<sup>276</sup> See Ernst Jünger, 'The Retreat into the Forest', *Confluences*, 3 (June, 1954), 127-142.

<sup>277</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels – Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1974), p. 15.

<sup>278</sup> João Barrento, 'O Livro das Transparências – Quase uma Paráfrase', in *O Livro das Transparências, Leituras de Amigo e Amiga. Curso de Silêncio 2004*, ed. by Hélia Correia, João Barrento, Maria de Lourdes Soares and Pedro Eiras (Colares: Espaço Llansol, 2007), pp. 13-35 (p. 22).

<sup>279</sup> *AA*, p. 35.

<sup>280</sup> Barrento, 'O Livro das Transparências', p. 17.



(diasporic exiles sustaining nomadology as the ‘war machine’ against the state apparatus). As João Barrento points out, in *Amigo e Amiga*, ‘a experiência da morte é aqui a experiência de um (re)nascimento. O homem que emerge do “mistério do desaparecimento” nasce, nasce para o texto e para a forma própria de eternidade’.<sup>281</sup>

The rebels leave for exile, and *A Restante Vida* (1983) will become the book of the nomads. The *figures* go undercover in history to fight the Princes, helped by a community of beguines led by Hadewijch of Anvers, who appears in this book in the bodily form of Ana de Peñalosa. Historically, Hadewijch was a thirteenth-century Dutch mystic beguine whose poetry proposed ‘a hard doctrine of suffering and being rejected by people on earth as the only place where union [with God] is possible’.<sup>282</sup> If the presence of mystics in Llansol could be interpreted as a consequence of the necessity of dispossession in relation to God, the *figure* of Hadewijch should be read as such, and yet, her importance can only be grasped through her condition as a woman poet in the Middle Ages. The writings of the mystic beguines in Germany and the Netherlands ‘avoided definitions of femininity and masculinity and embraced instead the notion of a genderless humanity’, arguing for a community of beings without gender, and therefore without social structures upon them.<sup>283</sup> As theological hermaphrodites<sup>284</sup> – not in the sense that they comprised *both* genders, but since they had *none* – these women poets were attracted to a ‘life [that] sought evangelical poverty, self-sufficiency, and a flexible vocation which included active charity’.<sup>285</sup> As Roberta Gilchrist points out, the medieval Dutch beguinages ‘aimed to be the antithesis of formal nunneries, which remained situated in rural contexts and served the needs of the traditional upper classes’,<sup>286</sup> thus, rebelling against a system which sustained society’s dependencies, safeguarding a relationship with God that could no longer be corrupted by the powerful.

The beguines are important in Llansol, because they are the moral and logistic support of the *community*: their desire for a metamorphosis of the language

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<sup>281</sup> *Ibid*, p. 22.

<sup>282</sup> Sashia Murk-Jansen, *Brides in the Desert: The Spirituality of the Beguines* (London: Darton, Longman & Tod, 1998), p. 70.

<sup>283</sup> Ulrike Wiethaus, ‘Sexuality, Gender, and the Body in Late Medieval Women’s Spirituality – Case from Germany and the Netherlands’, *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 7.1 (1991), 35-52 (p. 51).

<sup>284</sup> In Chapters Three and Four, the *figure* of the hermaphrodite in Llansol will be discussed, namely in relation to *Contos do Mal Errante*.

<sup>285</sup> Roberta Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture: The Archaeology of Religious Women* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 171.

<sup>286</sup> Gilchrist, p. 171.

to attain a perfect unison with God, and their simultaneous oaths of poverty, dispossession and chastity sustain the needs and future hopes of the *community* of rebels. The beguines are not only in charge of the *space* of the house (the beguinage), but they are also bearers of *time*. In Llansol, *time* is inexorably linked with *space*, yet, despite their mutual relation, they are very much independent, since they do not establish any sort of correlation to the *common*: ‘Somando o tempo, que tempo, que tempo restava, o que era o tempo? [...] Que verbo lhe estava destinado?’<sup>287</sup> *Writing* accounts for that incompatible, and almost impossible, simultaneity of future *and* beginning, a future of endless beginnings, and eternal recurrence.

Exile *deforms* the (European) map where these *figures* are based: at first, the text moves from Frankenhäusen to the womb-like protective beguinage. Llansol thus *superimposes* several landscapes. If in Europe all roads lead to Rome, in the Llansolian text, all roads/rivers/landscapes lead to the Atlantic. When the *figures* are lost in the maze of the white landscapes of Northern Europe, the text promptly metamorphoses space in order to *fold* time, so that, all of a sudden, ‘o jardim afigurava-se-lhe uma península ocupada por um grande deserto’.<sup>288</sup>

Somos o fruto de uma experiência de exílio, e temos uma língua e uma liberdade próprias. Praticámo-la durante infínitos anos numa casa aberta e fechada. Com todos os espíritos nos deslocámos. / Nesse país já descortino a ausência de fronteiras e terrenos vagos.<sup>289</sup>

Despite the journeys, we are always *in the same* place. The *figures* finally reach a country without borders, vast and ungraspable landscapes. The *community* is fortunate to have found such indomitable space, whose immensity prevents anybody from controlling it (prince, clergy, bourgeois or politician). *No one* can limit this landscape; it is free from power and oppression. They have finally reached the *edenic space*.

### **Uchronia, Utopia, Eutopia – Humanism**

João Barrento takes the *Geography of the Rebels* as the departure point for the question of *time* and *history* in Llansol’s works. He underlines the resistance shown in this text to being reduced to history’s *continuum*, blasting open time’s linearity in

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<sup>287</sup> *RV*, p. 87.

<sup>288</sup> *RV*, p. 61.

<sup>289</sup> *RV*, p. 68.

order to stress how ‘*todos os tempos se equivalem*’.<sup>290</sup> This premise generates the *energy* necessary to transform the text in a reflection upon conceptual structures like *space* or *time*.

Thus far, the *edenic space* may appear to be related to the notion of *utopia*, or a utopian vision of Europe as a space liberated from power. Nevertheless, Barrento accurately recalls that the Llansolian text questions not only *time*, but also, simultaneously, *space*, thus making the expression ‘utopian place’ an entrapped paradox. Barrento therefore replaces *utopia* with *uchronia*, ‘aquele lugar que, por sê-lo verdadeiramente, ainda não viu chegado o seu tempo. O texto llansoliano será ucrónico e não utópico [...], porque ele é lugar de “lugares”’.<sup>291</sup>

If *utopia* is a non-place (*ou-non*; *topos*-place), *uchronia* is, syllogistically, a non-time (*ou-chronos*). As such, the Llansolian text is a timeless space rather than a spaceless time. The Llansolian project seems to be founded on the idea of destruction – of space and time, history and its linearity, and therefore of canonicity and tradition. And yet, through the concept of *pruning* (‘decepação’), enunciated in *Parasceve*, the idea of destruction comes with the possibility of regeneration. *Pruning* explains Llansol’s relation to *memory*: when a tree branch is pruned, this does not represent death – a new branch will blossom with extra strength, energy and *fulgor*. This occurs in the text – a sentence is cut off and interrupted in order to generate meaning.

The Llansolian text does not imply a notion of destruction, but of *pruning*. It seeks to reiterate a condition of happiness, jubilation, and pleasure (*eu-topia*), not only for the *figures* (in the text), but also for the *lectant*, who re-enacts its existence by actively reading it. Llansol’s *utopia/uchronia* is ‘de natureza eudemonista e de intenção apocatástica (não apocalíptica)’.<sup>292</sup> *Eudemonism* is an ethical system according to which the goal of existence is to attain happiness (*eu-good*; *topos*-place); whilst *apocatastasis* means ‘reconstituição, regresso, repetição: o que vem depois do fim abrupto, do corte, de uma sequência’.<sup>293</sup>

Barrento’s *uchronia* echoes Elisabeth Wesseling’s application of this concept to postmodern writing. Coined by Charles Renouvier in 1876, *uchronia* is used by

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<sup>290</sup> *RV*, p. 72.

<sup>291</sup> João Barrento, *A Voz dos Tempos e o Silêncio do Tempo – O Projecto Inacabado da História em O Livro das Comunidades* (Sintra: GELL, 2005), p. 5.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid*, p. 7.

some scholars ‘to express the difference between an ideal society which is situated in a nonexistent place (utopia) and the type of utopian fantasy which is projected forward into the future (Uchronie)’.<sup>294</sup> Wesseling associates *uchronia* with science fiction, and notwithstanding Llansol’s rejection of this connection,<sup>295</sup> Wesseling’s definition of *uchronian* literature corresponds to some aspects of the Llansolian text:

Uchronian fantasy locates utopia in history, by imagining an apocryphal course of events, which clearly did not really take place, but which might have taken place. [...] Alternate histories can be unfolded from different perspectives within the context of a novel. A uchronian fiction may be set in the past, where it shows alternate history in the making. It may also be a set in a vaguely defined present or future whose shape has been determined by an alternate course of historical events.<sup>296</sup>

Barrento, however, would probably take issue with this citation on one specific point: the Llansolian text is not about the ‘what-could-have-been’ of history, ‘(essa é a visão da História de outros, [...] como Saramago), mas daquilo que nele é e um dia será fora dele’.<sup>297</sup> The movement of the *figures* towards exile is a search for a ‘lugar do tempo fora do tempo (da história), lugar do futuro e lugar de futuro’.<sup>298</sup> In the *uchronian* sense, the Llansolian text lies on Thomas More’s island *Utopia*, no longer perceived as a *place* in itself, but in a *state* or a *condition of interbeing*, midway between what it could *have been* and what it could *become*. ‘A ilha existe, / mas, / é um simples estado do Universo, entre relações.’<sup>299</sup>

#### CONCLUSION – A DEFINITION OF THE *EDENIC SPACE*

To Krishan Kumar, utopias are essentially ‘subversive’ since they sustain a ‘critical commentary on the arrangements of society’, and therefore lead only to violence.<sup>300</sup> Karl Mannheim goes further, stating how utopias act contrarily to ‘ideology’ and against the maintenance of the ‘conservative dominant values’ in society: ‘L’utopie serait-elle l’un des moteurs du mouvement historique, “le matériel explosif” aux mains de “couches sociales définies luttant pour la suprématie”. Des “chimères qui

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<sup>294</sup> Elisabeth Wesseling, *Writing History as a Prophet – Postmodernist Innovations of the Historical Novel* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1991), p. 101.

<sup>295</sup> Llansol explains how she does not want to be associated with the fantastic, the historic novel or science fiction (interestingly, the three categories Wesseling dwells on her book). See *OVDP*, p. 207.

<sup>296</sup> Wesseling, p. 102.

<sup>297</sup> Barrento, ‘Herbário de Faces’, p. 174.

<sup>298</sup> Barrento, *A Voz dos Tempos*, p. 5.

<sup>299</sup> *SS*, p. 85.

<sup>300</sup> Krishan Kumar, *Utopianism* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991), p. 88 and p. 90.

prennent une fonction révolutionnaire”.<sup>301</sup> Barrento affirms that Llansol created an ethical and aesthetical project sustained, following Ernst Bloch, by a revolutionary project.<sup>302</sup> Yet, in both Bloch and Llansol, ‘revolution’ is not related to a ‘superestrutura’, as Marx would have it. Instead it is ‘descentrad[a] em relação aos seus usos mais abstractos e à sua instrumentalização política’, rooted, then, in a field ‘muito mais amplo e aberto do que o social ou histórico, como “inventário do que ainda não é, mas pode vir a ser”’.<sup>303</sup> This ‘not-yet’ of utopia (its possibilitarian condition, as Musil puts it)<sup>304</sup> lies in the dormant character of literature as revolution. Since its revolutionary nature is still not verified, it cannot be totally related to historicism, and yet, it contains a ‘latência emancipatória do espírito de uma utopia que, parecendo trans-histórica, tem uma intensa concreticidade’.<sup>305</sup> This ‘utopia’ seeks, ultimately, to ‘mudar o mundo até ele se tornar reconhecível’.<sup>306</sup>

Given the contradiction of this text as revolutionary *because* it is historic, and, at the same time, *detached* from historicism’s linearity, Barrento stresses yet another contradiction in Llansol, which I would like to develop. Because the Llansolian text is based on *eudemonism* (happiness) and *apocatastasis* (returns), one might be deceived into thinking that there is ‘alguma nova forma de credo humanista, depois de todos os descréditos do humanismo’.<sup>307</sup> Barrento thus rejects the existence of a humanism in Llansol:

A haver aqui um ‘humanismo’ ele não corresponde a nenhuma crença apriorística numa essência do homem e do humano, mas antes a uma esperança no vivo, no que é singular, no que está a acontecer e em devir. [...] Nenhuma ‘ideia’ do homem ilumina a Comunidade. E o humano que não se cumpriu, não se cumprirá à luz de nenhum programa derivado dos habituais sistemas.<sup>308</sup>

I stated above that the Llansolian text attempts to answer the question ‘Como continuar o humano?’.<sup>309</sup> If one replaces *narrativity* with *textuality*; characters with *figures*; historic linear time with gaps and jumps; ‘once upon a time’ stories with the ‘eternal return of the mutual’; then, in response to this question, one is conceiving a

<sup>301</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Idéologie et utopie*, p. 135, p. 149 and p. 126, cited in Frédéric Rouvillois, *L’utopie* (Flammarion: Paris, 1998), p. 13.

<sup>302</sup> Barrento, *A Voz dos Tempos*, p. 15. Barrento is citing Ernst Bloch, *Geist der Utopie*.

<sup>303</sup> Barrento, *A Voz dos Tempos*, p. 15.

<sup>304</sup> See Chapter Two for a reading of Bloch, Musil and Llansol and the idea of utopia.

<sup>305</sup> Barrento, *A Voz dos Tempos*, p. 15.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16 (emphasis mine).

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid*, p. 11.

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid*, p. 11.

<sup>309</sup> Llansol, ‘Para Que o Romance Não Morra’, p. 120.

different notion of humanism altogether. Indeed, the Llansolian text ultimately revolutionizes the notion of the human itself. Barrento states that there is no ‘idea’ of/for the human in this text. And yet, Llansol explains how the *poor man* is the archetypal *figure* of her project: ‘O pobre é imagem da parte perdida da batalha, imagem que neste texto é Figura, ou seja, resto e arquétipo.’<sup>310</sup> Although some of the *figures* voice a Marxist style manifesto – ‘Pobres escreveu ele revoltai-vos’<sup>311</sup> –, for Llansol, the *poor man* is not the proletarian. Contrarily, he is the only *figure* who allows us (humans) to overcome the Prince, the embodiment of oppression. This concept is not related to gender – it could be a *poor woman* – but rather with the idea of dispossession: ‘Desmunir-se é a regra do abrir.’<sup>312</sup> The ideological disarmament of the *poor man* is the only way to rebellion, even when the only weapon is hope: ‘É verdadeiramente digno e justo, razoável e salutar, revoltarmo-nos, fugirmos, destruímos este Campo com esperança.’<sup>313</sup>

The *poor man* is a ‘cara expatriada’,<sup>314</sup> ‘alienada’,<sup>315</sup> attempting to answer the question posed by one of Llansol’s (embryonic) *figures* in the short story ‘Os Pregos na Erva’, the Jewish girl, Raquel: ‘Mataram a galinha à pedrada por pertencer a uma judia. Sabes o que são estigmas? [...] Nós temos estigmas. [...] Qualquer dia as pedras acertam nos próprios judeus. Não compreendo por que matam.’<sup>316</sup> This is Llansol’s first sign of rebellion against the powers which impose social, racial, sexual, religious or linguistic stigmas, marks of shame on someone’s body. Perhaps only by enduring such stigmas can the *figure* escape the social order that suffocated him/her, walk a different road and join the rest of the stigmatized.

The Llansolian text is only concerned with the vibration of the blood, the *fulgor* which metamorphoses the human into a *figure*. When this mutation finally occurs, ‘o homem será. E será no espaço edénico’.<sup>317</sup> Indeed, s/he will *be*, human, but not as we understand humanity, rather as a human dispossessed, unattached to a tradition, *pruned*, thereby existing *beyond* a social space.

I believe that the Llansolian text is supported by an idea of *humanism*. In this *edenic space*, the (wo)man will be, but s/he will be in a ‘forma de comunicação

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<sup>310</sup> *RV*, p. 99.

<sup>311</sup> Llansol, ‘Um Texto Decadente’, in *DPE*, pp. 79-175 (p. 143).

<sup>312</sup> *RV*, p. 101.

<sup>313</sup> Llansol, ‘Um Texto Decadente’, p. 117.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid*, p. 101.

<sup>315</sup> *RV*, p. 99.

<sup>316</sup> Llansol, ‘Os Pregos na Erva’, in *PE*, pp. 25-33 (pp. 28-29).

<sup>317</sup> Llansol, ‘Espaço Edénico’, in *CJA*, pp. 141-168 (p. 166).

fulgurante e generalizada entre todos os intervenientes ou figuras, sem nenhum privilégio para os humanos'.<sup>318</sup> This is the humanism of the *living*. The human, supported by the *fulgor* of the encounter, is nothing but a 'vivo no meio do vivo'.<sup>319</sup> A (wo)man will be, but s/he will no longer be (wo)man, but *living*.

To conclude, it is essential to define the *edenic space* in Llansol's words:

Se conseguires imaginar um espaço edénico, que *não esteja na origem* do universo, como diz o mito; que seja criado no *meio da coisa*, como um duplo feito de novo e de desordem; que sempre existiu e não só no princípio dos tempos; que está correndo o *risco de desaparecer* aqui e a *novidade de aparecer* além, incógnito e irreconhecível; que *não é fixo*, como sugere a tradição, mas elaborável segundo o *desejo criador* do homem, compreenderás o que entendo por espaço edénico.<sup>320</sup>

The highlights in italics stress the parallels between what I have stated about the Llansolian text, and Llansol's definition of *edenic space*: it is not at the origin, but in the *interbeing*; it holds the seed of apocalyptic catastrophe, and yet it is always regeneration; finally, it refuses fixity as a 'war machine', being rather based in *energeia*, creativity and *poetic gift*.

Perhaps this fragment should have been cited before, but I purposely postponed a definition of the *edenic space*, to avoid canonizing it in this Introduction. Through expressions like 'paradigm shift' or timeless and spaceless 'utopia', and in using some of the concepts that compose the *edenic space*, I was trying to refrain from naming this cartography of references *in the light of* Llansol.

Llansol expresses a contradictory reason for the choice of the word *edenic*: 'Até hoje não encontrei termo mais adequado, apesar de ao chamá-lo assim, me ver obrigada a desconstruir uma tradição religiosa.'<sup>321</sup> The word *edenic*, in Llansol, has no connection to a Paradise motif or to the garden of Eden, as enunciated in *Genesis*. She does not prescribe a reading of the *Genesis* from a point of view, understood as a literary re-enactment of the story of Adam and Eve, or, in the words of Carolyn Merchant, a 'reinvention' of Eden from a woman's perspective.<sup>322</sup> Contrarily, 'o ciclo

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<sup>318</sup> *Ibid*, p. 141.

<sup>319</sup> Llansol, 'Para Que o Romance Não Morra', p. 120.

<sup>320</sup> Llansol, 'O Espaço Edénico', p. 146 (emphasis mine).

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid*, p. 146 (emphasis mine).

<sup>322</sup> See Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden – The Fate of Nature in Western Culture* (New York, London: Routledge, 2004). Merchant's book is a scholarly account of the Genesis from an *ecofeminist* perspective. For further readings of the Bible in the light of feminist theory see, among others: David Rutledge, *Reading Marginally – Feminism, Deconstruction and the Bible* (Leiden, New York: E. J. Brill, 1996); Luise Schottroff, Silvia Schroer and Marie-Theres Wacker, *Feminist Interpretation, The Bible in Women's Perspective*, trans by. Martin and Barbara Rumscheidt (Minneapolis: Fortress Press,

de Adão acaba aqui. Secou a árvore do Tudo e do Nada. / Podemos voltar ao paraíso: estão cegos os querubins'.<sup>323</sup> This return to paradise is no longer a return to the original, canonical paradise of the *Bible*, but to the *edenic space* where there are no cherubim, no angels, no Adam nor Eve.

Even if Llansol admits the choice of the word *edenic* to be purely unconscious, the enunciation of such a charged word underlines her apocryphal condition as a heretic rebelling against language's *impostures*, defined and prescribed by power structures. 'Veja bem: a língua é uma impostura, tudo aquilo que estamos aqui a falar é uma impostura. Mas é possível, em algum momento, atingir a linguagem, a língua sem impostura. É isso que o meu texto quer.'<sup>324</sup> The word *edenic* is used here precisely to contest its definition in a dictionary, because definitions are prescriptions, instructions, and orders.

How does the *edenic space* correspond to Europe? The Llansolian text concurs with Steiner's premises in *The Idea of Europe*: Europe is a map of *cafés* and therefore of freedom of thought, of *poetic gift*, of intellectual discussion – like the house of Ana de Peñalosa or Hadewijch's beguinage. Europe is a cartography of history and memory: from Münster to Müntzer, we are living the legacy of Frankenhäusen. Europeans are bound together in the way we peacefully 'cross a border that our ancestors had approached armed with rifles'.<sup>325</sup> The reconciliation between Athens and Jerusalem is expressed in the fact that the 'text is homeland, even when it is rooted only in the exact remembrance and seeking a handful of wanderers, nomads of the word'.<sup>326</sup>

Finally, in the present world, the European is haunted by 'um sentimento de perigo iminente, de ténue esperança' because 'está de volta o medo, embora difuso e diverso, de uma exclusão ainda maior'.<sup>327</sup> In the future of the *edenic space*, 'chegou o momento de arrancar o homem ao aconchego do medo, de lhe dar a provar o gosto da incerteza'.<sup>328</sup> The *edenic space* stages a combat against the 'great weariness' of the

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1998); Roland Boer and Jorunn Økland (eds.), *Marxism and Feminist Criticism of the Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008).

<sup>323</sup> *F*, p. 126.

<sup>324</sup> Lúcia Castello Branco, Interview with Llansol, in 'Encontros com Escritoras Portuguesas', *Boletim do CESP*, 14.16 (July/December, 1993), 103-114 (p. 108).

<sup>325</sup> Umberto Eco, 'An Uncertain Europe Between Rebirth and Decline', in *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe*, pp. 14-20 (p. 16).

<sup>326</sup> Steiner, 'Our Homeland, the Text', p. 327.

<sup>327</sup> Maria Gabriela Llansol, 'Está de Volta o Medo', *Jornal de Letras, Artes e Ideias*, 28 September 1994, pp. 24-26 (p. 24).

<sup>328</sup> Llansol, 'Está de Volta o Medo', p. 25.



European, outlined by Husserl: either Europe will fall 'in its estrangement from its own rational sense of life' or 'into hostility towards the spirit and into barbarity', or, contrarily, it will be reborn 'from the spirit of philosophy through a heroism of reason that overcomes naturalism once and for all'.<sup>329</sup> Reasoning, philosophy, questioning – this is the *core Europe*, not, as Habermas and Derrida suggest, Germany, France and Benelux.

With the collapse of Marxism into barbaric tyranny and economic nullity, a great dream, that, as Trotsky proclaimed, of common man following in the wake of Aristotle and Goethe, went lost. Free of a bankrupt ideology, it can, it must be dreamt again.<sup>330</sup>

The Llansolian project is not the solution to mankind, yet the *edenic space* follows that same 'dream' as a possibility for Europeans to have access to a space for their creativity, for their freedom of thought, a space unlimited by ideologies, politics, banks, currencies, languages, media, or even history. In the Llansolian world, Europe would not be a map of *cafés*, but a map of Europeans (*lectants*) who are trying to imagine and build their own *edenic space*.

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<sup>329</sup> Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. by D. Carr (Evanston, 1970), p. 299.

<sup>330</sup> Steiner, *The Idea of Europe*, p. 35.

### PART III

#### MODERNISM, POSTMODERNISM, POSTCOLONIALISM AND POSTNATIONALISM – TOWARDS A PARADIGM FOR THE LLANSOLIAN TEXT

In concluding this Introduction, I briefly propose an overview of the theoretical paradigms that might (or might not) contribute to an understanding of the Llansolian text. In my opinion, these paradigms concur with this text because it challenges previously established notions of reading, as we have seen, by essentially dislocating the paradigm of *narrativity* to the emergence of a *textuality*.

First, the Llansolian text could be considered an ode to *modernism*, clearly reflected in the many *figures* who are metamorphoses of *modernist* writers – Pessoa, Musil, and Rilke, for example.<sup>331</sup> Llansol does not deny the relevance of authors such as Joyce, Woolf or Kafka, although they are not transformed into *figures* in her text. Evidently, the presence of Sufi mystics, San Juan de la Cruz, Hadewijch (medieval), Hölderlin (romantic), Emily Dickinson or Rimbaud (early-modernists), combined with the philosophical legacy of Spinoza, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, can only inform the Llansolian text as an *appropriation of literary references* which resonate with the *modernist* method. (1) The Llansolian text establishes clear literary appropriations of other texts, not in the sense of *influences*, but, as Goethe would have it, ‘elective affinities’.<sup>332</sup> (2) These ‘appropriated’ authors could be seen as literary ‘father’ *figures* of Llansol, like Pessoa and García Lorca’s homage’s to Walt Whitman.<sup>333</sup> (3) These texts are incorporated by Llansol in a way that resembles the Brazilian ‘Manifesto Antropófago’,<sup>334</sup> cannibalizing other writings only to ‘vomit’ them up later. This text ‘regurgita de “nascimentos” e “mutantes”: o porco que come F. Nietzsche ou vomita textos, o Urso, o peixe que vira Suso’.<sup>335</sup> (4) The Llansolian text places itself in an a-historic framework producing an anti-memory in order to face the anxiety of a collapsing humanism. In Yeats’s words, when ‘things fall apart;

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<sup>331</sup> The influence of modernist (or pre-modernist) writers on the Llansolian text might explain why Llansol has translated into Portuguese poetry by Verlaine, Rimbaud, Éluard or Rilke.

<sup>332</sup> See Walter Benjamin, ‘Goethe’s Elective Affinities’, in *Selected Writings, 1913-1926*, vol. 1, ed. by Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1997), pp. 297-360.

<sup>333</sup> See Fernando Pessoa, *Saudação a Walt Whitman*, in *Obras Completas de Fernando Pessoa: Poesias de Álvaro de Campos* (Lisbon: Ática, 1964), pp. 202-212; Federico García Lorca, *Oda a Walt Whitman*, in *Poeta en Nueva York* (Madrid: Catedra, 1987), pp. 219-224

<sup>334</sup> Oswald Andrade, ‘Manifesto Antropófago’, *Revista de Antropofagia*, 1 (1928), 3-7.

<sup>335</sup> Mourão, *O Fulgor é Móvel*, p. 91.

the centre cannot hold; / [and] mere anarchy is loosed upon the world'.<sup>336</sup> The Llansolian human (a future-hybrid-poor) is the new 'European Hamlet',<sup>337</sup> as Valéry would have it: bowing under the weight of history, he attempts to project history towards the future, so that 'nenhuma vida poderá jamais ser perdida'.<sup>338</sup>

For Llansol, 'poetry is survival',<sup>339</sup> and literature is the necessary tool to fight an anxiety of influence.<sup>340</sup> Through recycling, *bricolage*, collecting waste, writing becomes a *wunderkammer* of knowledge that might shed light on the future. And yet, these characteristics are also essentially postmodernist. Linda Hutcheon suggests that, contrary to modernism, postmodernism 'is not a nostalgic return; it is a *critical revisiting*, an ironic dialogue with the past.'<sup>341</sup> Following Frederic Jameson, Henri Lefèbvre, and Charles Russell, Hutcheon argues that postmodernism is a 'cultural dominant' paradigm arising from a late capitalist 'dissolution of bourgeois hegemony and the development of mass culture'.<sup>342</sup> Late capitalism is one of the 'totalizing forces that postmodernism exists to challenge, [...] but not deny. [...] It does seek to assert difference, not homogeneous identity.'<sup>343</sup> In this sense, the Llansolian text could be considered *postmodernist*, since it assumes *difference* in opposition to *otherness*, like *textuality* facing *narrativity*. Although Llansol pays homage to literary fathers, simultaneously, she refuses a 'master narrative'.<sup>344</sup> Thus, her text rethinks history as a totalizing paradigm, through the shattering of space-time frames.

Consensus on whether postmodernism is a paradigm in itself or a continuation of modernism is hard to find amongst critics. Even if it is questionable that 'there has been a wholesale paradigm shift of the cultural, social, and economic orders', there is, in fact, 'a noticeable shift in sensibility, practices, and discourse

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<sup>336</sup> W. B. Yeats, 'The Second Coming', in *The Collected Poems*, ed. by Richard Finneran (New York: Scribner, 1996), p. 187.

<sup>337</sup> Paul Valéry, 'The Intellectual Crisis', in *Selected Writings* (New York: New Directions, 1964), pp. 117-118.

<sup>338</sup> *RV*, p. 102.

<sup>339</sup> Paul Valéry, 'Poetry is a Survival', in *Selected Writings*, p. 149.

<sup>340</sup> See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: a Theory of Poetry* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).

<sup>341</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (New York and London: Routledge, [1988] 2005), p. 4.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6.

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6.

<sup>344</sup> Jean François Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1979).

formations which distinguishes a postmodern set of assumptions [...] from that of a preceding period'.<sup>345</sup>

Maria Alzira Seixo places Llansol in the context of Portuguese postmodern writing, 'because of the shock to textual understanding that is the effect of her writings, which start from a disunion of narrative elements and end with the same disunity that no poetic force intends to couple'.<sup>346</sup> Seixo does not refrain from stressing how Portuguese writers and critics refused to acknowledge the existence of postmodernism, showing a 'negative attitude towards' the concept, an attitude which 'denies, assails, or quite simply ignores possible aspects of postmodernism in Portuguese culture'.<sup>347</sup> Postmodernism's 'late arrival' to Portugal, due to the country's political situation, justifies this behaviour. In my view, the limited impact of postmodernism in Portugal resembles many Portuguese women writers' refusal to be labelled as 'feminist'. Seixo explains that this is 'understandable in a culture that not so long ago was not yet allowed the freedom to organize itself and to determine its own destiny'.<sup>348</sup>

Theo D'Haen stresses how, from the 1980s, some scholars resisted an indiscriminate use of *postmodernism* by stating how this paradigm, even if it appears as a critique of totalizing tendencies, was dominated by Eurocentric visions. As Kumkum Sangari suggests, postmodernism is 'carried everywhere as cultural paraphernalia and epistemological apparatus, as a way of seeing; and the postmodern problematic becomes *the* frame through which the cultural products of the rest of the world are seen'.<sup>349</sup> If postmodernism embodies a crisis of Western thinking, as a 'deconstruction of the legacy of Enlightenment', as Hans Bertens suggests,<sup>350</sup> D'Haen resets the historic framing of the paradigm by relating postmodern literature to the emergence of an American 'national narrative', in the 1950s and 1960s (a post-war context related to America's prosperity), constituting a challenge to the European

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<sup>345</sup> Andreas Huyssen cited in Joseph P. Natoli and Linda Hutcheon, 'Preface: Modern/Postmodern', in *The Postmodern Reader*, ed. by Joseph P. Natoli and Linda Hutcheon (New York: SUNY Press, 1993), pp. 1-8 (p. 1).

<sup>346</sup> Maria Alzira Seixo, 'Postmodernism in Portugal', in *International Postmodernism – Theory and Literary Practice*, ed. by Hans Bertens and Douwe Foukema (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997), pp. 405-410 (p. 409).

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 407.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 410.

<sup>349</sup> Kumkum Sangari cited in D'Haen, 'Post-Colonial Literature and Postmodern Literary Historiography', *Neohelicon*, 26.2 (December 1999) 19-29 (p. 23).

<sup>350</sup> Hans Bertens cited in D'Haen, 'Post-Colonial Literature and Postmodern Literary Historiography', p. 23.

literary canon of modernity.<sup>351</sup> D'Haen eloquently explains how outside America, other 'regional narratives,' such as the French *nouveau roman* or Latin American *magic realism*, embodied particular versions of postmodern writing concerning their national or local subjectivities.<sup>352</sup> In the context of European literature, what distinguishes the American 'national narrative' from other postmodernisms could be considered alongside the differences between 'canonized literature of the European nation-states' and 'marginalised literatures', such as Irish or Scottish (*versus* the British); Flemish (*versus* Belgium's 'national narratives'); Catalan or Galician (*versus* the Castilian).<sup>353</sup>

This issue brings us to *postcolonial* literature. By bringing together most of the former colonial powers which now must deal with the consequences of the fall of its empires, Europe could today be considered a postcolonial continent. As such, literature produced in this context attests to that post-imperial condition. Bearing this historic situation in mind, Paulo de Medeiros, in relation to Portuguese and European literatures, states that

torna-se imperativo tomar em consideração os vários modos como as condições pós-coloniais afectam as literaturas e sociedades europeias, dando atenção às variantes sócio-históricas assim como culturais e linguísticas, [...] sem receio de se considerar de novo a literatura e sociedade europeias não olvidando o seu passado imperial, nem o seu presente neo-colonial, sem complexos.<sup>354</sup>

The 'anxiety' currently suffered by the European writer arises from his/her post-imperial and *postcolonial* condition. Contemporary European writers should, then, be confronted with a literature that articulates the contradictions of a collapse of humanism, and the guilt of an imperial past. How can Europeans reach a 'degré zéro' by rebuilding an idea of Europe based on its historical, ideological and emotional ruins? Although Llansol does not write about the former Portuguese colonies, nor about contemporary Portuguese society dealing with its *postcolonial* legacy, I believe that by proposing a new paradigm of writing for European literature, she attempts to articulate those contradictory conditions suffered by Europeans today. Following D'Haen, I am using two different notions of *postcolonialism*, with and without the

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<sup>351</sup> *Ibid*, p. 24.

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>354</sup> Paulo de Medeiros, 'Apontamentos para Conceptualizar uma Europa Pós-Colonial', in *Portugal Não é um País Pequeno – Contar o Império na Pós-Colonialidade*, ed. by Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, pp. 339-356 (p. 348).

hyphen. *Post-colonialism* ‘situates itself outside Europe’, representing the literature of the countries previously dominated by European imperialism.<sup>355</sup> Contrarily, D’Haen asserts, *postcolonialism* ‘opens up possibilities for turning the “postcolonial gaze” upon Europe itself, and upon our own literary past and present. As such, “postcolonialism” no longer remains something happening out there, outside Europe [...] [which] now becomes itself the subject of “positioned” readings’.<sup>356</sup>

Finally, in an attempt to articulate these paradigms, I would like to suggest a final framework which is still largely underdeveloped in scholarly research, but which I believe to be particularly helpful to grasp Llansol’s works. *Postnationalism* is a concept coined by John Carlos Rowe regarding American scholarship, but appropriated by Habermas in 2001 in order to describe the end of a bipolar world, sustained by a North-South divide, and dominated by globalization and transnational organisations like the IMF, WEF or G8.<sup>357</sup> To Habermas, the European Union is the supreme example of a *postnational* ‘state’, because it no longer conforms to original notions of the sovereignty of a nation-state. This concept has been both fiercely criticized and defended by scholars, from Development to Literary Studies, without consensus. For reasons of space, I do not wish to pursue a discussion of *postnationalism* on an economic or political level.<sup>358</sup> Instead, I wish to emphasize recent readings of *postnationalism* in relation to literature, namely, the discussion led by César Domínguez and Theo D’Haen in the last conference of the American Comparative Literature Association (March 2009), which proposed a reading of contemporary European literature through a *postnational* lens. Given that ‘textbooks on European literature continue to rely on national canons and promote an image of nations as an impassable horizon of literature’, D’Haen and Domínguez called for a conceptualization of ‘European literature that is critical of national canons from a

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<sup>355</sup> Theo D’Haen, ‘Introduction: What the Postcolonial Means to us’, *European Review*, 13.1 (2005), 73-78 (p. 76).

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>357</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation – Political Essays*, trans. and ed. by Max Pensky (Cambridge: Polity, 2002).

<sup>358</sup> Ulrich Beck describes post-9/11 wars and the concept of ‘War on Terror’ as examples of *postnational* wars. See Beck, *Cosmopolitan Vision*, trans. by Ciaran Cronin (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), pp. 130-162. Randall Hansen suggests that, in relation to notions of European citizenship, *postnationalism* is based on ‘categories that are confused and untenable’. See Randell Hansen, ‘The poverty of postnationalism: citizenship, immigration, and the new Europe’, *Theory and Society*, 38 (2009), 1-24 (p. 1).

cosmopolitan point of view within a postnational context'.<sup>359</sup>

*Postnationalism* could be seen as a possible paradigm for reading contemporary European literature which combines, in Paul James's words, 'messy configurations of modern migrant consciousness, transnational religious revivals of tradition and movements of postmodern hybridity'.<sup>360</sup> In *postnationalism*, the 'post' implies not an *after*-nationalism, but a *beyond*-nationalism, including contemporary writers who express 'the subjectivity of mobile diasporas of individuals'.<sup>361</sup> These people in exile 'seek "communal" connection', James suggests, not attached to a territory: 'It is a loosely configured imagined community that may or may not have continuing embodied ties.'<sup>362</sup> One could include writers such as Vladimir Nabokov or Edward Said in a *postnational* constellation, since they write outside their original territory (as exiles), and in a language which is not their mother-tongue. In a contemporary European literary context, however, *postnationalism* fuses the aforementioned theoretical paradigms (modernism, postmodernism, and postcolonialism), although its ultimate aim is to question literature's responsibility in today's globalized world (post 9/11), no longer from the perspective of language *as* dominium, nation *as* identity, centre *versus* periphery, but rather, by introducing a non-place, non-time paradigm, ultimately, a kind of *edenic space*, *beyond* concepts of nation and identity. It is here that I find postnationalism particularly useful to understand the Llansolian text. Indeed, as D'Haen suggests, if one includes in *this* notion of *postmodernism* (combining a *postcolonial* perspective, but also, I would argue, a *postnational* one), the literatures of post-colonial countries, of 'migrant workers', the 'descendants of the West's formerly colonized now living in the former colonial mother country', we can therefore conclude that the notion of

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<sup>359</sup> See <<http://www.acla.org/acla2009/?p=40>> [accessed on 28 February 2009]. Scholars who participated in the panels and the topics of their papers are available here <<http://www.acla.org/Program%20ACLA09.pdf>> [accessed on 25 April 2009].

Researchers who used using the concept of *postnationalism* recently include: Ellie D. Hernández, *Postnationalism in Chicana/o Literature and Culture* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009); Joseba Gabilondo, 'Towards a Postnational History of Galician Literature: On Pardo Bazán's Transnational and Translational Position', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 86 (2009), 249-268 (p. 254); and Hena Ahmad, 'Postnational Feminism in Third World Women's Literature' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1998).

<sup>360</sup> Paul James, *Globalism, Nationalism, Tribalism – Bringing Theory Back in* (London: Sage, 2006) p. 292.

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid*, p. 297.

<sup>362</sup> *Ibid*, p. 297.

*postmodernism* in these literatures ‘reaches beyond existing “national narratives” and points the way to a more encompassing European “(supra-)national narrative”’.<sup>363</sup>

The resistance of the Llansolian text to being framed within genres or canons, does not necessarily mean it cannot be understood within existing literary frameworks. As Barrento argues, against readings which exacerbate Llansol’s exceptionalism, literary theory

tem (tem de ter) ferramentas para ‘dar conta’ do Texto llansoliano. [...] Ora perante um Texto destes (e o texto dita o método), uma tal linguagem, mesmo a da teoria, não pode ser mais uma língua da impostura, nem mera ‘aplicação’, tem de ser uma busca, sensível e receptiva, da verdade possível para este Texto.<sup>364</sup>

By rejecting the suggestion that there is one appropriate theory to explain this text, I do not intend to highlight Llansol’s exceptionalism. This *does not* mean that this text is unparalleled and therefore cannot be understood in the light of, say, theory of *postmodernism*. In doing so, I am arguing for a reading of Llansol (and of Musil, Saramago, Kafka and Woolf) that challenges existing (sometimes passive) modes of reading. Instead of ‘using’ theory X to ‘explain’ the similarities between the Llansolian text and other authors’ texts, I propose a reading of these authors *in the light of* the Llansolian *textuality*. Indeed, this text ‘dita o método’, in other words, provides procedures in order to explain itself. Literary theory considers, indeed, techniques which contribute to a more complete understanding of the Llansolian text. However, by attempting to frame it in *one* paradigm, I would be condemning the freedom, creativity and *energeia* of this text.

Despite the fact that the Llansolian text is literary and fictional, in my opinion, Llansol contests existing paradigms, employing them in reversible ways, and, through the creation of concepts. Llansol rejects the notion that her text generates concepts: ‘Não desejo pensar conceitos, mas *fazer nós voláteis* de imagens, pensamentos, fascínios e sinais / que me permitam, / hoje, / caminhar e gostar do meu caminho.’<sup>365</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos concurs that Llansol does not develop concepts: ‘O texto fornece instrumentos para a sua leitura; não conceitos (o que implicaria um maior grau de abstração), mas “ideias-noções” [...] que estão de

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<sup>363</sup> D’Haen, “‘Post-Colonial Literature and Postmodern Literary Historiography’, p. 26.

<sup>364</sup> João Barrento, ‘A Chave sobre a Maçã’, in *Na Dobra do Mundo*, pp. 20-31 (pp. 23-24).

<sup>365</sup> *IQC*, p. 78.



acordo com a leitura que propõe.<sup>366</sup> Yet, pages later, she acknowledges: ‘Remetemos, deste modo, para novos usos de conceitos como os de objecto, imagem ou figura que podem, pelo seu uso no texto llansoliano, fazer repensar as teorias da leitura e os processos de representação.’<sup>367</sup> The critic suggests that literary theory should embrace the difficulties of the Llansolian text as ‘defesa do atrito’,<sup>368</sup> towards a ‘contaminação e aventura dos conceitos e sua desconstrução, de modo a redefinir novos modos de ler’.<sup>369</sup>

Throughout this thesis, instead of rooting the project in one discernible framework, I will refer to several works of Gilles Deleuze (whose philosophy is based on Spinoza and Nietzsche, core affinities of the Llansolian text). According to Deleuze, ‘philosophy is the activity that traces a prephilosophical plane of immanence (reason), invents prophylosophical characters (imagination), and creates philosophical concepts (understanding).’<sup>370</sup> To my mind, the Llansolian text articulates these three instances (reason, imagination and understanding), arguing that a concept is no longer adequate or applicable, in Deleuze’s words, ‘when new functions in new fields discharge it’.<sup>371</sup> And so, one must confront existing concepts and ‘discover by *what forces* the problems transform themselves and *demand* the constitution of new concepts.’<sup>372</sup> This thesis will propose the Llansolian text as a *theory*, which outlines a ‘philosophical’ paradigm of reading sustained by the creation of ‘philosophical’ concepts.

## THESIS STRUCTURE

The guiding principle of this thesis, as outlined above at the beginning of this Introduction, is to read José Saramago, Robert Musil, Franz Kafka and Virginia Woolf not exactly *in comparison*, but *in the light of* Llansol’s concepts and the theory of the *edenic space*.

This thesis is, then, structured in four chapters. Each chapter is focused on a Llansolian concept and attempts to demonstrate how that concept is applicable to the works of the author in question.

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<sup>366</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, p. 149.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid*, p. 156.

<sup>368</sup> Silvina Rodrigues Lopes, *Literatura, Defesa do Atrito* (Lisbon: Vendaval, 2003).

<sup>369</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, p. 156.

<sup>370</sup> Boundas and Olkowski, p. 1-2.

<sup>371</sup> Gilles Deleuze, ‘A philosophical concept...’, in *Who Comes After the Subject?*, ed. by Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy (New York, London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 94-95 (p. 94).

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid*, p. 95.

**Chapter One** will analyse Llansol's second trilogy, *O Litoral do Mundo* – including *Causa Amante*, *Contos do Mal Errante*, and *Da Sebe ao Ser* – in relation to existing theory on Portuguese identity, and Portugal's relationship with both Europe and Spain. These novels will be read in parallel with two texts by José Saramago, the novel *A Jangada de Pedra* (1986), and the play *Que Farei com Este Livro?* (1980). This chapter argues for a re-inscription of Llansol in a Portuguese literary context, through a reading of the *edenic space* as a humanist European 'island' of hope. By stressing the similarities between an almost unknown author like Llansol alongside with the Portuguese Nobel Prize winner, José Saramago, I will argue how both Saramago and Llansol have accomplished ideological transformations in Portuguese literature, through the rewriting of Portuguese and European histories and through the re-inscription of historical *figures* removed from their space-time frames.

In **Chapter Two**, Robert Musil's *magnus opus* *The Man Without Qualities* (1978)<sup>373</sup> will be analysed using the concept of the *scene of fulgor*, and employing Deleuze and Guattari's theories of *minor literature* and *detritorialization*, presented in *Kafka, pour une littérature mineure* (1975) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), respectively. Musil's novel will be read in tandem with *Lisboaleipzig 1* and *Lisboaleipzig 2* (both published in 1994), novels in which Llansol detritorializes the *figure* of Fernando Pessoa from Lisbon to Leipzig, in order to propose an encounter between the Portuguese poet and the Austrian composer Bach.

Following on from some concepts enunciated in the previous chapter, **Chapter Three** will apply the Llansolian *figure* to the works of Franz Kafka, mainly, to *The Metamorphosis*, arguing how Kafka created metamorphoses so that he could escape the literary and narrative constraints of the metaphor. By transforming his characters into monstrous beings, I believe Kafka is foreseeing Llansol's process of *figuration*, which is, also, extremely similar to Deleuze and Guattari's concept of *becoming*, enunciated in *A Thousand Plateaus*. By using texts written by Musil and Kafka, I intend to stress how Llansol saw these two modernist writers as *rebels* against a narrative order, although they were not yet able to liberate themselves from *narrativity*'s constraints and attain *textuality*.<sup>374</sup> In my opinion, Llansol's project

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<sup>373</sup> 1978 is the year of the publication of the first complete edition (including the three parts) of the *The Man Without Qualities* as we know it today. The novel, left unfinished due to Musil's death, was written between 1918 and 1942.

<sup>374</sup> Llansol, 'Espaço Edénico', p. 162.

seems to provide an original continuity to Musil and Kafka's unaccomplished projects.

Finally, **Chapter Four** is divided into two parts. In the first part, I will read the three diaries of Llansol – *Um Falcão no Punho* (1985), *Finita* (1987) and *Inquérito às Quatro Confidências* (1996) – drawing on the ideas proposed by Donna Haraway in *The Companion Species Manifesto*.<sup>375</sup> It is my intention to demonstrate how the Llansolian project creates an all-inclusive text, which invites different beings into its core, regardless of gender, realm or historic period. The diaries, sustained by the concept of the *living*, will be read alongside ecofeminist theory, stressing parallels between man's exploitation of nature and animals, and the patriarchal system. The second part will propose a parallel reading of Virginia Woolf's *Flush* (1933) and Llansol's *Amar um Cão* (1990), two texts about two special dogs in search of an author. The proximity between Woolf and Llansol will prove how some of Llansol's concepts (the *odd love*, the *sex of reading*, the *scribin'body* and the *libidinous moonlight*), recurrent in women's writing, could shed new light on Woolf's text. In order to read Llansol and Woolf alongside each other, I will focus on *Onde Vais, Drama-Poesia?* (2000), *Parasceve* (2001) and *O Jogo da Liberdade da Alma* (2003) along with Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *The Waves* (1931).

In its entirety, this thesis mirrors the journey the rebels undergo through the European map. After their self-imposed exile, the Llansolian rebels base themselves in an imaginary island, off the Portuguese coast. Throughout the thesis, the rebels will move gradually towards central European landscapes, until they attain a last movement of *dispossession* – when they are no longer attached to a notion of identity, nationality or territory; when they have endured the Llansolian mutation through *fulgor* and the *pruning* of their memories; when they have ultimately reached the *edenic space*.

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<sup>375</sup> Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto – Dogs, People, and the Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm, 2003).

# Chapter 1

## IBERIAN UTOPIAS, EUROPEAN ‘COMMUNITIES’ – LLANSOL AND SARAMAGO IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE REMNANTS

*‘É preciso deixar de fazer a História de Portugal,  
para se começar a fazer a história dos portugueses’.*<sup>376</sup>  
José Saramago

In his foundational 1978 text on Portuguese identity, *O Labirinto da Saudade*, Eduardo Lourenço expresses his concerns about Portugal’s ‘subaltern’<sup>377</sup> condition as a country traumatized by the sudden and brutal loss of an empire that was considered an extension of its own identity. The amputation of these colonized ‘limbs’ submerged the Portuguese in an existential crisis, ‘ausentes de si mesmos’,<sup>378</sup> carrying the burden of existence on their shoulders, incapable of performing an ‘autognose’<sup>379</sup> or of understanding themselves. Lourenço explains how in a time-frame of ten years, the Portuguese changed from ‘cidadãos de um Estado opressivo sem gozo de direitos cívicos normais ao contexto europeu’, to becoming miraculously ‘cidadãos *à part entière* da Europa e do mundo democrático’.<sup>380</sup> According to Lourenço, Portugal was not ready for the changes provoked by the 1974 revolution, nor was it prepared for its conversion from a colonial empire (publicly criticized by historical allies, and humiliated by its military defeats), to becoming part of the European Community.

Portugal has always seen itself as an island (instead of part of a peninsula, constantly ignoring the presence of Spain) in relation to Europe, always dually defining itself as ‘this side of’ and the other ‘beyond’ the Pyrenees.<sup>381</sup> In fact, the Portuguese have always talked about Europe ‘como se não lhe pertencêssemos ou fôssemos nela um caso *à parte*’,<sup>382</sup> as something ‘outside’ and ‘faraway’, to the extent that when Portugal actually ‘entered’ the European Community, the Portuguese

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<sup>376</sup> José Saramago cited in Teresa Cristina Cerdeira da Silva, *José Saramago, entre a História e a Ficção: Uma Saga de Portugueses* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1989), p. 21.

<sup>377</sup> See Boaventura de Sousa Santos, ‘Entre Próspero e Caliban: Colonialismo, Pós-colonialismo e Inter-identidade’, in *A Gramática do Tempo: Para uma Nova Cultura Política*, ed. by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (Porto: Afrontamento, 2006), pp. 211-255.

<sup>378</sup> Eduardo Lourenço, *O Labirinto da Saudade*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Lisbon: Gradiva, 2005), p. 48.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid*, p. 69.

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid*, p. 63.

<sup>381</sup> Eduardo Lourenço, ‘Nós e a Europa, ou as Duas Razões’, in *Nós e a Europa, ou as Duas Razões* (Lisbon: INCM, 1994), pp. 51-65 (p. 51).

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid*, p. 51.

could indeed state that they were 'in' Europe now, simultaneously converting them into Europeans. Lourenço plays with the verbs 'to enter' and 'to be' ('não só *estamos* na Europa, para onde entrámos [...], como somos *vistos* como europeus')<sup>383</sup> because they all cause an epistemological shift in Portuguese identity. Nevertheless, Portugal and Europe still establish a one-way relationship (Europe still provides more for Portugal than *vice-versa*) which Lourenço describes as 'do fascínio e do ressentimento'.<sup>384</sup>

According to Boaventura de Sousa Santos, in the current context of globalization, Portugal remains politically peripheral in relation to the European centre, and yet *simultaneously*, by belonging to the European Union as a whole, could also be seen as a central nation. This 'semiperipheral' condition is cause and effect of a 'a complex mix of social features' in Portuguese society, that

shuffled and reshuffled in the historical short circuit of the past fifteen years in which there converge and melt such different social temporalities as the five-centuries-long temporality of the European expansion, the two-centuries-long temporality of the democratic revolutions, the one-century-long temporality of the socialist movement, the forty-year-long temporality of the welfare state.<sup>385</sup>

These twin *tempos* shaped Portugal as 'semiperipheral' and underlined its permanent state of crisis, since, according to Sousa Santos, the 1974 revolution occurred precisely at a moment in which post-war prosperity in Europe was declining. Indeed, Portugal's first constitutional government after fifty years of dictatorship (and after the turbulent post-revolutionary period) 'did not end the social crisis, though it did change its nature. In terms of social regulation we can say that the crisis began before 1974 and has continued from 1976 to the present day'.<sup>386</sup> Portugal in a context of globalization is very much a country trying to find its own sovereignty in an enduring state of crisis (economic, social and of identity, as well). To give just a few examples of crises in Portuguese history: the loss of independence to Spain in 1581 (until 1640); the transfer of the court to Brazil (1808) and the consequent independence of the colony (1822); the isolationist policy of the dictatorship; the fall

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<sup>383</sup> *Ibid*, p. 52 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>384</sup> Eduardo Lourenço, 'Nós e a Europa: Ressentimento e Fascínio', in *Nós e a Europa, ou as Duas Razões*, pp. 25-37 (p. 25).

<sup>385</sup> Boaventura de Sousa Santos, 'State and Society in Portugal', in *After the Revolution: Twenty Years of Portuguese Literature, 1974-1994*, ed. by Helena Kaufman and Anna Klobucka (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1997), pp. 31-77 (p. 33).

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid*, p. 43.

of the colonial empire (1974); the revolutionary period or its now ‘semiperipheral’ condition in Europe. Some of these facts play an important role in the contradictory process of ‘deterritorialization’ in the 1970s (with the decolonization process) and ‘reterritorialization’, with Portugal’s integration into the EEC, as Sousa Santos points out.<sup>387</sup> According to Fernando Arenas, both movements (deterritorialization *versus* reterritorialization) ‘signified a shifting of national borders, where the latter underscored a relative loss of national sovereignty in exchange for inclusion within a supranational structure’, within Portuguese society.<sup>388</sup>

The case of Portugal’s relationship with Spain is more complex than the ‘troca desigual’ with Europe.<sup>389</sup> Portugal always saw itself belonging more to Europe than to the ‘todo peninsular, marginalmente europeu, que a Península tem sido’, Lourenço explains,<sup>390</sup> although it also felt excluded from that ‘other’ Europe that never saw Portugal as its legitimate member (perhaps because Portugal had not historically seen itself as such). This ambivalent relationship with Spain is a reflection of years of alliances and wars, territorial disputes and visceral envy, from the Treaty of Tordesillas, in 1494 (which put the Peninsula at the core of the *mapa mundi*) to the Spanish dominion of Portugal, from the similarity between Portuguese and Spanish Inquisitions, fascist regimes in the twentieth century, and the subsequent liberation from those dictatorships. However, the fact that Europe ‘a pris l’habitude de nous confondre avec l’Espagne’,<sup>391</sup> pushed the Portuguese towards a refusal to acknowledge Spain’s existence, and then ‘l’Espagne nous est devenue presque invisible, ou visible par intermittence’.<sup>392</sup> It was not always like that, as the writings of the Generation of the 1870s, specifically, Antero de Quental’s *manifesto* on the decadence of the peninsular countries in 1871, confirms.<sup>393</sup>

Quental suggests Portugal and Spain’s similarities are a result of a shared decadence, read as cultural, intellectual, political, religious and economic underdevelopment, in relation to the other, advanced, enlightened and progressive Europe. Quental points out how this decadence arises from the fact that the winds of

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<sup>387</sup> *Ibid*, p. 33.

<sup>388</sup> Fernando Arenas, *Utopias of Otherness – Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 17.

<sup>389</sup> Lourenço, ‘Nós e a Europa, ou as Duas Razões’, p. 53.

<sup>390</sup> Eduardo Lourenço, ‘A Espanha e Nós’, in *Nós e a Europa, ou as Duas Razões*, pp. 79-85 (p. 81).

<sup>391</sup> Eduardo Lourenço, ‘L’Europe et Nous’, in *Nós e a Europa, ou as Duas Razões*, pp. 39-49 (p. 44).

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid*, p. 46.

<sup>393</sup> Antero de Quental, *Causas da Decadência dos Povos Peninsulares nos Três Últimos Séculos*, pref. by Eduardo Lourenço (Lisbon: Tinta da China, 2008).

Protestantism never crossed the Pyrenees, and on account of this, Iberia became isolated and marginalized, struggling under the rules of Rome to sustain a faith that would inexorably lead to its own decay.<sup>394</sup> Obviously, Qental does not refrain from stressing how Iberia's decadence inevitably started with the take over of Portugal by the 'monarquia anómala, inconsistente e desnatural' of Philip II.<sup>395</sup> Yet, for Qental, the three main causes of the Peninsula's decline are the following: 'O primeiro é a transformação do *Catolicismo*, pelo Concílio de Trento. O segundo, o estabelecimento do *Absolutismo*, pela ruína das liberdades locais. O terceiro, o desenvolvimento das *Conquistas* longínquas.'<sup>396</sup> It is worth noticing how the second and third causes are directly linked to the first, since Absolutism enforced Catholicism in its most fearful way, and the Conquests spread throughout the world in a process of evangelization, making 'do nome de cristão um símbolo de morte'.<sup>397</sup> Maria Gabriela Llansol and José Saramago share (indirectly) Qental's opinion on Iberia's decadence, although they ultimately extend its meaning towards Europe, as we will see, regarding the abuses of power (Absolutism), religious intolerance and the oppression of other peoples.

The revolutionary impetus of the late 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s brought about a dramatic change in the narratives, in Portugal. Several authors, states Fernando Arenas, 'believe that the metanarrative of the Portuguese nation linked to its maritime-colonial past has now weakened, and that, by virtue of its weakening, its corollary – the metanarrative of decline or the longing for a past that is irretrievable – has exhausted itself'.<sup>398</sup> In addition to the identity shift in Portugal's idiosyncratic behaviour, there was a 'surge of micronarratives of the nation, a multiplication of subjectivities that speak for their differing individual, group, or localized identities and interests'.<sup>399</sup> Two examples of this proliferation of micronarratives and multiplication of subjectivities are the works of Llansol and Saramago, among others. Both authors achieved ideological transformations in Portuguese literature

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<sup>394</sup> To a certain extent, Qental's opinion echoes Max Weber's early twentieth-century theory on how the countries dominated by Protestantism developed towards the emergence of a bourgeoisie that sustained a social and an economic stability, whilst countries over which the Inquisition performed its power did not. See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. by Talcott Parsons (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967).

<sup>395</sup> Qental, p. 46.

<sup>396</sup> *Ibid*, p. 55 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid*, p. 71.

<sup>398</sup> Arenas, p. 19.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

shifting from 'macrological political projects to an emphasis on the micrological instances of daily life'.<sup>400</sup> What unites Llansol and Saramago is much more than what separates them; both authors have accomplished ideological transformations in Portuguese literature through the rewriting of Portuguese and European histories, and the re-inscribing of historical figures removed from their space-time frames (both have controversially used iconic Portuguese figures as characters in their texts). Llansol and Saramago have significantly experimented with the Portuguese language, independent of the target-readership or linguistic conventions. Both authors have also defended a new humanism, an understanding of the other, the building of new communities, or the proposal of new 'utopias'.

With these confluences in mind, in this chapter I will analyse Maria Gabriela Llansol's second trilogy, *O Litoral do Mundo*, comprised of the novels *Causa Amante* (1984), *Contos do Mal Errante* (1986) and *Da Sebe ao Ser* (1988), in relation to existing theory on Portuguese identity and its relationship with both Europe and Spain, in comparison with two texts by José Saramago, the novel *A Jangada de Pedra* (1986) and the play *Que Farei com Este Livro?* (1980).

#### **TRANSIBERIAN STONE RAFTS, ISLANDS IN THE STREAM**

The publication of *A Jangada de Pedra*, in 1986, occurs in the same year in which Portugal and Spain joined the EEC.<sup>401</sup> This fact is not a coincidence, since Saramago has always asserted himself in the role of fearless anti-Europeanist. *A Jangada* is a 'magic-realist utopian fable' about how,<sup>402</sup> through the dramatic and catastrophic splitting of the Pyrenees, the Iberian Peninsula separates itself (by a mysterious sequence of paranormal events) from the European continent and drifts across the Atlantic. This event coincides with apparently inexplicable actions performed by those who will become the five main characters in the novel. These five people (and a dog) will eventually meet along the way, becoming migrant figures in the peninsular space. They will also voice the anguish and doubts that haunt Iberia throughout the story.

Saramago does not explain whether these characters' actions provoked the split from the continent. One could argue, though, that this is not Saramago's

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<sup>400</sup> *Ibid*, p. 68.

<sup>401</sup> José Saramago, *A Jangada de Pedra*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Lisbon: Caminho, 1986).

<sup>402</sup> Anna Klobucka, 'Introduction: Saramago's World', *Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies*, 6 (Spring, 2001), xi-xxi (p. xiv).



objective anyway. There is no solution to the remarkable fact that the Peninsula has separated itself from Europe – this is an open novel, a book of the future, because as Alejo Carpentier’s epigraph, quoted by Saramago at the beginning of the novel, demonstrates, ‘todo futuro es fabuloso’.<sup>403</sup> Instead, Saramago is already proclaiming a literary project that Helena Kaufman calls ‘a project in minor history’, since in this text (as well in previous and later ones) the author

proposes a recuperation of history at a level yet unknown to the traditional historical novel. Minor history is recovered through manipulating narrative elements, such as point of view and construction of characters, and narrative strategies, such as metafictionality and historiographic commentary.<sup>404</sup>

Saramago does this by defining ‘his mission to recover the marginalized voices of people’s history’.<sup>405</sup> These voiceless, nomadic Iberians are thus named in *A Jangada* and they are axiological allegories of the fifty million inhabitants of a space that strikingly became an island. After that event, the relationship between the Peninsula and Europe will never be the same. If at first Europe still considers the island part of its territory, when the Peninsula distances itself more and more from what is now the South West coast of France, Europe foregoes its responsibility towards it. A core of leftwing protests rises inside the continent, when gangs of disaffected youth rebel and demonstrate against the established order, writing their new identity status across the walls of Europe: ‘Nous aussi sommes iberiques’,<sup>406</sup> a statement that echoes JFK’s historic sentence ‘Ich bin ein Berliner’, in 1963 in West Berlin.<sup>407</sup> Saramago takes the argument a stage further by explaining how these ‘anarquistas doidos’<sup>408</sup> have painted the walls in several colours with this sentence in every language of every country of Europe – the polemic even reached the Vatican, where the cathedral was stained with Iberian propaganda in Latin. This should be no surprise coming from a highly politicized author. Accordingly, Saramago interweaves the narrative encounters of the main characters with political comment on how the world reacted to the fact that Iberia was drifting away from Europe. Saramago highlights several political authorities in the globalized world and reproduces speeches (for example by the

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<sup>403</sup> Alejo Carpentier, *Concierto Barroco* (Mexico DF: Editorial Lectorum, [1974] 2003), p. 30.

<sup>404</sup> Helena Kaufman, ‘Is Minor Essential?: Contemporary Portuguese Fiction and Questions of Identity’, *Symploke*, 5.1 (1997) 167-182 (p. 177).

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid*, p. 177.

<sup>406</sup> Saramago, *A Jangada de Pedra*, p. 162.

<sup>407</sup> This point is also underlined by Mark Sabine in “‘Once but no longer the prow of Europe’”: National Identity and Portuguese Destiny in José Saramago’s *The Stone Raft*, *Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies*, 6 (Spring, 2001), 185-203 (p. 191).

<sup>408</sup> Saramago, *A Jangada de Pedra*, p. 163.

European Community or NATO), that responded quite bizarrely to the geological event: ‘A resposta, não sendo embora negativa, veio a resumir-se numa frase impublicável, Wait and see, o que aliás, não exprimia nenhuma inteira verdade.’<sup>409</sup> The US kept alternating between giving a friendly hand to their historic allies, by supplying oil and food,<sup>410</sup> and witnessing with anxiety as the Peninsula moved closer to their shores, therefore threatening their position on the geopolitical map.<sup>411</sup>

Despite the fact that several analyses of *A Jangada* accurately question ideas about Portuguese identity, I would like to focus on how, through the use of literary references and media or political discourses, *A Jangada* is instead presenting Saramago’s utopia for the Iberian Atlantic, establishing blatantly its distance from ‘simbolismos nacionalistas ou providencialistas de um “brave new world” shakespeariano, de uma “Ilha dos Amores” camoniana ou do nacionalismo atlântico de um Sarmiento de Gamboa’.<sup>412</sup> Throughout the book, the Peninsula moves West, but after drifting into the middle of the North Atlantic, in the last chapters, it suddenly changes direction towards the South. Iberia becomes a stationary outpost located in-between Africa and Latin America, specifically (and symbolically) between the two former Lusophone territories, Brazil and Angola.

In his 1998 Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Saramago put forward his idea for a postcolonial and globalized world, drawing on the metaphor previously proposed in *A Jangada*. According to Saramago, Portugal and Spain have a dual responsibility towards their former colonies: not only because both countries share an identity which separates them from the European continent, but also because they have a deep connection (linguistic, economic and historic) with Latin American and African countries. Saramago dwells on the concept of ‘trans-ibericidade’, a utopia for the Iberian Atlantic.<sup>413</sup> Being ‘trans-iberian’ means being an Iberian with one hand stretched out towards Africa and the other to Latin America. This movement towards the South paves the way for a new utopia:

O encontro cultural dos povos peninsulares com os povos do outro lado do Atlântico, desafiando assim, a tanto a minha estratégia se atreveu, o domínio sufocante que os Estados Unidos da América do Norte vêm exercendo

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<sup>409</sup> *Ibid*, p. 45.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid*, p. 170.

<sup>411</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 281-283.

<sup>412</sup> Burghard Baltrusch, ‘Sobre o “Trans-iberismo” como Metanarrativa. José Saramago entre Universalismo and Pós-colonialismo’, in *O Estado do Nosso Futuro – Brasil e Portugal entre Identidade e Globalização*, ed. by Orlando Grossegeesse (Berlin: Tranvia, 2004), pp. 111-133 (p. 121).

<sup>413</sup> See also José Saramago, ‘O (Meu) Iberismo’, *Jornal de Letras*, 31 October 1988, p. 32.

naquelas paragens. Uma visão duas vezes utópica entenderia esta ficção política como uma metáfora muito mais generosa e humana: que a Europa, toda ela, deverá deslocar-se para o Sul, a fim de, em desconto dos seus abusos colonialistas antigos e modernos, ajudar a equilibrar o mundo. Isto é, Europa finalmente como ética.<sup>414</sup>

Europe as ethics reflects the way Saramago portrays the Peninsula as one ‘cultural space with a common history and a common future, turning it from its peripheral status into a new center of a less centralized Europe’.<sup>415</sup> Therefore, an axiological Europe is, states Mark Sabine, ‘rethink[ing the] political option’,<sup>416</sup> placing Iberia in the middle of the Atlantic, not as a continuation of colonialism, but rather to perform a cultural exchange between European, Latin American and African countries.

A postcolonial Saramago cannot obliterate the Iberianist and anti-Europeanist Saramago, for this is the topic of *A Jangada*. Throughout his literary life, Saramago has stated several times that Portugal and Spain should be integrated, and recently he polemically affirmed ‘não vale a pena armar-me em profeta, mas acho que acabaremos por integrar-nos’.<sup>417</sup> Saramago is not yet writing history as a prophet,<sup>418</sup> but his ‘dream’ for Iberia, as he puts it, shows surprising similarities with his own concept of history as a rewriting of the canon by giving a voice to the voiceless. As such, the utopia of *A Jangada* is not a neo-colonial order, ‘não é uma afirmação rácica, que a própria diversidade de raças desmente’, nor is it a ‘quinto nem sexto nem sétimo império’, as Fernando Pessoa would have it.<sup>419</sup> Rather, *A Jangada* ‘trata-se apenas de sonhar – acho que esta palavra serve muito bem – com uma aproximação entre estes dois blocos’.<sup>420</sup> This would be the ‘appropriate’ dream, since Saramago regards Portugal and Spain’s relationship with Europe as the contemporary cause for the decadence of the Iberian people. The integration of Spain and Portugal into the EEC represented the dissolution of a common identity, to the extent that ‘nada mais teremos que fazer na vida senão esperar as sentenças que Bruxelas vá preparando para nós’, plans that, Saramago states, would become

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<sup>414</sup> José Saramago, *Discursos de Estocolmo* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1999), p. 25-26.

<sup>415</sup> Orlando Grossegeese, ‘Journey to the Iberian God: Antonio Machado Revisited by Saramago’, *Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies*, 6 (Spring, 2001), 167-184 (p. 168).

<sup>416</sup> Sabine, “Once but no longer the prow of Europe”, p. 189.

<sup>417</sup> João Céu e Silva, ‘Não sou profeta, mas Portugal acabará por integrar-se na Espanha: Entrevista com José Saramago’, *Diário de Notícias*, 15 July 2007, available at [http://dn.sapo.pt/inicio/interior.aspx?content\\_id=661318](http://dn.sapo.pt/inicio/interior.aspx?content_id=661318) [accessed 28 April 2009].

<sup>418</sup> I am alluding to Elisabeth Wesseling’s book *Writing History as a Prophet*.

<sup>419</sup> Inês Pedrosa, ‘A Península Ibérica Nunca Esteve Ligada à Europa: Entrevista com José Saramago’, *Jornal de Letras*, 10-16 November 1986, pp. 24-26 (p. 24).

<sup>420</sup> *Idem*, p. 24.

‘rígidos’, ‘intolerantes’ and ‘igualmente intoleráveis’.<sup>421</sup> *A Jangada* is a novel that represents an ‘efeito último de um ressentimento histórico’ for which there is,<sup>422</sup> however hope: Saramago’s hope is willing to move the new Iberian island back towards the continent, but only if Europe, ‘reconhecendo-se incompleta sem a Península Ibérica, fizesse pública confissão dos erros cometidos, injustiças e desrezos’.<sup>423</sup> Saramago is not talking about colonialism and oppression here, although he states that Europe is not more guilty, or more responsible than any other region for the course of history. Instead, he is underlining Iberia’s historically subaltern position in relation to the European core, thus echoing Eduardo Lourenço’s views expressed above. Spain and Portugal share a proximity that inevitably arises from their Quentalian ‘decadence’. As such, ‘enquanto Camões tinha pessoalizado Portugal [...] e Pessoa o tinha enigmado, Lourenço psicanalisou a Nação pessoalizada que Saramago agora despessoaliza e desconstrói, reduzindo-a a uma linguagem cultural e dissolvendo-a no trans-iberismo’.<sup>424</sup>

According to Saramago, *transiberianism* could therefore be seen as the solution to the definition of a new Portuguese identity, yet, *A Jangada* is still very much a book about an island – perhaps the island Portugal sees reflected when looking at itself in the mirror: ‘Île-capitale indolente d’un empire vivant au ralenti, mais île, surtout, par rapport à l’autre Europe, y compris l’Europe la plus proche, celle représentée par une Espagne repliée frileusement sur elle-même.’<sup>425</sup> The island metaphor in Saramago is extremely interesting owing to the fact that, in the case of *A Jangada*, the concept of island coincides with the space of utopia, or with what Llansol calls ‘o jardim que o pensamento permite’.<sup>426</sup> Saramago created this island (and the one in *O Conto da Ilha Desconhecida*), because islands can sometimes be

<sup>421</sup> José Saramago, ‘A Península Ibérica entre a Europa e a América Latina’, *Vértice*, 47 (March/April, 1992), 5-11 (p. 7).

<sup>422</sup> José Saramago, ‘Europa Sim, Europa Não’, *Jornal de Letras*, 10 January 1989, p. 32. It is worth noting that Lourenço stated that very same ‘ressentimento’ as opposed to ‘fascínio’.

<sup>423</sup> Saramago, ‘Europa Sim, Europa Não’, p. 32. The issue of hope in *A Jangada* is made obvious by the fact that, at the end of the novel, all Iberian women are pregnant. David Frier establishes an interesting comparison between Saramago’s island and Camões’s Island of Love at the end of *Os Lusíadas*, stating how ‘the reward for Vasco da Gama’s bold men [...] is superseded in the mass pregnancy at the end of *A Jangada* by a productive and fertile ‘(Pen)ínsula de amor’, where the love is not a reward for reaching a predestined goal, but a symbolic representation of a *hermaphrodite community* constantly renewing itself by inserting its penis into its own fertile “ínsula”, in order to create a new future for the next generation’. David Frier, *The Novels of José Saramago – Echoes from the Past, Pathways into the Future* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), p. 148 (emphasis mine).

<sup>424</sup> Baltrusch, p. 128.

<sup>425</sup> Lourenço, ‘L’Europe et Nous’, p. 45 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>426</sup> *FP*, p. 130.

illusions, sometimes ‘parecem que flutuam sobre as águas, e não é verdade’<sup>427</sup> – a concept which Juan Ribera Llopis has called the ‘meta-island’.<sup>428</sup> The islands of *A Jangada* and *Conto* are indeed ‘meta-islands’, since for Saramago (both the narrative voice and the author) it is sometimes ‘necessário sair da ilha para ver a ilha, que não nos vemos se não nos saímos de nós’,<sup>429</sup> in what could also be seen as an allusion to Saramago’s own ‘exile’ in Lanzarote, since the beginning of the 1990s.

### SARAMAGO AND LLANSOL – THE REWRITING OF HISTORY

In her fascinating article ‘Is Minor Essential?’, Helena Kaufman starts out by questioning whether or not Portuguese literature is indeed a ‘minor’ one by stating that Portugal is a clear case of a ‘minor nation’ (in the light of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of *minor literature*),<sup>430</sup> and that its fiction reflects a voiceless country in search of an expression of that minority condition. Portuguese fiction, thus, constructs itself against a canon that does not necessarily refer to a major literature, but rather, ‘should be understood as a centralized and totalizing cultural discourse characterized by a set of epistemological and aesthetic judgements expressing universalizing tendencies’.<sup>431</sup> These ‘tendencies’ could be seen as power structures that several writers, such as Llansol and Saramago, have tried to overcome and ultimately destroy, by affirming their identity as alternative against the canon.<sup>432</sup>

Maria Gabriela Llansol has created a whole literary universe counteracting these ‘tendencies’ imposed by the canon. In addition, by leaving Portugal before the Revolution, Llansol escaped the risk of seeing her works becoming standardized according to the new political, economical and cultural rules enforced when Portugal joined the European Community. The utopian/uchronian space enunciated in the late 1970s with *O Livro das Comunidades* could be read as an imaginary ‘island’ inside Europe. The starting point on the map is *A Geografia dos Rebeldes*, the trilogy that paved the way for Llansol’s subsequent books, all set in the *edenic space* into which she invited several European voices/authors who have been, she says, forgotten by

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<sup>427</sup> José Saramago, *O Conto da Ilha Desconhecida*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Lisbon: Caminho, 1999), p. 27.

<sup>428</sup> Juan M. Ribera Llopis, ‘Ilhas, Illas, Illes, Islas, Uharteak: Pen(ta)insula’, in ‘José Saramago: O Ano de 1998’, *Colóquio-Letras*, 151-152 (1999), 473-482 (p. 475).

<sup>429</sup> Saramago, *O Conto da Ilha Desconhecida*, p. 28.

<sup>430</sup> See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka – pour une littérature mineure* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1975).

<sup>431</sup> Kaufman, ‘Is Minor Essential?’, p. 177.

<sup>432</sup> The following chapter will focus on Llansol as ‘minor’ (in the light of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of *minor literature*).

history. However, these voices did not necessarily have to be ‘European’, and they could, in fact, be Portuguese, to the extent that Llansol’s literary project for Europe upholds, ultimately, a ‘utopia’ for Portugal as well. Her project is sustained by the creation of a group of rebels, poor men and revolutionaries who will create a *community* to combat the established powers and ‘o mal errante’ inherent to society. There are only two kinds of beings, Llansol explains: those that ‘crescem para o Estado (em hierarquias temporais e sociais)’, and who are thus trapped in the indestructible network that society imposes on men; and those who ‘crescem para a sua própria criação (numa expansão de singularidades)’, that is, the monsters.<sup>433</sup>

Despite the number of comparative readings of Saramago, there is an absence of comparable research on Llansol, especially relating her to Portuguese authors.<sup>434</sup> This lack exists despite the fact that Augusto Joaquim placed her firmly in a lineage of Portuguese writers;<sup>435</sup> that Llansol ‘used’ several Portuguese writers as her *figures*; and that she is often discussed in the same breath as Rui Nunes,<sup>436</sup> or with other women writers like Teolinda Gersão and Maria Velho da Costa.<sup>437</sup> It is my contention that in juxtaposing Saramago and Llansol this chapter will, in part, take issue with this lack of comparative readings, thus repositioning Llansol with respect to her Portuguese peers.

At first sight, Saramago and Llansol have nothing in common, yet, as Fernando Arenas accurately points out, both ‘have redefined the concept of

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<sup>433</sup> *SH*, p. 191. These monsters are very similar to the gangs of distressed youth in *A Jangada*, the crazy anarchists who shout ‘we are Iberians too’ – it could be argued that these rebels are Llansolian too.

<sup>434</sup> To which the exception is Pedro Eiras’s book *Esquecer Fausto*, a comparative reading of Raul Brandão, Fernando Pessoa, Herberto Helder and Llansol. For the most part, comparative readings of Llansol include parallels with Eduardo Lourenço (see Maria de Lourdes Soares’s essays quoted in the Introduction), and essentially compare her with the Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector: Maria de Lourdes Soares, ‘Clarice Lispector e Maria Gabriela Llansol: Tentativas de Descrever Sutilezas’, in *Brasil, 500 Anos de Língua Portuguesa*, ed. by Leodegário de Azevedo (Rio de Janeiro: Ágora da Ilha, 2000), pp. 281-291; Maria de Lourdes Soares, ‘Clarice e Llansol – Cenas Fulgor da Escrita’, in *Limites – Anais do 3º Congresso ABRALIC* (São Paulo: EdUSP, 1995), pp. 245-252; Claire Williams, ‘LispectorLlansol: Um Encontro Inesperado do Diverso’, unpublished paper presented at AHIGBI conference (Kent, April 1999); and Lúcia Helena, ‘Lispector e Llansol: Um Encontro de Corpos de Escrita’, *Revista Tempo Brasileiro*, 128 (1997), 19-26. Tatiana Pequeno da Silva is currently studying for a PhD provisionally entitled ‘Llansol, Lispector: Luminescências’, supervised by Jorge Fernandes da Silveira (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro).

<sup>435</sup> Joaquim, ‘Algumas Coisas’, p. 193.

<sup>436</sup> See, for instance, Joaquim, ‘Não Tem Esse Nome’, *Público*; Barrento, ‘A Voz dos Tempos e o Silêncio do Tempo’; or José Augusto Mourão, ‘Funambulismos: A Narrativa e as Formas de Vida Tecnológicas’, in <<http://pagesperso-orange.fr/renaud.camus/articles/funambulist.html>> [accessed 1 April 2009].

<sup>437</sup> See Allegro de Magalhães, *O Sexo dos Textos*.

nationhood for their respective countries'.<sup>438</sup> Arenas identifies a group of Portuguese and Brazilian writers, including Llansol and Saramago, who correspond to this description, and who have theorized a

'utopia of the other' as reflected in new subjectivities and communities based on relationships of ethical responsibility and solidarity. They privilege one's relationship with the 'other' as embodied in the form of a relationship with a family member, a loved one, a community, or the 'reader'. [...] [They] are, implicitly and explicitly, interested in the destiny of their respective nations in today's globalized environment, as they are interested in the destiny of humankind at the turn of the new century, where there is profound scepticism in relationship to utopian ideologies of redemption, either religious or political.<sup>439</sup>

Maria Alzira Seixo was the first to directly compare Saramago and Llansol, explaining how the process of self-referentiality in Mário Cláudio, Saramago and Llansol arises from the emergence of an alterity. In other words, 'é ao apontar para si próprio que o texto, engrandecendo as marcas do seu projecto literário, pode ultrapassar-se e encontrar o seu "outro lado"', by denouncing a conflict 'entre o mundo e o texto, entre representação e produção significativa, entre a leitura imaginária da escrita como espelho e a travessia de uma opacidade'.<sup>440</sup> As a consequence, there are interesting similarities between Llansol and Saramago – particularly, since Saramago could be considered part of the Portuguese literary canon, his inclusion obviously justified by the Nobel Prize; whereas Llansol is still very much pushed aside into a literary ghetto. In order to stress the similarities and differences between both authors, I would like to refer to Manuel Gusmão's article on the question of history in Saramago's fiction, stressing *a posteriori* how his ideas might correspond to, or clash with, Llansol.

Gusmão lists some of the strategies used by Saramago in order to interweave fiction and history:

uma ampliação do *teclado verbal* e dos modos narrativos, assim como uma *diversificação dos mundos de referência* constituídos pela ficção;  
uma renovada *vontade de efabulação* e um comprazimento lúcido na arte de contar histórias, que se prolongam em formas diversas de integrar o *maravilhoso ou o fantástico*, mas também o humor e a sátira;  
diferentes regimes da *textualização poética da narrativa*;

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<sup>438</sup> Arenas, p. xxix.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxix-xxx.

<sup>440</sup> Maria Alzira Seixo, *A Palavra do Romance*, pp. 22-23.

uma clara *autoconsciência dos procedimentos* narrativos que se pode manifestar quer no jogo com as formas composicionais ou com a arquitectura textual, quer na sua erosão.<sup>441</sup>

My emphasis in italics stresses how these strategies correspond to those employed in Llansol's writing. First, as Maria Alzira Seixo states, Llansol's text is essentially a 'poetic fiction'<sup>442</sup> in which we witness a total and self-conscious 'libertação semântica e sintáctica que o lirismo como género permite', through mechanisms such as 'o onirismo, a desarticulação narrativa, uma concepção da aventura como manifestação contraditória do decurso do tempo'.<sup>443</sup> According to Seixo, Llansol is the most revealing case of a 'processo de mutação' in Portuguese literature, 'perigosamente oscilante sobre esse vazio onde se joga e não suporta como livro, que para mais o é de Comunidades, referência aberta à solidão comum'.<sup>444</sup> Consequently, Llansol's narrative (like Saramago's, according to Gusmão) follows the principles of 'uma clara autoconsciência dos procedimentos narrativos', since her text is an 'organização de pequenos núcleos sequenciais desligados uns dos outros mas cuja tutela conjunta é possível detectar-se num grande *sintagma totalizante*, que se formula muito mais em termos de constituição semântica ou discursiva coesa do que em termos de relato, de história que se conta'.<sup>445</sup>

Secondly, by amplifying the verbal spectrum and expanding narrativity towards *textuality* the Llansolian text becomes primarily based on language as a 'sintagma totalizante', defining its essence through a daily struggle against the *impostures* that language exerts over the individual. The issue of *imposture* is clearly established by Llansol in *Um Beijo Dado Mais Tarde* (1990), yet all her texts undoubtedly raise questions about language and how to escape its rhetorical or grammatical constraints, discourses of power, or, in other words, how 'the unprecedented violence of human power has its deepest roots in this structure of language'.<sup>446</sup>

*Um Beijo*, the novel that earned Llansol her first prestigious APE award, is a text which could be read like a 'gesto com a escrita em direcção a alguém no

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<sup>441</sup> Manuel Gusmão, 'O Sentido Histórico na Ficção de José Saramago', *Vértice*, 87 (November/December, 1998), 7-22 (p. 8) (emphasis mine).

<sup>442</sup> Seixo, *A Palavra do Romance*, p. 26.

<sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>444</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>445</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>446</sup> Giorgio Agamben, 'Preface: *Experimentum Linguae*', in *Infancy and History – On the Destruction of Experience*, trans. by Liz Heron (London: Verso, 2007) p. 8.



tempo'.<sup>447</sup> In this way, the kiss of the title is now transformed into text – testimony, memory, *ruah* – given later ('dado mais tarde').<sup>448</sup> Here Llansol introduces one of her most interesting *figures* (ultimately, her alter ego), Témia, *a rapariga que temia a impostura da língua*, playing with the verb 'temer', to fear, to be scared of the *imposture* of the language or of the tongue (organ) – as Claire Williams reminds us, 'língua' means both in Portuguese.<sup>449</sup> The tongue, Williams signals, is a recurrent subject in Llansol and in *Um Beijo* the reader is initially introduced to a goat whose tongue was cut out but to whom a second tongue,

principiou a nascer-lhe,                      e foi ela a voz.<sup>450</sup>

The narrator explains that it was precisely the space between the cut tongue and the new tongue that generated Témia's legacy. Moreover, 'da intersecção das duas línguas – a que se ouvia balindo [the goat's], e a que nasceu do sangue – voou o Falcão, ou Aossê feito ave'.<sup>451</sup> Even if the reader first thought that the narrator was talking about tongues in general, the reference to falcão (notably, to *Falcão no Punho*) and to Aossê (Llansol's *figure* of Fernando Pessoa) allude immediately to a meaning of tongue beyond the purely anatomical organ; here *língua* becomes language, Llansol (falcão) and Pessoa (the most canonical Portuguese poet of the twentieth century). The *figure* of Témia will be Pessoa's philosophical companion in this book.<sup>452</sup>

To Claire Williams, language's *imposture* should be 'understood as the act of imposing one language, and by implication a code of conduct and way of life, upon an individual or a nation, and the defensive strategies deployed to avoid or counteract this'.<sup>453</sup> Given Llansol's rebellion against the *status quo*, this could be one of its interpretations, yet, *imposture* also means deceiving, not specifically in the sense of lying, but of misrepresentation, trickery, or fraud (note that an impostor is always pretending). This double reading of *imposture* illuminates not only *Um Beijo*, but

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<sup>447</sup> Manuel Gusmão, 'Partilha Generosa do que é Misterioso', *Jornal de Letras*, 18 June 1991, p. 17.

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>449</sup> See Williams, 'Speaking in Tongues'.

<sup>450</sup> *BDMT*, p. 7.

<sup>451</sup> *BDMT*, p. 7.

<sup>452</sup> Témia will be a *figure* in later books as well: in *Lisboaleipzig 2*, Aossê meets a young girl and her dog, explaining that he had 'um amigo que se chamava Juan. Era o chefe supremo de um bando. Uma quadrilhas de peregrinos armados', making an obvious reference to the *communities*. *L2*, p. 108. She is also present in *Inquérito às Quatro Confidências*, when Vergílio Ferreira meets 'a rapariga que saiu do texto', and a dog. Finally, among other texts, in *O Jogo da Liberdade da Alma*, in a passage I will mention below.

<sup>453</sup> Williams, 'Speaking in Tongues', p. 233.

also Llansol's theory about learning how to read a text – and this is why Témia is that sparkling spectre created in order for Llansol to observe herself learning how to read.<sup>454</sup> Llansol's *imposture* is both the meaning of a word as *imposed* by a dictionary or grammatical rules, which Deleuze and Guattari would call *order-words*,<sup>455</sup> and *simultaneously* the deceiving nature of language, its previous meanings, its established preconceptions:

Nunca olhes os bordos de um texto. Tens que começar numa palavra. Numa palavra qualquer se conta. Mas, no ponto-voraz, surgem fugazes as imagens. Também lhes chamo figuras. Não liguês excessivamente ao sentido. A maior parte das vezes, é impostura da língua.<sup>456</sup>

In order to avoid *both* impostures it is essential to highlight one word but allow it to untie itself – like the tongue cut from the goat – from its primary significance, enter the voracity and vibration of the *fulgor* and allow the images to appear. If the reader believes in impostures, s/he will never be able to *see* (read) the *figures*, and consequently the Llansolian text does not attain its objective. The intersection between the cut tongue and the mother tongue is thus a space (*ponto-voraz*) which allows Témia to exist, since, as Eduardo Prado Coelho points out, 'se uma língua vai nascer no lugar da língua arrancada pelo não-dito, esta língua será a da transparência da escrita. A língua transparente vence a impostura da língua suspensa do não-dito'.<sup>457</sup> Michel Foucault once wrote that one should not read the *unsaid* as the solution to the absent meaning of a discourse.<sup>458</sup> *Um Beijo* relies on the *unsaid* to perform its existence, yet its rejection is very much its first premise. In this way, *Um Beijo* blatantly intersects biography and fiction in a manner previously unseen in Llansol.<sup>459</sup> She will turn to some moments exposed in this text in *O Jogo da*

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<sup>454</sup> Jorge Fernandes da Silveira describes the 'plot' of *Um Beijo* thus: 'Na casa da rua Domingos Sequeira, onde Maria Gabriela Llansol nasceu e foi criada, assistida por uma criada, vai ser montada *uma outra casa* para que ela assista ao crescimento e à educação de *si mesma através* da "figura" de Témia, [...] visto que aquela que assiste à lição não pode deixar de ser *assistida por ela*.' Silveira, *O Beijo Partido*, p. 22 (emphasis mine).

<sup>455</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 84.

<sup>456</sup> *BDMT*, p. 112-113.

<sup>457</sup> Eduardo Prado Coelho, 'A rapariga que temia a impostura da língua', in *O Cálculo das Sombras* (Porto: ASA, 1997), pp. 251-260 (p. 257).

<sup>458</sup> Foucault suggests that one should not look into the *unsaid* of discourses, but 'à partir du discours lui-même, de son apparition et de sa régularité, aller vers ses conditions externes de possibilité, vers ce qui donne lieu à la série aléatoire de ces événements et qui en fixe les bornes'. It is, then, the *event*, the *utterance*, the *occurrence* of discourse that are essential, rather than its previous order-words, the possibility of truth, the unity of a narrative or what is left *unsaid*. Michel Foucault, *L'ordre du discours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), p. 55.

<sup>459</sup> Interestingly, this connection between impostures (as fiction and biography) is also stressed by, for instance, Hélène Cixous. When confronted with her nationality (French, born in Algeria, to a German

*Liberdade da Alma* (2003), where she essentially explains what could not have been said before, in *Um Beijo*: ‘Sobre o meu vestido pousava o não dito, um texto que haveria de ser dito, / que, dizendo a vida, fosse capaz de abrir a morte [...] // se escrevo esta breve passagem autobiográfica, / é para indicar onde nasce uma palavra livre.’<sup>460</sup> Consequently, the unsaid ‘que fomenta um dizer hipócrita’<sup>461</sup> is now replaced by a text of freedom, a text that can speak life and death, and in which memory is no longer a haunting structure, but lies in the *ponto-voraz*, the *fulgor*, in the *ruah*, the breath of the origin of life without *imposture*. Llansol rejects the *unsaid* because there is no longer a need to say it. Indeed, as the text explains

‘Havia um *segredo*’ [...] / A. é serva; quando engravida de B, o filho da casa, só pode cantar o amor de boca fechada; alguns anos mais tarde, o filho da casa contrai matrimónio, e dessa união tem uma filha \_\_\_\_\_; o primeiro filho – o da serva – foi abortado; e ‘sobre a casa pairou um mistério, um não-dito [...]. Deste mistério, e no fim de um trabalho executado a som e a cinzel, fez-se *a rapariga que temia a impostura da língua e que queria*’, / através da palavra, / fazer ressoar fortemente, / o seu irmão morto.<sup>462</sup>

The biography lying underneath *Um Beijo* is not, in the end, relevant, for this text rather focuses on how Llansol became a reader and, after the so-called kiss, a writer. To read, to die, to write, to teach how to read – Llansol’s allusion to George La Tour’s painting ‘The Education of the Virgin’ exemplifies how reading and learning are both a ‘mecanismo silencioso de disseminação dos afectos’.<sup>463</sup> The short story ‘E Que Não Escrevia’, in *Depois dos Pregos na Erva*, could be read as a first draft to *Um Beijo*, an *esquisse* of a kiss to be given at the precise moment of reading the Llansolian text.<sup>464</sup> The *imposture* is a structure Llansol tried to combat throughout her literary project – at the end of the text, however, Témia is no longer the girl who

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Ashkenazy Jewish mother), she stated: ‘They put me in the position of imposture. Even now, I sometimes feel pushed to explain myself, to excuse myself, to rectify, like an old reflex. For at least I believed, if not in the truth of being, in a rigor, a purity of language. If a given word turned to the practice of lying, it was because it was being mistreated. Twisted, abused, used idiotically.’ Hélène Cixous, ‘Coming to Writing’, in *Coming to Writing and Other Essays*, trans. by Sarah Cornell, Deborah Jenson, Ann Liddle, and Susan Sellers (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 1-58 (p. 3).

<sup>460</sup> *JLA*, pp. 90-91

<sup>461</sup> Prado Coelho, ‘A rapariga que temia a impostura da língua’, p. 258.

<sup>462</sup> *BDMT*, p. 12 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>463</sup> Prado Coelho, ‘A rapariga que temia a impostura da língua’, p. 253. Maria Etelvina Santos wrote a very interesting analysis of La Tour’s painting in the light of Llansol’s theory of reading. See Maria Etelvina Santos, ‘A Fraternidade do Ímpar – Amar um Cão (2)’, in *Um Ser Sendo – Leituras de Amar um Cão*, ed. by Maria Etelvina Santos, João Barrento and Cristiana V. Rodrigues (Colares: Espaço Llansol, 2007), pp. 18-36 (pp. 34-35). See also George La Tour, *The Education of the Virgin*, ca 1650.

<sup>464</sup> See Llansol, ‘E Que Não Escrevia’, in *DPE*, pp. 7-76 (p. 74).

feared it, for she learned how to read. Not in the margins, but, like the beguines teaching Camões (in *Na Casa de Julho e de Agosto*), she learned ‘uma palavra e a sua sombra’ so that one day she (and Camões) would be able to distinguish between ‘o veneno e a sua cura’.<sup>465</sup> To Llansol, teaching how to read goes beyond the actual reading of a word and its meaning according to the canonized dictionary definition. To read is, above all, to escape *imposture* through the opening up of the text to the other, to the infinite expressions of its *edenic* possibilities. Consequently, for Llansol ‘um texto não “tem” sentido; “é” o sentido que nunca virá a “ter”. Escreve-se desde sempre no futuro desse sentido’.<sup>466</sup>

Language is the *thing*<sup>467</sup> Llansol brought with her from Portugal to exile in Belgium, a *thing* that will later reflect the superimposition of landscapes in her texts – the Tagus and the Elster in *Lisboaleipzig*, or even Portugal’s coast with the Brabant, a superimposition that ‘seria também uma meditação sobre as raízes, terras incultas, paisagem de montado, campos nus de cereais com pousios, / vinha, olival’,<sup>468</sup> witnessing a fusion of the frozen landscapes of Northern Europe with the green grass and ‘oliveiras, as árvores deste país [Portugal]’.<sup>469</sup> Apparently contradictory, the very same language Llansol tried to overcome became ‘o meu único ponto firme, a minha âncora’ in exile,<sup>470</sup> owing to the fact that it was this language that allowed her texts to establish a ‘nó de certeza do meu corpo com o mundo’.<sup>471</sup> In Llansol, language (and its manipulation towards the rejection of *imposture*) allows for the existence of a ‘diversificação dos mundos de referência’, in the words of Gusmão, for language performs the opening of the text to (com)possible ‘other’ worlds,<sup>472</sup> an opening towards the *Drama-Poesia* which is not only ‘um horizonte, ela é a concreta e aberta invenção textual (i) da multiplicidade de figuras, (ii) das metamorfoses do vivo e (iii) da pluralidade dos mundos do mundo’.<sup>473</sup>

The Llansolian text also subscribes to Saramago’s ‘vontade de efabulação’ built into the marvellous or the fantastic, perhaps not exactly in the same way as in

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<sup>465</sup> *SH*, p. 201

<sup>466</sup> Prado Coelho, ‘A rapariga que temia a impostura da língua’, p. 253.

<sup>467</sup> Agamben, *Infancy and History*, p. 4.

<sup>468</sup> *CJA*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>469</sup> *CJA*, p. 47.

<sup>470</sup> *LI*, p. 126.

<sup>471</sup> *LI*, p. 126.

<sup>472</sup> Manuel Gusmão: ‘Os mundos também podem ser compossíveis ou alternativos’, in ‘A História ou o Projecto Humano’, p. 134.

<sup>473</sup> *Idem*, p. 133.

Saramago, but nonetheless showing the way in which textuality can express a plurality of worlds. Maria Alzira Seixo underlines this fact when referring to the presence of the fantastic in Saramago, not as a literary genre, but rather as an artistic strategy that provokes ‘reações específicas de leitura (da personagem em relação ao facto; do leitor em relação à obra) que vão da curiosidade ao medo, da perplexidade ao terror, da estranheza à sedução’, a vision synthesized in the “‘assombro”, essa atitude simultaneamente física e psíquica, feita de espanto e interrogação’.<sup>474</sup> The fantastic in Portuguese literature arises from the rupture with the neoclassical paradigm, although, concurrently, the intrusion of the fantastic performs that same rupture with traditional forms of textuality. Seixo mentions Lúcia Jorge’s *O Dia dos Prodígios* (1980) or Maria Velho da Costa’s *Lúcialima* (1983) as fictions that follow this premise, ‘para não falar numa obra que sistematicamente desenvolve essa via, a de Maria Gabriela Llansol’.<sup>475</sup>

Although both Llansol and Saramago resist letting their works be categorized as fantastic, historical novels or science fiction,<sup>476</sup> both authors employ several narrative techniques which could be described as postmodern, and/or science fiction, in Elisabeth Wesseling’s definition.<sup>477</sup> In the Introduction, we have seen how Llansol’s texts do not totally correspond to postmodernism, yet Wesseling points out how postmodern novelists ‘depart from the traditional historical novel by inventing alternate versions of history, which focus on groups of people who have been relegated to insignificance by official history’.<sup>478</sup> These texts are ‘apocryphal histories’ which introduce ‘the utopian potential of science fiction into the generic model of the historical novel’, in order to produce ‘uchronian’ narratives.<sup>479</sup> The rewriting of history from ‘the perspectives of the losers of historical struggles for power’ is then reflected in a text with ‘a confusing cacophony of dissenting

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<sup>474</sup> Seixo is referring to a study by Duarte Faria, *Metamorfoses do Fantástico na Obra de José Régio* (Paris: Centro Cultural Português/Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1977), in *Lugares da Ficção em José Saramago*, p. 52.

<sup>475</sup> Seixo, *Lugares da Ficção em José Saramago*, p. 53. See also Lúcia Jorge, *O Dia dos Prodígios* (Mem Martins: Europa-América, 1980); Maria Velho da Costa, *Lúcialima* (Lisbon: O Jornal, 1983).

<sup>476</sup> Saramago refuses to assume that his novels are within the ‘historical novel’ category when stating that ‘toda a ficção literária (e, em sentido mais lato, toda a obra de arte), não só é histórica, como não poderia deixar de o ser’. José Saramago, ‘O tempo e a história’, *Jornal de Letras, Artes e Ideias*, 27 January 1999, p. 5. Moreover, Llansol also states that: ‘Não queria ser vista como escritora do fantástico, do romance histórico ou de ficção científica.’ *OYDP*, p. 207.

<sup>477</sup> See Wesseling, *Writing History as a Prophet*.

<sup>478</sup> *Ibid*, pp. vii-viii.

<sup>479</sup> *Ibid*, p. viii.

voices',<sup>480</sup> an obvious characteristic of Llansol's works – a polyphonic and communitarian cacophony of *figures* – and of Saramago's also.<sup>481</sup> Wesseling's argument is particularly interesting here as it suggests that science fiction produces utopian fantasies that 'invent alternate human communities', a possibility that would not be effectively produced by other genres. However, it should be stressed that in *not* writing science fiction, Llansol seeks to create those very same *alternate communities* (not necessarily human) with(in) the text, thus exploring all the possibilities of language in search of the 'assombro' Seixo described before. This is why Jorge Fernandes da Silveira defines *Contos do Mal Errante* as a 'forma de ficção sobre os gêneros da Literatura';<sup>482</sup> this is also why Llansol affirmed the strangeness of the eruption of her texts in the Portuguese language 'porque no interior dessa língua, não havia uma cultura para os receber'.<sup>483</sup> As such, both Llansol's and Saramago's texts concur with Wesseling's thoughts on utopian fantasies and science fiction, since both genres share an 'eschatological dimension, in that they ultimately deal with the problem of how mankind can attain harmony within itself', or how mankind may 'survive into the future'.<sup>484</sup> It is the *possibilitarian* feature of these texts that performs Gusmão's 'vontade de efabulação' through the marvellous or fantastic elements. It is, then, important to explain how Llansol (and Saramago) rewrite historical figures in order to create possible worlds and *communities* projected into the future of mankind.

### Camões, Comuns, Canon

Saramago's 'minor history' represents a rewriting of the historical narrative from the perspective of those to whom a voice was historically denied. In fact, Saramago's vision of history is an account of a life of a 'pessoa comum e corrente, aquela que passa e que ninguém quer saber quem é, que não interessa nada, que aparentemente nunca fez nada que valesse a pena registrar, é a isso que chamo as vidas

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<sup>480</sup> *Ibid*, p. viii and p. 3.

<sup>481</sup> As David Frier points out, 'the importance of a plurality of voices (most famously discussed, of course, by Bakhtin in connection with the writing of Dostoevsky) is one of the key aspects of Saramago's writing'. Frier, p. 14.

<sup>482</sup> Silveira, 'A Crise dos Gêneros', p. 49 (emphasis mine).

<sup>483</sup> *LI*, p. 95. Llansol writes that the culture in which 'os meus textos se inserem não sei se algum dia existirá, mas se vier a existir, o que escrevo também será um *topos*'. See Llansol, 'Post-fácio a Sousa Viterbo ou a Linguagem dos Pássaros', in Sousa Viterbo, *O Fantasma do Lago* (Lisbon: Rolim, 1986), n. p.

<sup>484</sup> Wesseling, p. 95.

desperdiçadas'.<sup>485</sup> These wasted lives (or waste *of* lives) are extremely similar to Llansol's concept of 'restante vida', *the life that is left* of the poor man who will become the rebel, in Saramago's words, 'milhões de pessoas que se foram embora e não deixaram rasto nem sinal'.<sup>486</sup> According to Llansol, since there is no memory of the human (because we have been *dehumanized*) 'mais vale guardar em memória o resto, todos os restos, a restante vida'.<sup>487</sup> By following the *rasto* of the *restos* (the footsteps of the remnants), Saramago and Llansol's projects ultimately meet in their rewriting of history from the point of view of the voiceless. But their narratives have not only presented anonymous people. On the contrary, although the anonymous were there – Jade, Témia or Prunus Triloba; Joana Carda, Blimunda or João Mau-Tempo – they were given equal prominence with historical Portuguese (or European) figures, whose names we recognize, who both authors now recycle into 'mere' characters. Saramago has a 'tendency to resurrect other writers from historical death into the life of contemporary discourse'<sup>488</sup> – such as Fernando Pessoa and Ricardo Reis in *O Ano da Morte de Ricardo Reis* (1984); or Camões in *Que Farei com Este Livro?* (1980). As David Frier explains, in Saramago (this could be extended to Llansol), the appropriation of historical figures thus permits 'the author to expand the imaginative force of his writing, and also to cleverly co-opt writers, dead and alive, to his own world vision'.<sup>489</sup>

In Saramago the rejection of history (and historiography) as a 'master-narrative',<sup>490</sup> a claim for 'truth' or a 'myth', allows the emergence of decentred or marginal readings of facts which constantly question 'humanist certainties about the nature of the self and of the role of consciousness and Cartesian reason (or positivistic science), but they do that by inscribing that subjectivity and only then contesting it'.<sup>491</sup> Saramago's works correspond to the 'historiographic metafiction' which Linda Hutcheon puts forward as representative of postmodern novels. Llansol's works correlate with some aspects of postmodern writing as described by Hutcheon, such as the recuperation 'of the past in the name of the future' through a

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<sup>485</sup> Carlos Reis, *Diálogos com José Saramago* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1998), p. 82

<sup>486</sup> Carlos Reis, p. 81.

<sup>487</sup> *RV*, p. 100.

<sup>488</sup> Frier, p. 18.

<sup>489</sup> Frier, p. 18.

<sup>490</sup> See Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne*.

<sup>491</sup> Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, p. 19.

‘re-evaluation of and a dialogue with the past in the light of the present’.<sup>492</sup> Simultaneously, both Saramago and Llansol use ‘historiographic metafiction’ to present a parodic reading or re-enactment of history. Ironic parody ‘enables this contradictory doubleness’ as an intertext between history and fiction.<sup>493</sup> According to Hutcheon, the intertextual parody ‘offers a sense of the presence of the past, but a past that can be known only from its texts, its traces’.<sup>494</sup> As such, to parody, Hutcheon continues, ‘is not to destroy the past; in fact, to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it’.<sup>495</sup>

Three Portuguese historical figures are ‘parodied’ (in Hutcheon’s sense) in Llansol’s second trilogy *O Litoral do Mundo*, a title that clearly corresponds to the time these figures belonged to: the period of the Discoveries. Camões, King Sebastião and Vasco da Gama are Llansolian figures in *Causa Amante* and in *Da Sebe ao Ser*, whilst in *Contos do Mal Errante* Llansol moves away from the Portuguese coast, back to the heart of Europe, and to the siege of the city of Münster in 1534-1535. Even though the ‘narrative space’ of *Contos* is outside Portuguese territory, its historical period roughly matches the one presented in *Causa Amante* (the imaginary return of King Sebastião, alive, from the battle of Alcazarquivir in 1578) and in *Da Sebe ao Ser* (when Vasco da Gama returns from his first journey to India, in 1499).<sup>496</sup> At the same time, by moving *Contos* (the second volume of the trilogy) to the core of Europe, she is questioning history: ‘Penso muitas vezes: “E se Vasco da Gama não tivesse voltado...”?’<sup>497</sup> If Da Gama did not return, history, Portugal, and the future would have been different. The same premise sustains the first volume, *Causa Amante*, in which one of the beguines, Eleanora, challenges the order of things by stating ‘a nossa língua não é verdadeira, que o português que falamos é uma impostura’,<sup>498</sup> to which the narrator (Ana de Peñalosa?) replies, admitting the dual feeling of regretting the acceptance of the exclusion, ‘em que queres, no entanto, ser admitida’.<sup>499</sup> Eleanora is not convinced: ‘A língua que falamos é uma invenção fabulosa’, echoing the future prescribed by Alejo Carpentier, in the epigraph to *A Jangada*, ‘mas nós nunca poderemos deixar de falar línguas factícias’,

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<sup>492</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

<sup>493</sup> *Ibid*, p. 124.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid*, p. 125.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid*, p. 126.

<sup>496</sup> Note also that the main character in *CME* is Copernicus (1473-1543).

<sup>497</sup> *FP*, p. 37.

<sup>498</sup> *CA*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>499</sup> *CA*, p. 18.



replies the narrator.<sup>500</sup> Note how the text plays with the proximity between the words *fictitious* (as in ‘fabuloso’, imaginary or even fake) and *factitious* (a fact artificially created by art, imitation, rewriting, parody). Even if they appear to be the same, as both point in the direction of fiction and literature, the only way to overcome this play on words is through a daily struggle for a language without *impostures*, without factitious or fictitious characteristics.

Llansol explains how, when combating *imposture*, she sometimes experiences crises in which ‘perco a memória da nossa cosmogonia’.<sup>501</sup> This ‘cosmogony’ (understood as Portuguese literature) is the paradigm which she tried to master and, to a certain extent, overcome, so that she could create a language freed of *imposture*: ‘Querida desfazer o nó que liga, na literatura portuguesa, a água e os seus maiores textos. Mas esse nó é muito forte, um paradigma frontalmente inatacável.’<sup>502</sup> This inescapable and indestructible paradigm, a knot Llansol feels unable to untie, links the Portuguese major texts to the metaphor of water and the sea. After meandering through the heart of Europe in the first trilogy, Llansol decides to come back to the Portuguese coast in order to show how ‘a cultura europeia de que a portuguesa faz parte (a um ponto que os próprios portugueses não imaginam) era marcada pelos encontros de confrontação que não se deram – e podiam ter sido autênticos recomeços de novos ciclos de pensamentos e de formas de viver.’<sup>503</sup> What if Copernicus had met Camões? Llansol’s hypothetical suggestion sustains the idea that ‘teria sido tão diferente o final do canto IX dos Lusíadas [...] e o encontro amoroso na Ilha teria alcançado um âmbito que nunca poderá conseguir por mais cálculos cabalísticos que se façam.’<sup>504</sup>

In *Causa Amante*, Llansol recovers the space-time of *Na Casa de Julho e de Agosto* (the last volume of *Geografia dos Rebeldes*), Lisbon and the Capuchos convent in Sintra – literally, the *coast of the world*, where ‘a terra acaba e o mar começa’,<sup>505</sup> the westernmost point of Europe, ‘o extremo ocidental do Brabante’,<sup>506</sup>

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<sup>500</sup> CA, p. 19.

<sup>501</sup> FP, p. 40.

<sup>502</sup> FP, p. 32

<sup>503</sup> FP, p. 97.

<sup>504</sup> FP, p. 97.

<sup>505</sup> *Os Lusíadas*, III, 20: ‘Eis aqui, quase cume da cabeça, / De Europa toda, o Reino Lusitano, / Onde a terra acaba e o mar começa, / E onde Febo repousa no Oceano’. Camões, *Os Lusíadas* (Lisbon: Arcádia, 1971), p. 90.

<sup>506</sup> Llansol, ‘O Extremo Ocidental do Brabante’, in *L1*, pp. 124-134 (p. 124).

superimposing once again ‘a minha língua confrontada às vossas paisagens’,<sup>507</sup> and uniting Portugal and Belgium in an ‘encontro inesperado do diverso’.<sup>508</sup> In *Na Casa*, Luís M. (Camões) will write letters to a group of beguines who will pursue a nomadic movement (*space*) towards the beginning of Portuguese history, whilst simultaneously, *time* ‘caminha até ao lugar onde Luís M. nasceu’,<sup>509</sup> no longer in Portugal, as history has it, but in between the Brabant and Baghdad. He is born outside the language that received him, outside the culture that created him: ‘O exílio levou-nos a falar a língua por dentro e a olhá-la por fora.’<sup>510</sup> As such, Luís M. can now speak/write without *imposture*. He was born out of an edenic relationship between the Brabant, Lisbon and Baghdad, inhabiting the margins as a place of origin: ‘Não era aí [na Mesopotâmia], ao que diz o mito, o Jardim do Éden, a origem de tudo?’, asks João Barrento.<sup>511</sup> A beguine departs from Lisbon to the Middle East searching for the spring of the Tigris and the Euphrates, searching for an origin. Luís M., later metamorphosed into Comuns, the poor man of the *community*, becomes both son, apprentice and lover of the beguines, because he is the one who will teach them the language ‘pura e agreste’<sup>512</sup> (Portuguese) and explain how ‘o meu país é um país de rebeldes pobres. De dia são miseráveis; de noite, opulentos na ilha dos amores’.<sup>513</sup> At the end of the novel, the beguines leave Bruges and take shelter in Lisbon, when the rest of Europe is burning with religious flames – a wind that will soon reach the coast of the world, which is the premise for the second trilogy: ‘Vai chegar o tempo em que os irmãos do livre espírito serão perseguidos pelas hierarquias e que nós, beguinas, os esconderemos na teia de uma ampla rede clandestina.’<sup>514</sup> Comuns is now the *figure* of Camões, invisible to human eyes, but alive in the Llansolian text. As the name states, he is common to the *community*, supported by that clandestine network of rebels. Yet he is now also absent ‘na paisagem territorial do livro’, a Llansolian reference to how the Camões-historic-symbol of the nation became the mere Camões-writer-of-an-epic-poem, and how the Portuguese people forgot (or misused) their writer. Perhaps Llansol chose the paradigmatic Camões-as-*figure* because he is a synecdoche of the Portuguese nation,

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid*, p. 124.

<sup>508</sup> Subtitle of *Lisboaleipzig 1*.

<sup>509</sup> *CJA*, p. 20.

<sup>510</sup> *CJA*, p. 24.

<sup>511</sup> Barrento, ‘Herbário de Faces’, p. 179.

<sup>512</sup> *CJA*, p. 115.

<sup>513</sup> *CJA*, p. 122.

<sup>514</sup> *CJA*, p. 29.

but also of freedom. It was for the recreation (both in the sense of amusement and recreation) of the garden of Eden that Camões wrote the ninth *Canto* of *Os Lusíadas*, the infamous section on the Island of Love, that was criticized by the Inquisition,<sup>515</sup> and that was later censored by the dictatorship. Indeed, in the words of Saramago's Camões: 'Devo agradecer o mal que me fazem, à conta de não mo terem feito maior.'<sup>516</sup>

Luís Vaz de Camões in Saramago's play *Que Farei com Este Livro?* is a fragile and melancholic writer, an eyeless poor man who returned from India without a penny – 'que misérias mais custosas de suportar que esta pobreza costumada?', his mother wonders<sup>517</sup> – and who is now trying to sell the manuscript of *Os Lusíadas* with the consent of the Santo Ofício and the support of the young King Sebastião. As his friend Diogo do Couto states, 'em todo o reino não há poeta maior'.<sup>518</sup> However, Saramago, never complacent with the powerful, describes the young King and the nobility around him as vain and futile. Sebastião does not want to get married (even though the kingdom has no succession if he does not have children): 'À Companhia [de Jesus] não convém que el-rei case tão cedo. Casando el-rei, quem sabe se continuaria a ouvir-nos, ainda que pouco?'<sup>519</sup> Priests want to convince him that faith is more important than lineage, but the young King does not pay much attention to what the Inquisition has to say about the kingdom, rather, he prefers to enjoy the pleasures of hunting: 'É de manhãs assim que el-rei mais gosta. É o seu maior prazer, cavalgar às cegas. [...] Sim, manhãs de nevoeiro.'<sup>520</sup> Obviously, the reference to the fog is a sign of an errant evil that will soon reach the country's shores – as we will see.

The humiliation of Luís Vaz is the mechanism used by Saramago to highlight the fragility of his character and of his poem, and to underline how history did not ensure their magnanimity. Supported by his mother Ana de Sá, his beloved Francisca de Aragão and his friend Diogo do Couto, characters who believe in his talent and the importance of the poem, the audacity of Camões is crushed by the apathetic King Sebastião, when the poet tries to read him a verse:

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<sup>515</sup> 'Vossa Mercê por todo o lado introduz nudezas, e em tal excesso que fará da leitura um constante alarme aos sentidos', says the priest to Camões in Saramago's play *Que Farei com Este Livro?*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Lisbon: Caminho, 1999), p. 118.

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid*, p. 139.

<sup>517</sup> *Ibid*, p. 51.

<sup>518</sup> *Ibid*, p. 54.

<sup>519</sup> *Ibid*, p. 24.

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30.

(D. Sebastião, que tem ouvido indiferente, avança para o outro lado e retira-se, levando atrás de si todo o séquito, incluindo a figuração que estivera presente desde o princípio da cena. Luís de Camões permanece como estava, com um joelho em terra, segurando os papéis abertos.)<sup>521</sup>

Note that *all* the players leave the stage, enhancing the solitary figure of Camões literally on his knees, simultaneously honouring the King to whom this poem is dedicated, and humiliated before his lack of interest, is a powerful image of an individual brought down by the power structure. He was here denied a voice of his own – even if his voice will be printed in the ten *Cantos* of his epic poem, no one will listen to him. The behaviour of the grandson of Vasco da Gama, the hero of *Os Lusíadas*, is extremely similar to that of the King: ‘Decerto não quereis contar-me a história da minha família (*risos das aias*).’<sup>522</sup> Certainly that was not the case, yet when the Count refuses to listen to the insistent Luís Vaz, the Countess tears the manuscript into pieces throwing them to the floor. Immediately after, like blind followers, ‘*aias e moços precipitam-se, disputam os fragmentos, e rasgam-nos em bocadinhos cada vez mais pequenos, atirando-os ao ar.*’<sup>523</sup> The pressure of the Inquisition to change some passages of *Os Lusíadas*, with a veiled threat that next time someone might really censor it (a clear allusion to future amputations of the text),<sup>524</sup> coupled with the fact that Camões had to concede the copyright to his publisher because he could not afford to publish his own book, attest to the multiple humiliations of the poet who is, ironically, now the symbol of Portugal’s literature.

The scene between Camões, Diogo do Couto and Damião de Góis exemplifies how,<sup>525</sup> to Saramago, the plague and the fog in Portugal (throughout the country, but essentially in the court) can only be overcome with the existence of strong-willed intellectual minds, men and women who dare to defy the powerful, even if sometimes they are silenced by the Inquisition (like Damião de Góis himself), or by history (like Camões). Indeed, to Saramago ‘só as ideias dos intelectuais podem ganhar raiz, amparadas pelo amor, por alguns laivos de espírito de tolerância e de sacrifício maior da fidelidade à criação mediante a perda de tudo o mais’.<sup>526</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> *Ibid*, p. 75 (emphasis in the original, stage direction).

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid*, p. 95.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid*, p. 95.

<sup>524</sup> The priest warns Camões: ‘Quando alguém entra numa quinta sem acordar os cães, haverá de redobrar de cuidado para não os acordar à saída’. *Ibid*, p. 144.

<sup>525</sup> See Act I, Scene 2 in Saramago, *Que Farei com Este Livro?*, pp. 97-116.

<sup>526</sup> Seixo, *Lugares da Ficção em José Saramago*, p. 33.

For Saramago, knowledge is power, above filiation, inheritance or a birth certificate. As such, at the end of the play, he proposes to return to the conjugation of the verb in the title, ‘Que farei com este livro?’.<sup>527</sup> We no longer witness Camões wondering what *he* shall do with this book (since we have seen how hard he tried to do *something* with it, and no one really cared). Instead he asks us what *we* shall do with it, thus opening up the play towards its audience, the Portuguese. In this scene, states Luís Francisco Rebello, Saramago converts the epic poem into an ‘instrumento de pedagogia revolucionária’, and a new drama starts, but no longer with Camões as the protagonist. Rather, ‘o destinatário do seu livro e a sua razão maior de ser’ are the Portuguese people.<sup>528</sup>

Through the recreation and the rewriting of the *figure* of Camões, both Saramago and Llansol are corroborating Eduardo Lourenço’s statement that Camões does not belong to anyone.<sup>529</sup> His figure cannot be owned, even if the New State always celebrated Camões ‘às avessas’, taking advantage of *Os Lusíadas* as propaganda for the regime, praising the noble and brave deeds of the Portuguese, and consequently, ‘sob pretexto de servir Camões’, the regime succumbed to the ‘tentação de se servir dele’.<sup>530</sup> According to Harold Bloom, in the enduringly polemic *Western Canon*, Shakespeare is *the* Western canon, because ‘without Shakespeare, [there is] no canon [...], no recognizable selves in us, whoever we are’, and our debt to Shakespeare is ‘not only our representation of cognition but much of our capacity for cognition’.<sup>531</sup> To Bloom, writing is a constant rewriting, dwelling on previous influences in order to inscribe something new (which he called the ‘anxiety of influence’).<sup>532</sup> The canon *is* Shakespeare because every writer rewrites the Shakespearean morality and dichotomous vision of the world. Yet, contrary to Bloom’s affirmation, in Portuguese culture, history and identity, the canon is not Shakespeare, but *Camões*. As Lourenço states, the responsibility of Portuguese poets and writers is to maintain and continue ‘o diálogo nunca interrompido’ with the Poem,<sup>533</sup> through the *reading* of ‘o seu livro imortal’, since by reading it over and

<sup>527</sup> Saramago, *Que Farei com Este Livro?*, p. 174.

<sup>528</sup> Luís Francisco Rebello, ‘Prefácio (Talvez) Supérfluo’, in José Saramago, *Que Farei com Este Livro?*, pp. 7-15 (p. 15).

<sup>529</sup> Lourenço, *O Labirinto da Saudade*, p. 149.

<sup>530</sup> *Ibid*, p. 157.

<sup>531</sup> Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages* (London: Papermac, 1995), p. 40.

<sup>532</sup> See Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*.

<sup>533</sup> Lourenço, *O Labirinto da Saudade*, p. 156.

over, each creator ‘remodela sem cessar essa mesma imagem, cada um é dela supremamente garantia e fiador’.<sup>534</sup>

### King Sebastião, Dom Arbusto, Rhizomes

At the end of *Na Casa*, the reflection of Ana de Peñalosa is an example of how in Llansol a book is never an ending (or even never-ending), because ‘quando se atinge este fim, as origens estão próximas’.<sup>535</sup> Ana explains how, as the woman who writes this text, ‘nós, Comuns e eu, e eu, e eu em Comuns [...] não sabíamos que esta cidade era inflamável’,<sup>536</sup> and so she must protect the *community*, once again creating another “‘terra quase ilha”, a visão terrífica de Portugal, dominado por uma peste que não era “da natureza da doença mas da natureza da estupidez e do ódio”’.<sup>537</sup> There is an errant evil spreading out its thousand tentacles through the continent, a plague that will ultimately reach Portugal. The last scene of *Na Casa* – a prologue to *Causa Amante*, it could be said – displays how, even after the imminent tragedy of Portuguese history, evil disseminates through infection because this disease is intrinsic to Portugal:

[O] rei suspeito de ser sonhador fala com um frade que é seu senhor de espírito [...]:

– Amanhã só verei este Convento vogando nas águas; aonde eu for, a Serra de Sintra estará diante de mim; quem imaginaria que é para perdê-la, ou ganhá-la, que eu vou combater em África. [...]

– Senhor – disse o frade –, como sempre aqui, a manhã está húmida e fria. Não vos deixeis tomar por um medo arrepiante.

– Tragam o meu cavalo – disse o rei. – Se eu perder com o inimigo, se algum mal me acontecer, esse mal virá ter convosco.

– Esse mal já está aqui – disse o frade. – Mesmo se as nossas celas têm entradas tão pequenas.<sup>538</sup>

Similar metaphors of ‘disease’ and ‘evil’ punctuate *Que Farei...?*, namely Camões’s mother’s description of India as ‘uma doença de Portugal’,<sup>539</sup> or the premonition of the Cardinal when speaking to Dona Catarina, grandmother of Sebastião: ‘Pressinto que grandes desgraças cairão sobre Portugal se a tempo não nos precavermos.’<sup>540</sup> If in the first trilogy, Llansol turned her back on Portugal and moved to the core of Europe

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<sup>534</sup> *Ibid*, p. 156.

<sup>535</sup> *CJA*, p. 127.

<sup>536</sup> *CJA*, 136.

<sup>537</sup> Barrento, ‘Herbário de Faces’, p. 188.

<sup>538</sup> *CJA*, pp. 136-137.

<sup>539</sup> Saramago, *Que Farei com este Livro?*, p. 49

<sup>540</sup> *Ibid*, p. 38.

– probably a reflection of her own personal movement from Portugal to Belgium –, with *Causa Amante*, Llansol, still living in Herbais, turns her text towards the ‘coast of the world’. She explains how that physical movement did not interfere with the fact that she wrote in Portuguese. On the contrary, from her diaries one could infer that exile provided her with the necessary tools in order to be able to write (about) Portugal. ‘Fui à procura do nosso contexto. E escrevendo sobre lugares alienos, estrangeiros, dei a impressão de não estar a falar daqui. / Mas eu nunca saí daqui, no sentido em que nunca abandonei o meu corpo.’<sup>541</sup> *Causa Amante* displays that contradictory movement of exile and the immutability of the body – in this case, not Llansol’s, but King Sebastião’s.

The beguines are in a house in Cape Espichel discussing how the only way to escape *impostures* is to detach oneself from a territory. Ana de Peñalosa explains, in many languages, that they must open the door towards the water: ‘Suponho que desapareceremos debaixo dessa ideia marítima [...] e, à hora em que a manhã já deve nascer, encontramos-nos fora de qualquer alcance, salvos da língua.’<sup>542</sup> Thus, the way to escape imposture is to move like a stone raft or island towards the middle of the ocean, so that through the contact with water, language will be purified of its impurities.

Unlike history that saw Sebastião killed in Alcazarquivir, and his body never retrieved, the Llansolian text saw the King land on the shore, bleeding, but even so, alive, to be protected by the communities of beguines in Sintra. ‘Nunca mais Sebastião seria o Rei, dele tudo se havia perdido, a não ser o corpo que nós tínhamos.’<sup>543</sup> In the same way that Llansol never left Portugal because her body was always connected to the sea, ‘que era, para esse povo, como a última linha de um texto’,<sup>544</sup> so Sebastião returned to Portugal in order to change the course of history. ‘Os que lutam e perdem batalhas, como Müntzer, vivem as suas vidas ignoradas em ideias submersas’, the narrador explains.<sup>545</sup> Sebastião, like Müntzer’s head in the trilogy *A Geografia dos Rebeldes*, will become a *figure* in the Llansolian text so that no one will have to listen to the question ‘Quem sou?’, again, echoing Frei Luís de Sousa who similarly returned from the battle, and ends up answering, for himself and

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<sup>541</sup> *FP*, p. 135.

<sup>542</sup> *CA*, p. 38.

<sup>543</sup> *CA*, p. 51.

<sup>544</sup> *CA*, p. 46.

<sup>545</sup> *CA*, p. 51.

for the King: ‘Ninguém!’<sup>546</sup> Sebastião thus ceases to be a ‘*português* de camoniana e hegemónica memória’, becoming in its place the ‘*português-ninguém*, imerso e dissolvido no universal de todos’, as Lourenço points out in a reference to Garrett’s ‘Ninguém-Portugal’.<sup>547</sup> The King asks repeatedly that question which reverberates in Portuguese identity,

mas só sabia reconhecer quem não era, não era um clérigo, não era um homem que transportava as armas, não era um filho segundo; era um homem deitado por terra num campo de batalha [...]. Quando, ao raiar do dia, meditava com o monge no convento dos Capuchos, não era bem do reino que pensava, nem nas jornadas de África, era sempre a mesma pergunta: – Quem sou? – Que o destino do reino estivesse dependente dessa pergunta de escravo, fora o pecado que acabara de confessar.<sup>548</sup>

The country was lost because the King never actually returned, and Úrsula, the beguine who looks after Sebastião, listens ‘aos gritos, a gente-própria deste reino’ about to be taken over by the Spanish reign of Philip II.<sup>549</sup> The persistent fog brings the inability to see beyond the landscape, and so the future of the country cannot be foreseen. The *poor man* returns with a manuscript (*Os Lusíadas*?) and Úrsula listens to his voice reading the text to the young King, ‘escrevo coso; escrevo ou coso; quem lê, vela a meu lado; não escrevo, deixo-o escrever’.<sup>550</sup> On the reverse side of Úrsula’s embroidery there was the landscape of a battle, ‘escrevo coso; escrevo ou coso; quem me fala, ouve a meu lado; mas o ser escrito, que nesse instante lhe aparecera em forma corpórea pela primeira vez’ (a *figure* appeared out of *fulgor*) ‘já lhe levara pelos ares o tecido, / para lá da janela, / para lá do desastre da batalha, / para lá da última extremidade do cabo Espichel’.<sup>551</sup> Through that movement (writing and sewing), Úrsula realizes that a beguine’s duty is to ‘coser as almas’ of the *figures* together, so that they could ‘despoetiza[r] tudo o que pudesse fazer-se com a língua’.<sup>552</sup> This moment is extremely important because the beguines will finally attain a language without *imposture*, without any traces of nostalgia for a past or a memory, without attachment to a territory. They could now perform a

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<sup>546</sup> Act I, Scene 15, in Almeida Garrett, *Frei Luís de Sousa* (Lisbon: Editorial Comunicação 1982), p. 185.

<sup>547</sup> Lourenço, *O Labirinto da Saudade*, p. 111.

<sup>548</sup> *CA*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>549</sup> *CA*, p. 57.

<sup>550</sup> *CA*, p. 58.

<sup>551</sup> *CA*, p. 60.

<sup>552</sup> *CA*, p. 61.



‘transplantação da língua’<sup>553</sup> through the transplantation of a bush with the body of Sebastião, a passage from human language to the vegetal realm. ‘Dom Arbusto’, as the text will call him from now onwards, is Sebastião descending into the vegetal world, metamorphosed into a bush: ‘Spirea? Forsythia? acuba japonica? giesta?; estava a desabrochar em flores amarelas [...] e ainda se sentia, em parte, no meio de um entrechocar de espadas e de línguas estrangeiras que lhe abandonavam os olhos.’<sup>554</sup>

The transubstantiation of the King into a bush is extremely significant in Llansol because this metamorphosis from human to plant is something she affirms as usual in her *oeuvre*.<sup>555</sup> At the same time, the *figure* of Sebastião, whose death submerged the Portuguese in a long, depressive wait for a man who would restore the order relinquished when the crown was taken by the Spanish, is symptomatic of the way in which Llansol is constantly refusing the *impostures* established by language (Portuguese) and history. By questioning the labyrinth of longing inherent to Portuguese identity, Llansol is therefore disputing historical narrative through a rewriting of facts, a ‘what if’ that is now projected into the future of Portugal, rather than its past, as the Portuguese would continue to wait for that fateful foggy morning of hope.

The metamorphosis of Sebastião into Dom Arbusto shares surprising coincidences with the notion of *rhizome* as established by Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>556</sup> In botany, a rhizome is a ‘continuously growing horizontal underground stem that puts out lateral shoots and adventitious roots at intervals’, according to the English dictionary. Deleuze and Guattari use the same definition but apply it to writing, literature and power because (and this is particularly applicable to the Llansolian text) a book has no object, nor subject, as it presents ‘lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification’.<sup>557</sup> The philosophers explain how a book

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<sup>553</sup> CA, p. 61.

<sup>554</sup> CA, p. 64.

<sup>555</sup> Chapter Four will focus on the presence of different realms (human, vegetable and animal) in the works of Llansol.

<sup>556</sup> Llansol (and Deleuze’s philosophy) was extremely influenced by Spinoza’s concept of *Deus sive natura*, enunciated in *The Ethics*. God *or* nature: the ‘or’ does not mean a dichotomy, rather an inclusion. The human being is in constant and dynamic relationship with the environment that surrounds him. God is *in* everything – there is no reason to separate beings into hierarchies (humans, vegetables, animals, rocks and objects). They are all at the same level. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 3-28.

<sup>557</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

could no longer be a metaphor for a tree, imitating the world and nature (as Llansol would put it, *narrativity*), rather it becomes rhizome, which like a bulb ‘can be connected to anything other’. In this sense, a rhizome is completely different from trees and roots, which ‘plot a point, fix an order’<sup>558</sup>; rather, a rhizome ‘ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles’.<sup>559</sup> This is when a rhizome becomes a multiplicity, horizontal instead of vertical arborescent connections that reflect a series of combinations with different lineages of objects or subjects changing in nature, in opposition to the classical or romantic book – the rhizome against the tree.<sup>560</sup> The metamorphosis of Sebastião into a bush has nothing to do with becoming a tree, for in the Llansolian text we witness a movement along different speeds, broken chains, mutations of nature, the annulment of objects that become subjects and subjects that become plants. ‘Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which [it] is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified’.<sup>561</sup> As such, every book contains a narrative order or constraints imposed by the state apparatus, even if its primary intention is to destroy them through lines of ‘deterritorialization, down which it constantly flees’.<sup>562</sup> Through those vanishing points, the text becomes deterritorialized towards the emergence of the paradigm of *textuality*. No matter how hard one combats language’s *impostures*, there is always an attempt to normalize it, thus restoring its order. It is therefore essential to follow the rhizome as rupture, to break the ties with language in order to allow its multiple permutations. Sebastião is no longer a tree, but a rhizome and if one cuts off Dom Arbusto’s roots, others will reappear, because rhizomes stratify, multiply, spread out, are cartographed, and are deterritorialized. In this way they create new maps, new constructions, new possible geographies. Since rhizomes are ‘antigenealogies’<sup>563</sup> and ‘short-term memory, or [even] antimemory’,<sup>564</sup> Portugal no longer needs to wait for the return of the King – there is no filiation, no reproduction, no descent, rather, things progress by association, by becomings and multiplicities. ‘We should stop believing in trees, roots, and radicles. They’ve made us suffer too much’, write

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<sup>558</sup> *Ibid*, p. 7.

<sup>559</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8.

<sup>560</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10.

<sup>561</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10.

<sup>562</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10.

<sup>563</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12.

<sup>564</sup> *Ibid*, p. 23.

Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>565</sup> Like Llansol, the philosophers associate the tree with the propagation of power – as in the family tree, or the dynastic succession of kings, princes and noblemen who have perpetuated the errant evil. ‘The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb “to be”, but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjugation, “and... and... and”.’<sup>566</sup> The fragmentation of the Llansolian text could, therefore, be seen as a rhizomatic reproduction of ‘and... and... and’, since these figures appear by alliance, not by filiation or descent, but out of a scene of *fulgor*, as we have seen with Jade.

The Llansolian text seems to subscribe to Deleuze and Guattari’s orders to write following ‘the rhizome by rupture’, thus expanding its possibilities, ‘conjugat[ing] deterritorialized flows’.<sup>567</sup> Dom Arbusto, Comuns (and one could say, the Iberian ‘stone raft’, or Saramago’s Camões) are therefore deterritorialized, pushed towards another geography (of the rebels), a map that is

always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight. [...] The rhizome is an acentered, nonhierarchical, non-signifying system without a General and without an organizing memory or a central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states. What is at question in the rhizome, is a relation to sexuality – but also to the animal, the vegetal, the world, politics, the book, things natural and artificial – that is totally different from the arborescent relation [...]. A plateau is always in the middle, not at the beginning or the end. A rhizome is made of plateaus.<sup>568</sup>

The Llansolian text is made of those thousand plateaus, rhizomatic by multiplicity and assemblage, always in the middle, *interbeing* (‘entresser’).<sup>569</sup> In these thousand plateaus, any *figure* from any historical time may appear in the middle of a *scene of fulgor*, an *intermezzo*.

Dom Arbusto propels Llansol’s reflection on Portuguese language and identity forward. This rhizomatic dissemination explains how Sebastião did come back from Africa alive, and how his rhizomes are now deeply rooted in Portuguese soil, horizontally, however, spreading the evil through our cells, no matter how small they are, as the priest predicted.

*Causa Amante* evolves towards the big great earthquake of 1775, but before the historical event that destroyed the city of Lisbon, Llansol refers to other ‘fires’

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<sup>565</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>566</sup> *Ibid*, p. 27.

<sup>567</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12.

<sup>568</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>569</sup> *Ibid*, p. 27.

and ‘earthquakes’ suffered by the country: ‘Já houve um em 1557, outro em 1575, outro em 1598.’<sup>570</sup> In *Contos do Mal Errante*, another date will be added to this calendar of fires: 1534-35, the siege of Münster. The periods overlap in both books – the fires of the *autos-da-fé* that punctuate Lisbon’s landscape are similar to the ‘earthquakes’ suffered in the ‘morticínio e no sangue’ of Münster,<sup>571</sup> a place to which one goes ‘como quem vai à morte que o espera’.<sup>572</sup>

The *figure* of Jorge de Sena (here called Jorge Anés) appears to the beguines in a dream, about to be burnt at the stake for heresy – ‘horrível perspectiva de ver Jorge Anés preso e morrer na forca suspenso pela língua’.<sup>573</sup> Llansol quotes Sena quite clearly, underlining, in the end, how *impostures* arise directly from the superimposition of Camões’ verses and Jorge de Sena’s short story ‘Super Flumina Babylonis’.<sup>574</sup> As Gilda Santos points out, ‘fogo e língua são justamente os sinais mais evidentes da passagem de Jorge de Sena pela obra de Llansol’,<sup>575</sup> and his appearance is a pretext for Llansol to raise the issue of the fire which, instead of erasing *impostures*, usually enhances the power of the strongest (Inquisition). The hypothetical burning of Anés in an *auto-de-fé* cannot be separated from the conversation between Comuns and Anés: ‘O que é a língua?’, one asks, to which the other replies, ‘era impossível que o fogo ardesse’.<sup>576</sup> Indeed, since Anés is in the text, the fire can no longer burn. The sun rose behind a layer of fog and damp that prevented it from proliferating: ‘Era um conluio vegetal, nesse princípio de Primavera, enleado de verde de limoeiro, e de humidade.’<sup>577</sup> Instead of Alcazarquivir, the space of the battle in *Causa Amante* is ‘o jardim que o pensamento permite’, the space of the battle against the *imposture* that will liberate us from a ‘cegueira da língua’<sup>578</sup> provoked by the ashes and the sparks from the fires of faith proclaimed by the Santo Ofício. This passage echoes brilliantly Sena’s most famous epiphany in the

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<sup>570</sup> CA, p. 86. Llansol is certainly referring to Sebastião becoming king in 1557; the foundation of Luanda, which establishes Angola as a colony in 1575; and the death of Sebastião in 1598.

<sup>571</sup> CME, p. 114.

<sup>572</sup> CME, p. 113.

<sup>573</sup> CA, p. 95.

<sup>574</sup> Jorge de Sena, ‘Super Flumina Babylonis’, in *Antigas e Novas Andanças do Demónio* (Lisbon: Edições 70, 1978), pp. 179-192 (p. 176). See CA, p. 88.

<sup>575</sup> Gilda Santos, *Jorge de Sena: Ressonâncias, e Cinquenta poemas* (Rio de Janeiro: 7Letras, 2006), p. 68.

<sup>576</sup> CA, pp. 98-99.

<sup>577</sup> CA, p. 99.

<sup>578</sup> CA, p. 99.

novel *Sinais de Fogo* (1978), the moment in which these verses assault Jorge, the main character, when he writes poetry for the first time:

Sinais de fogo, os homens se despedem  
exaustos e tranquilos, destas cinzas frias.  
E o vento que essas cinzas nos dispersa  
não é de nós, mas é quem reacende  
outros sinais ardendo na distância,  
um breve instante, gestos e palavras  
ansiosas brasas que se apagam logo.<sup>579</sup>

Anés will have to endure being burnt by the Inquisition so that *we* (writers or Portuguese nationals) can continue to write freely. In a reference to *Sinais de Fogo*, Anés explains that he created an escape towards a language without *imposture*, ‘ardendo na distância’ in the Llansolian text: ‘Disse-me que tinha feito um poema sobre o *enterramento do seu corpo* no ar, e que esse prazer era um prazer dado pelo jardim a quem nele ia trespassar; tinha escrito sobre a matéria que se inflama que, quando se apaga, agasta o fogo.’<sup>580</sup>

#### CONCLUSION – TOWARDS A LLANSOLIAN ISLAND

The wind of Sena’s poem will gradually disseminate the ashes, not as an errant evil, rather as a mutation of a body buried in air – *mattermorphoses*. This dispersion will create monsters, the main *figures* of the last volume of the trilogy, *Da Sebe ao Ser*, who will introduce more figures of *poor men* and *rebels*. These ‘great golems’ are the legacy of the Discoveries – the Portuguese must learn how to live in a territory invaded by dead caravels returned from India. ‘Estas caravelas que murcham são o corpo alado do monstro.’<sup>581</sup> If the errant evil cannot spread because the fire cannot burn behind the fog, these monsters will no longer represent evil. Instead, they will be mere metamorphoses of the human, representing the ‘fim de uma época, / e início de uma revolução de apatia que dará frutos’.<sup>582</sup> The journey has not yet ended, ‘só amou aqui, por instantes’.<sup>583</sup> Notably, the journey of the Portuguese through history did not finish with the return of the caravels, rather it continues to be written today against the *imposture* of the language, since, as Comuns prophesized in *Causa Amante*, the *communities* rely on a future day of hope in which ‘todos, afinal, hão-de

<sup>579</sup> Jorge de Sena, *Sinais de Fogo* (Lisbon: Edições 70, 1978), p. 444.

<sup>580</sup> *CA*, p. 101 (emphasis mine).

<sup>581</sup> *SS*, p. 23.

<sup>582</sup> *SS*, p. 23.

<sup>583</sup> *SS*, p. 22.

vir a escrever numa língua em que ninguém se vingá'.<sup>584</sup> It is now time to 'fazer adornecer todas as caravelas',<sup>585</sup> and depart towards a new geography.

The caravels are moored to a jetty in the middle of the forest, which was, ironically, the only place the *community* could be protected from the fires of religious intolerance. The beguine Psalmidia has been living by the caravels 'na esperança de encontrarmos, por entre os monstros, o capitão que domou o grande golém',<sup>586</sup> notably Vasco da Gama, who will become a *figure* in *Da Sebe*, metamorphosed into Vê Gama (the man who *saw* the atrocities performed fuelled by the greed of the Portuguese in the Orient). Da Gama returns from India along with 'doze réprobos e condenados',<sup>587</sup> men who rebelled against the *status quo* and embarked towards the 'ilha desconhecida'.<sup>588</sup> They were tramps, losers, paupers, criminals and murderers, and the beguines recognize a great affinity between these men and the communities of rebels, 'porque é resistência encontrar uma alternativa ao seu destino'.<sup>589</sup> Although they have sailed to the East, these men are inevitably prisoners of 'um imenso país onde sempre houve uma inclinação desordenada para os desastres sensíveis' – Portugal.<sup>590</sup> Even if Da Gama defeated the great golem (Adamastor), and his courage was rewarded with a visit to the Island of Love in *Os Lusíadas*, the caravels returned from India 'sem ouro, cheias de imagens fortes, vãs e loucas'<sup>591</sup>, 'abarrotadas de vazio'.<sup>592</sup> Da Gama faces a life sentence for not being able to erect an empire which would represent the brave deeds of the Portuguese, spreading the errant evil of oppression through the five continents. The orgy of the senses with the nymphs described by Camões is now destroyed by the beguines who tell Da Gama to get rid of the 'phallus', the oppression exerted by the masculine paradigm on the feminine, but also a metaphor for all the oppressions.

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<sup>584</sup> *CA*, p. 156. In this sense, Llansol's hope differs from Saramago's pessimism, since for the Nobel Prize winner the Portuguese historical mission is over: 'Eu acho que estamos cansados. Como portugueses, estamos cansados de viver. Se calhar, a nossa missão histórica acabou.' Adelino Gomes, 'Como portugueses estamos cansados de viver', interview with José Saramago, *Público*, 12 November 2006, p. 36.

<sup>585</sup> *SS*, p. 23.

<sup>586</sup> *SS*, p. 35. See Chapter Three for a comparison of Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and Llansol's monsters, along with a reading of Adamastor as the 'grande golém'.

<sup>587</sup> *SS*, p. 39.

<sup>588</sup> Reference to Saramago, *Conto da Ilha Desconhecida*.

<sup>589</sup> *SS*, p. 40.

<sup>590</sup> *SS*, p. 40.

<sup>591</sup> *SS*, p. 39.

<sup>592</sup> *SS*, p. 19.

*Da Sebe ao Ser* establishes a clear ending to both trilogies, since all the figures from *A Geografia dos Rebeldes*, plus those from the previous volumes of *Litoral do Mundo*, meet here on the journey towards the island of Ana de Peñalosa. San Juan de la Cruz was the literary father of the first trilogy; Camões the mentor of the second. In *Da Sebe ao Ser*, the excommunicated author of *La Noche Oscura* (the leader of the gang of rebels), and the forgotten writer of *Os Lusíadas*, will meet, bringing with them the movement of the rebels from the core of Europe to the margins of the world.<sup>593</sup> *Da Sebe ao Ser*, interestingly one of Llansol's lesser-quoted texts, synthesizes most of Llansol's theory for the future of Europe and Portugal, as a European country. Llansol explains that her fight against *impostures* pursues a 'desejo intenso de que esta cosmognia narrativa nunca seja um império, e que nela abra brechas a minha liberdade humana. / Contra mim também'.<sup>594</sup> Llansol must fight against her own condition as a Portuguese woman inevitably linked to the empire. She must resist this condition through the destruction of the paradigm of water in Portuguese literature, as we have seen. Llansol's new paradigm will not 'forgive' the mistakes carried out by the Portuguese during the colonial period, but her text attempts to reverse the reading of history as a succession of events performed by the powerful, thus giving a voice to those who did not have the opportunity to choose, to realize who they were, to question their essence. They were ignorant of their own condition: 'Estas viagens são feitas por bandos de homens pobres, rondas, por grupos de pessoas que não cultivam qualquer ideia prévia sobre elas mesmas, ou que não usam nenhuma ideia perfectível, ou peregrina, para disfarçar quem sejam.'<sup>595</sup>

In *Da Sebe ao Ser*, Comuns persists in singing the poem to the writer of the text (Ana de Peñalosa, Úrsula, Juan de la Cruz, or Llansol), an insistence that will create an inevitable conflict between the Llansolian text and the *book* (*Os Lusíadas*) since Llansol writes in a 'língua estrangeira dentro da língua de Comuns, e essa língua não tem nenhum território já povoado'.<sup>596</sup> The language freed from *impostures* is now detached from the territory which gave birth to the *poem*: 'O meu conflito com Comuns, o Pobre, se anuncia. Passa horas a ditar-me o seu canto, a dizer-me o que foi, quando, de facto, é o futuro que escreveu o meu, e este texto / dele se afasta,

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<sup>593</sup> Interestingly, this idea of San Juan de la Cruz and Camões as mentors (or literary father figures) of the Llansolian text could be seen as an accomplishment of Saramago's premonition that 'one day' Portugal and Spain will finally integrate.

<sup>594</sup> *SS*, p. 39.

<sup>595</sup> *FP*, p. 50.

<sup>596</sup> *SS*, p. 101.

por sua livre vontade; *nunca foi ditado*.<sup>597</sup> The Llansolian text willingly moves away from the *poem* towards the future, no longer singing the bravery of the Portuguese, but instead pushing the rebels towards a future of hope, a future away from *dictated* texts. Although the Llansolian text performs a literal vomiting up of the canonical Portuguese texts by way of constant allusions and their play on words with verses, poems and references contained within the cultural baggage of every Portuguese reader,<sup>598</sup> it is almost impossible to identify when precisely Llansol is quoting, paraphrasing, appropriating or reversing the sense of these texts or verses that could be considered mythical in Portuguese literature. This mechanism could be seen as a reenactment of T. S. Eliot's 'mythical method',<sup>599</sup> rather than an enshrinement of Portuguese legacy. By appropriating and *simultaneously* reworking mythical texts or *figures* of Portuguese history, Llansol seems to suggest the possibility that 'myth can be transformed from within without losing its power', as Estella Lauter puts it.<sup>600</sup> According to Alicia Ostriker, women writers have always been 'thieves of language',<sup>601</sup> and the fact that many have used mythical narratives in an attempt to subvert oppressive structures (be they literary or social), is not just a mere coincidence with Eliot's 'mythical method'. Ostriker explains how the process of 'revisionist mythmaking' supported by the modernists (Yeats, Eliot, or Pound) is very similar to the one used by contemporary women writers in general, although there are some substantial differences.<sup>602</sup> These differences arise from the gendered mark of these narratives, and from the fact that these women share 'no trace of nostalgia, no faith that the past is a repository of truth, goodness, or desirable social

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<sup>597</sup> *SS*, p. 64 (emphasis mine).

<sup>598</sup> See for instance: 'Menina e moça me levaram de casa de meus pais para longes terras', from Bernardim Ribeiro, *Menina e Moça*; 'Reginaldo, Reginaldo / Pagem do Rei tão querido / Bem puderás, Reginaldo, / Domir a noite comigo', from Almeida Garrett, *Romanceiro*; 'Não há machado que corte a raiz ao pensamento', from Manuel Freire; 'Eu sou aquele oculto e grande cabo', from Camões, *Os Lusíadas*. *RV*, p. 30; p. 31; p. 32; and p. 33.

<sup>599</sup> In the essay 'Ulysses, Order and Myth', T. S. Eliot explains how, as a result of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, 'instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method'. By manipulating myth, one is establishing a 'way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history'. See T. S. Eliot, 'Ulysses, Order and Myth', in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. by Lawrence S. Rainey (London: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 165-167 (p. 167).

<sup>600</sup> Estella Lauter, *Women as Mythmakers – Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth-Century Women* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 74.

<sup>601</sup> Alicia Ostriker, 'The Thieves of Language: Women Poets and Revisionist Mythmaking', *Signs*, 8.1 (Autumn, 1982), 68-90 (p. 69).

<sup>602</sup> Llansol is an interesting example, but so are Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005) or Christa Wolf's, *Cassandra: A Novel and Four Essays*, trans. by Jan van Heurck (New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1984).



organizations'.<sup>603</sup> The past as a repository established the same patriarchal order, and perpetuated, in the words of Jane Marcus, 'blood narratives of adventure and quest',<sup>604</sup> in which women were to be conquered or disposed of (a genre to which *Os Lusíadas* conforms).

'Revisionist mythmaking' is Alicia Ostriker's term for the process through which a writer 'employs a figure or story previously accepted and defined by culture'. Myth, in this sense, is understood as a superstructure imposed by a culture upon its community of readers. In the revisionist process, Ostriker writes, 'the [mythical] figure or tale will be appropriated for altered ends, the old vessel filled with new wine, initially satisfying the thirst of the individual poet but ultimately making cultural change possible'.<sup>605</sup> As a consequence, revisionist mythmaking holds a double power: first, it represents a re-evaluation, or re-interpretation of mythical tales (say, the re-writing of *Os Lusíadas* from a contemporary perspective); secondly, it also represents a re-appropriation of historic or 'quasi-historic figures', which are considered mythical for a specific culture (say, the re-inscription of Vasco da Gama in a contemporary setting).<sup>606</sup>

I do not wish to overemphasize here the similarities between Llansol's project and women's writing more generally,<sup>607</sup> but it is worth noting how Ostriker's 'revisionist mythmaking', even if it is regarded as characteristic of contemporary women's narratives, is a *mechanism* used by writers (unmarked by gender) to perform a constant rewriting of history as hypothetical 'encontros de confrontação'<sup>608</sup> between the figures – Hadewjich, Isabel de Portugal and Copernicus in *Contos do Mal Errante*; King João III and San Juan de la Cruz in *Da Sebe ao Ser*; Bach and Pessoa in *Lisboaleipzig 1* and *2*, and so on. These 'encontros de confrontação' are thus unexpected encounters of the diverse that connect the Llansolian text to a prophetic writing of history, as Elisabeth Wesseling puts it:

Historical events and persons may be transferred from one epoch to another, losers of a power struggle may be turned into winners or vice versa, world-

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<sup>603</sup> Ostriker, p. 87.

<sup>604</sup> Jane Marcus, 'Bluebeard's Daughters: Pretexts for Pre-Texts', in *Feminist Critical Negotiations*, ed. by Alice A. Parker and Elizabeth A. Messe (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1992), pp. 21-30 (p. 27).

<sup>605</sup> Ostriker, p. 72.

<sup>606</sup> As Ostriker puts it: 'Historic and quasi-historic figures like Napoleon and Sappho are in this sense mythic, as are folktales, legends and Scripture.' Ostriker, p. 72.

<sup>607</sup> See Chapter Four for a comparison between Llansol and Virginia Woolf, dwelling on women's writing theory.

<sup>608</sup> *FP*, 97.

historical figures may be made to set out upon an alternative course of action, casual weight may be shifted from one historical factor to another [...]. [C]ounterfactual shifts may envisage an alternate outcome of the perennial historical conflict between the *vis inertiae*, the force which fosters the continual reproduction of the *status quo*, and revolutionary forces aiming at radical change.<sup>609</sup>

This tension Llansol creates with *Os Lusíadas* is, then, exemplary of the mechanism of ‘revisionist mythmaking’. She no longer wishes to sing the brave history of the Portuguese, rather she wants to emphasize the proximity between Portugal and Europe as two entities sharing the same legacy. ‘Como me inspiraria o livro que agonizava na cama?’, asks Úrsula.<sup>610</sup> The agonizing book could no longer be saved – ‘Um homem a morrer chama-se moribundo, e a um livro?’<sup>611</sup> – but Llansol alters its ultimate function thus guaranteeing that the *book* ‘não teria o destino das cinzas’, because ‘uma nação lhe pertencia’.<sup>612</sup> Instead of the Portuguese, *Os Lusíadas* should then celebrate ‘o bando de camponeses da silésia, judeus e ciganos de Dachau, de almocreves, de marinheiros da rota da Índia, de // soldados rasos e comerciantes de canela, de hereges e de heterodoxos’, the poor men of a nation with an ‘insustentável vontade de viajar de paisagem em paisagem, até nos encontrarmos sozinhos’, on the island of the future. This is not the Camonian Island of Love (a *canto* Vê Gama describes as ‘histórias de rameiras, que imaginaste no teu [Camões’s] bordel flutuante’).<sup>613</sup> Instead, the island of the rebels is a simple ‘estado do Universo, entre relações’ of both confrontation and encounters.<sup>614</sup> The Llansolian text shows how ‘para lá da geografia dos lugares há esta geografia’.<sup>615</sup> This is not the space of Portugal as the margin of Europe, or of Europe as the centre of the world, since these world-visions seal a pact with the Princes ‘que apregoam que pobre é quem nasce pobre [...]; apregoam ainda que não devem partilhar os restos de miséria; mais dizem entre si que os seres singulares serão passados a fio de espada’.<sup>616</sup> One must rebel against *impotence* because of its ceaseless dependence on power. As a consequence, the rebels in Camões (the brave Portuguese embarking through history towards the

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<sup>609</sup> Wesseling, p. 100.

<sup>610</sup> *SS*, p. 136.

<sup>611</sup> *SS*, p. 138.

<sup>612</sup> *SS*, p. 137.

<sup>613</sup> *SS*, p. 98.

<sup>614</sup> *SS*, p. 85.

<sup>615</sup> *CA*, p. 106.

<sup>616</sup> *SS*, p. 111.

Island of Love), ‘não saíram ainda da memória’.<sup>617</sup> They still rely on the past to inform their lives.

Llansol seems, therefore, to be answering Paulo de Medeiros’s challenge that literature in Portuguese should re-read *Os Lusíadas* from a postcolonial perspective.<sup>618</sup> Following a parallel between Shakespeare and Camões, Medeiros suggests: ‘Porque não avançar a [história] de Adamastor como ilustração exactamente de uma diferença importante dada a sua transformação de símbolo da submissão ao poder europeu em símbolo de resistência a esse mesmo poder?’<sup>619</sup>

In my opinion, the absence of Llansol’s name in scholarly readings of Portuguese literature in the post-revolutionary context (as we have seen in the Introduction) probably arises from the clear link her texts establish with a European paradigm, rather than a Portuguese or global one. However, as this chapter on the trilogy *O Litoral do Mundo* has demonstrated, the presence of an imperial history or the Discoveries in these texts reflects a contemporary postcolonial predicament in Llansol’s project. As such, the Llansolian text attempts to perform a

compreensão da condição pós-colonial de *Portugal e da Europa*, em áreas como a representação das guerras coloniais, a problemática dos fantasmas que assombram vários nacionalismos europeus, a questão da memória e da sua relação com a história, a reescrita fundamental dos dados históricos e do cânone literário, e ainda a questão das migrações actuais.<sup>620</sup>

The only exception in Llansol’s text (and ironically in Saramago’s as well) is the absence of the reference to the colonial wars. Yet, like Saramago, Llansol establishes a parallel reading of history as a meta-narrative corresponding to a ‘questionamento da memória portuguesa’, which, in Saramago, is always related to a ‘reavaliação da própria institucionalização da História’.<sup>621</sup> Ellen Sapega explains how in Saramago’s *Memorial do Convento* (1982) that questioning of memory and history (in the light of

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<sup>617</sup> SS, 115.

<sup>618</sup> Medeiros does mention scholars who have published postcolonial readings of *Os Lusíadas*, however, my emphasis here is on Portuguese literary creations. António Lobo Antunes’s novel *As Naus* (1988) is an excellent example of a re-appropriation of mythical figures like Vasco da Gama and Camões in a postcolonial context, thus approximating the sixteenth century of the Discoveries with the decolonization period of the twentieth century. António Lobo Antunes, *As Naus* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, Círculo de Leitores, 1988). See Medeiros, ‘Apontamentos para Conceptualizar uma Europa Pós-Colonial’, p. 349.

<sup>619</sup> Medeiros, ‘Apontamentos para Conceptualizar uma Europa Pós-Colonial’, p. 349.

<sup>620</sup> *Ibid*, p. 349 (emphasis mine).

<sup>621</sup> Ellen W. Sapega, ‘Aspectos do Romance Pós-Revolucionário Português: O Papel da Memória na Construção de um Novo Sujeito Nacional’, *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 32.1 (Summer, 1995), 31-40 (p. 35).

Hutcheon's parody) is concomitant with a strong ideological commitment to a possible other (future) world. It is significant that, Sapega states,

a linha temática central de *Memorial do Convento* [seja] aquela que diz respeito à *realização do sonho*, ainda fique por resolver no fim do romance. Ao contrário do que podia parecer, este contínuo retardamento da realização concreta do sonho aponta [...] para um espaço exterior ao texto – para a criação futura de outras ordens, de outros conventos, e, em última instância, de outro tipo de sociedade.<sup>622</sup>

It is precisely the creation of 'outro tipo de sociedade' that guides Llansol's and Saramago's projects as a continuous possibility of escape and of rebellion from historical constraints towards a new future. Consequently, taking into consideration Medeiros' statement above, it is worth questioning, as Maria Alzira Seixo does with Saramago, why Llansol never wrote about the colonial wars in Africa: 'Saramago chooses not to write about this Africa of which he has no knowledge; rather, in a way, he writes "on the edge" of Africa, given that the [Iberian] peninsula finds itself in its final destiny in closer proximity to the "dark continent".'<sup>623</sup> The island of Ana de Peñalosa is, then, similar to the peninsula suspended in the middle of the Atlantic, 'on the edge of Africa' (and in the margins of the canonical text), on the edge of Europe and of history, thus finding a 'closer proximity' not with the 'dark continent', but rather with those excluded from history. Similarly, David Frier accurately suggests how the metaphor of the flying machine in *Memorial* represents the possibility of escape, although 'freedom has not yet come: many more generations of Portuguese people will have to suffer tyranny and oppression before their descendants achieve fulfilment'.<sup>624</sup> The island of Ana de Peñalosa and the Iberian stone raft (along with the flying machine of *Memorial*) attest to how both Saramago and Llansol establish an obvious relation between privilege and exclusion, in Frier's words,<sup>625</sup> between the *prince* and the *poor man* (Llansol); the capitalist and the proletarian (Saramago); the powerful and the silenced (both authors write about the Inquisition); in the end, metaphorically, about the colonizer and the colonized,

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<sup>622</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 36-37. The expression 'realização de um sonho' is taken from Seixo, *A Palavra do Romance*, pp. 78-79.

<sup>623</sup> Obviously, Seixo is referring to *A Jangada de Pedra*. Maria Alzira Seixo, 'The Edge of Darkness, or, Why Saramago Has Never Written about the Colonial War in África', *Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies*, 6 (Spring, 2001), 205-219. (p. 211).

<sup>624</sup> Frier, p. 137.

<sup>625</sup> See chapter entitled 'Privilege and Exclusion', in Frier, pp. 31-109.

inadvertently commenting on postcolonial geographies. They thus draw attention to how centuries of exploitation, alienation and abuses of power have not yet ceased.

Llansol's rewriting (or revisionist reading) of *Os Lusíadas* is sustained by the final question of San Juan de la Cruz at the end of *Da Sebe ao Ser*. The Spanish poet confesses that he always felt intrigued by 'a nossa [Portuguesa] herança errante e marítima', to such an extent that although Portuguese history is connected to the sea, it seems that 'o próprio ermo marítimo nos ia reter para sempre'.<sup>626</sup> The Portuguese are trapped in their own condition as sailors (travellers), but incapable of sailing away from the territory, the *figure* of San Juan seems to suggest. Perhaps that is why Llansol wants to break the paradigm of water and the sea, even if, in order to do so, she must re-enact the Island of Love, not as Camões would have imagined it, but as a Saramaguian stone raft: an island without memory and without history. After all, what matters to Llansol is the journey of poor men, the rebellion against the *status quo*, the movement of the nomads in Europe, a daily fight against *impostures*, of language, and history, and against the powerful (the prince, men, or literary canonical writers) who have written (or imposed) language and history upon others. As such, the legacy of the Portuguese *after* the Llansolian text is to 'evitar conflitos de poder. O meu fim é partir // num barco, não procurar conquistar território'.<sup>627</sup> Reading *Os Lusíadas* in the light of Llansol underlines how the poem's legacy is not the absence of Sebastião (although the Portuguese still seem to be waiting for his return), or in the forgetting of Camões, the fall of the empire or the loss of the colonies. There is an inevitable link to the sea, indeed, but, as Ana de Peñalosa explains, 'não foi o mar, Juan, mas o seu movimento, que nos foi dado em herança'.<sup>628</sup> Thus, the transformation of the Portuguese into poor men and women, rebels and nomads, is the ultimate legacy of the Llansolian text.

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<sup>626</sup> SS, p. 205

<sup>627</sup> SS, p. 164.

<sup>628</sup> SS, p. 206.

## Chapter 2

### MINOR, NOMADIC AND DETERRITORIALIZED – ROBERT MUSIL AND FERNANDO PESSOA IN *LISBOALEIPZIG 1* AND *LISBOALEIPZIG 2* (1994)

In their seminal text on the works of Franz Kafka, *Kafka, pour une littérature mineure* (1975), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari first introduced the concept of *minor literature*, not as ‘a specific kind of literature – the literature of minorities, the literature of secondary authors or small nations, the literature of the avant-garde – but a way of writing, a use of language.’<sup>629</sup> As this chapter will demonstrate, the concept of *minor literature* as applied to Kafka by Deleuze and Guattari is deeply relevant to the works of Robert Musil, Fernando Pessoa and of Maria Gabriela Llansol. Musil’s novel *The Man Without Qualities* (1978)<sup>630</sup> will be read in relation to Llansol’s *Lisboaleipzig 1* and *Lisboaleipzig 2* (both published in 1994), texts in which the *figure* of Fernando Pessoa is *deterritorialized* from Lisbon to Leipzig, through an encounter between the Portuguese poet and the Austrian composer Bach. Moreover, in this chapter, I will argue that in *The Man Without Qualities* Musil is inadvertently mapping Llansol’s concepts of *poetic gift* and *scene of fulgor*.

Before discussing the relevance of *minor literature* to Llansol’s work, I will briefly offer a breakdown of the three main characteristics of this concept. First, ‘une littérature mineure n’est pas celle d’une langue mineure, plutôt celle qu’une minorité fait dans une langue majeure [...]. La langue y est affectée d’un fort coefficient de déterritorialisation.’<sup>631</sup> Deleuze and Guattari are here alluding to Franz Kafka, a Jewish writer who lived in Bohemia, a region inside the Czech territory, though on the periphery of the Habsburg Empire, in which the ‘official’ and ‘political’ language was German. Within the Jewish circle of Prague writers, the inevitability of writing in German enforces a ‘distance irréductible avec la territorialité primitive tchèque’.<sup>632</sup> As a consequence, Kafka’s use of German language is a *deterritorialized* one, in the same sense that despotism *deterritorializes* societies, or capitalism *deterritorializes*

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<sup>629</sup> Ronald Bogue, ‘Minor Writing and Minor Literature’, *Symploke*, 5.1 (1997), 99-118 (p. 115).

<sup>630</sup> 1978 is the year of the publication of the first complete edition (including the three parts) of the *The Man Without Qualities* as we know it today. The first volume was published in 1930, and the second (incomplete) in 1932.

<sup>631</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, p. 29.

<sup>632</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30.

means of production: it triggers a shift inside the same 'territory'. Unlike major literatures, which support the *status quo*, and in which each individual text is part of a major mosaic of national identity (or of a national canon), in *minor literatures* every text has a political implication. Indeed, as Deleuze and Guattari assert, 'le second caractère des littératures mineures, c'est que tout y est politique.'<sup>633</sup> In other words, the family triangle 'se connecte aux autres triangles, commerciaux, économiques, bureaucratiques, juridiques, qui en déterminent les valeurs'.<sup>634</sup> In this way, killing the 'father' (language) becomes more than Oedipal – it is political.

Finally, in *minor literature* 'tout prend une valeur collective'.<sup>635</sup> A writer of *minor literature* (it should be noted that s/he is not a 'minor writer') no longer pays tribute to a master, or a literary father figure of a nation, because this father (historically, a male writer) is intimately linked to a hegemonic tradition of language. Considering the political implications of a writer of minor literature, and even if s/he works in isolation, *minor literature* is charged with a collective consciousness that is inexorably revolutionary.<sup>636</sup> If s/he writes from the margins or attains a feeble presence in the linguistic community of readers, it is the literature produced out of this context that will endow this writer with the possibility of forging another community, another consciousness, and sensibility. Deleuze writes that 'la machine littéraire prend ainsi le relais d'une machine révolutionnaire à venir'<sup>637</sup> as a result of its resolution to 'remplir les conditions d'une énonciation collective qui manquent partout ailleurs dans ce milieu: la littérature est l'affaire du peuple'.<sup>638</sup>

According to Ronald Bogue, however, the concept of *minor literature* is used too freely in criticism and the majority of academics overlook the theoretical implications of *minor literature* as set out by Deleuze and Guattari. *Minor literature* is not specifically a way of analysing sociologically the collective identity of a nation, but rather a way of describing a literary phenomenon that the philosophers call *becoming*.<sup>639</sup> A *minor literature* is not established against a major literature,

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<sup>633</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30.

<sup>634</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30.

<sup>635</sup> *Ibid*, p. 31.

<sup>636</sup> *Ibid*, p. 31.

<sup>637</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32.

<sup>638</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32.

<sup>639</sup> I do not wish to contradict Helena Kaufman's argument on the status of Portugal as a *minor* country, as stated in Chapter One. As previously discussed, Kaufman does not view Portugal as *minor* as a nation, but rather reinforces Deleuze's position in which this *minor* condition is a process of deterritorialization.

instead it is inscribed within its borders. This is its revolutionary character, not exactly in the political sense of the word, but because it revolutionizes a language, expanding its possibilities, its usage, and therefore its meanings, in an endless search for *becomings*, revelations or fabulations within the text. In 'La Littérature et la Vie', Deleuze expands on these concepts previously presented in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980). To write, he says, is to *become*: the writer, a sane (wo)man who wants to reveal his/her memories, dreams, lovers or journeys, *becomes* delirious. In order to abolish the subject of the enunciation, s/he consequently breaks the narrative continuity of life, thus creating a 'foreign language'<sup>640</sup> that operates a *detritorialization* inside its core, asserting a nomadic condition. In my opinion, this 'foreign language' can only be pronounced by rebels or revolutionaries, like Fernando Pessoa, Franz Kafka, Robert Musil, or Maria Gabriela Llansol.

As writers, Musil and Kafka have tried to defy the mechanisms of control (linguistic or political), both challenging the limits of language, and questioning notions of 'nationhood' through a ceaseless search 'to raise the world into the pure, the true, the immutable', as Kafka wrote.<sup>641</sup> As I will argue now, they live inside the Llansolian text and, therefore, beyond power structures that limit countries and languages, and constrain individuals. They have become *detrterritorialized* characters in a Europe no longer related to a primordial idea of Europe as preconceived by the European Union, but rather made up of a cartography of voices, *detrterritorialized* from its centre, and lying on the margins of its own identity. This cartography is a map on the edge of Europe.

Notably, the first encounter between Maria Gabriela Llansol and Robert Musil takes place in the diary *Um Falcão no Punho* (1985),<sup>642</sup> in which Musil arrives at Herbais in order to visit Llansol, an appearance that coincides with the death of her cat, Branca. Why Musil? Llansol explains: 'Musil e eu interessamo-nos pelo pensamento que se desenvolve e suspende na escrita; a literatura, como comércio, abandonámo-la neste cruzar de prados onde nos encontramos por uma circunstância fortuita.'<sup>643</sup> What unites Llansol and Musil is precisely their intent to produce a different kind of literature, one that is not constrained by the parameters imposed on

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<sup>12</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1993), p. 15.

<sup>641</sup> Franz Kafka's diary entry for 25 September 1917 quoted in Malcom Pasley's 'Preface', in Franz Kafka, *The Great Wall of China*, trans. by Malcom Pasley (London: Penguin Books, 2002), pp. vii-xiii (p. vii).

<sup>642</sup> *FP*, p. 46.

<sup>643</sup> *FP*, p. 61.



it by the narrative order or the canon, one that freely contemplates thought and is open to the impulses arising from the literary text. In sum, the two authors write in fragments in order to go beyond the literary conventions of space and time. From this section onwards, I will focus on two Llansolian concepts vital to the appearance of Musil, Kafka, and Pessoa as nomads on a European map: the *scene of fulgor* and the *figure*.

*Lisboaleipzig 1* and *Lisboaleipzig 2* (both published in 1994) are two examples in which the *edenic space* becomes effective in the Llansolian *oeuvre*. In both books, Llansol sets Fernando Pessoa, the most canonical poet of Portuguese letters in the twentieth century, the task of travelling to Leipzig to ask the Austrian composer Johann Sebastian Bach to write a melody for a national poem he has written. By dislocating Pessoa (and Bach) from their historical time/space binary, Llansol is also dislocating Lisbon and Portugal from the conventional European map into the heart of a new Europe, thereby creating an interstitial space, neither in the margins, nor in the centre. In this sense, Pessoa's proximity to Bach transforms him into a contemporary of Kafka and Musil (and a speaker of German), *detrterritorialized* from his own language and culture, willing to perform a synthesis of worlds only conceivable in the Llansolian imaginary. Pessoa, the European nomad, thus remains Pessoa, the Portuguese poet who fragmented his body into heteronyms, and whose identity scholars are continuously struggling to grasp. However, in the Llansolian text, Pessoa becomes a *figure*, created by a glittering centre of light, the Llansolian *scene of fulgor*.

#### LISBON REVISITED, PESSOA DETERRITORIALIZED

A portrayal of the imaginary encounter between Bach and Pessoa, in Leipzig, 'o encontro inesperado do diverso' as the title explicitly reveals, *Lisboaleipzig 1* is an excuse for Llansol to re-think the idea of Europe and the nomadic quality of her *figures* and text. Thus, Pessoa-*figure* becomes a nomad in Austria, the mirror image of an errant Llansol within the European map, searching for her own references, in what António Guerreiro called 'lógica nómada da vida'.<sup>644</sup> Here Llansol breaks with the tradition initiated by *O Livro das Comunidades*, leaving the primal rebels of her

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<sup>644</sup> António Guerreiro, 'Texto Nómada de Maria Gabriela Llansol', *Colóquio-Letras*, 91 (1986), 66-69 (p. 68).

text (the beguines, Eckhart, San Juan de la Cruz, or Müntzer) behind, longing for ‘o encontro com outro mestre’: Fernando Pessoa.<sup>645</sup>

Here, Llansol wonders whether her condition as an exile in Belgium, in the heart of Europe, contributed to the intense proliferation of figures and thoughts in her text. Indeed, the *Lisboaleipzig* volumes underline the author’s growing isolation, to the extent that Llansol confesses that since she moved to Herbais she has often dreamt about Robinson Crusoe. She explains why Crusoe suddenly appears in the text: he is the paradigm of ‘um novo livro que não escreverei nunca’,<sup>646</sup> probably a book about exile, the real autobiographical text Llansol continuously rejected by stating ‘não há texto autobiográfico’.<sup>647</sup> Crusoe is not a lonely man on a desert island, he is instead, like Christopher Columbus, an adventurer, ‘um viajante num mundo totalmente solitário’.<sup>648</sup> Note that the world is solitary, not Robinson, since Llansol soon gives reasons for his inclusion in this text by instigating an encounter between Crusoe and Pessoa, in Herbais. In a *scene of fulgor*, Robinson reads Pessoa’s body as a piece of paper *over which* he can write or ‘sobrepor’ himself, as Llansol puts it, since Pessoa ‘se sente como uma folha sem espessura onde o verso e o reverso se encontram finalmente confundidos’,<sup>649</sup> in an obvious allusion to Pessoa’s multiple heteronyms. The text thus causes a fusion of Robinson and Pessoa, that is to say, of Llansol (the marooned solitary woman on a ‘desert island’) and the Portuguese poet, so that the reader can peruse Pessoa’s body, no longer as biography instituted it, but as the *figure* Llansol created. Rather than composing a book about a desert island (or about the author’s own isolation), rather than narrating the exile itself, Llansol chose to write a book *of* exiles: the *figures*. The use of Robinson Crusoe as a metaphor for Llansol’s isolation is concomitant to Clara Rocha’s description of Robinson’s marooning as a recurrent theme in autobiographical writing.<sup>650</sup> Although Llansol denies the autobiographical text by fragmenting her authorial body into a multiplicity of figures, it is nonetheless true that in stating how Robinson and Pessoa have become one, Llansol is leaving the trace of her biographical life (her isolation) in the fictional text (the one which invited Pessoa to become a figure, in 1984, ‘próximo do

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<sup>645</sup> *LI*, p. 12.

<sup>646</sup> *LI*, p. 40.

<sup>647</sup> *CL*, p. 11.

<sup>648</sup> *LI*, p. 41.

<sup>649</sup> *LI*, p. 42.

<sup>650</sup> Clara Rocha, *Máscaras de Narciso – Estudos sobre a Literatura Autobiográfica em Portugal* (Coimbra: Almedina, 1992), p. 56.

momento em que teriam passado cinquenta anos sobre a sua [Pessoa's] morte').<sup>651</sup> As a result, Clara Rocha writes that 'a figura de Robinson insinua-se na escrita intimista como modelo desse diálogo/monólogo, em que se cruzam as vozes de um eu dividido por força do seu isolamento, da sua inquietação, ou então do seu excesso'.<sup>652</sup> Perhaps it is precisely the isolation of the individual that allows for the creation of this excess, and the birth of the *figures* out of that very same abundance of creativity, thus becoming remnants, or 'vidas restantes', in the margins.

*Lisboaleipzig 1* and *Lisboaleipzig 2* are Llansol's most European-oriented texts, and it is no coincidence that Llansol decided to publish, as a collection of afterwords at the end of *Lisboaleipzig 1*, several essays about her own work: conference papers, seminars, or speeches under the title '\_\_\_\_\_ dedico-vos estes textos'.<sup>653</sup> These essays grant the general reader a wider understanding of a text which is often deemed impenetrable; they explain concepts, ideas, and references, offering a possible approximation between the narrative order and the author's biography. By presenting the intellectual influences and paradigms that mould her text, Llansol is ultimately reflecting on the legacy of European history on Portuguese identity. 'Nós todos, os portugueses e europeus do Centro da Europa, somos, ao mesmo tempo, os descendentes de um mesmo problema, e os herdeiros de um modo radicalmente diferente de o resolver',<sup>654</sup> writes Llansol, thus affirming a proximity between Europe and Portugal. She demonstrates that the problems, which affect Europe today, are related to all countries, even if some are to be found, indeed, in the margins. It is Europe's past (and past mistakes), in the end, that caused the feeling of a historical frustration, a strange restlessness that is today translated as an "identity deficit" that continues to plague Europe'.<sup>655</sup>

Several figures from previous texts appear, at the beginning of *Lisboaleipzig 1*, namely Hölderlin from *Holder, de Hölderlin*, who, with Kierkegaard, inhabits the house. In this opening, Pessoa writes a letter to Hölderlin 'porque não quis encontrar-me com o seu vazio de loucura durante trinta e cinco anos'.<sup>656</sup> As such, Pessoa relinquishes Hölderlin, although the German poet's voice is still heard in the

<sup>651</sup> *L1*, p. 41.

<sup>652</sup> Rocha, *Máscaras de Narciso*, p. 56.

<sup>653</sup> *L1*, pp. 84-147.

<sup>654</sup> Llansol, 'Porque não pude deixar de vir', in *L1*, pp. 94-96 (p. 95).

<sup>655</sup> Levy, Pensky and Torpey, 'Editor's Introduction', in *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe*, p.

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<sup>656</sup> *L1*, p. 21. Note that there is only one year's difference between the publication of *Hölder, de Hölderlin* (1993) and *Lisboaleipzig 1* (1994).

Llansolian house like a prophet announcing what the future might bring, and the responsibility of this text towards the continent: 'A Europa Central tem um neoveiro que lhe força a forma, e lhe dá cantos.'<sup>657</sup> These 'cantos' could be read as the marginal corners of Europe, but could also be considered an allusion to the different voices or languages punctuating both Europe and the Llansolian text. Perhaps the fog no longer signifies the return of a lost king (Sebastião), but instead a hope that the poor visibility caused by the mist might open our eyes to something beyond the established borders. Llansol therefore allows Kierkegaard, Hölderlin, Nietzsche, Bach and Pessoa to coexist at the start of *Lisboaleipzig 1*, 'submetidos ao engima \_\_\_\_\_ como distinguir o jardim devastado em que nos encontramos do perfil da esperança'<sup>658</sup>, demonstrating how our eyes can turn away from this devastated Europe to finally encounter a fog of hope.

The legacy of the Battle of Frankenhausen (1535) is the condition that Europe has been living with for several centuries. From this moment on, Llansol suggests, 'desenha-se a figura do Príncipe, a figura do poder de um sobre os outros, de uns sobre os outros – o fraccionamento ininterrupto do Mundo e a sua reunião num centro imposto pela espada'.<sup>659</sup> From this possession, this abuse of power – to some extent, this law of terror – submission to an empowered order was born and, consequently, freedom of thought and the *poetic gift* could no longer coexist. As a result, Llansol proposes that Europe should rebel and revert to where everything started, five centuries ago, but only the hermit can become 'a semente, a imagem do início'.<sup>660</sup> We will see how the nomad contributes to the conceptual movements inside the text through an analysis of Kafka's works, but for the moment, I will focus on Fernando Pessoa's movement from Lisbon to Leipzig, in *Lisboaleipzig 1*.

Pessoa appears in the Llansolian text on a creative night in November 1982: 'Precisava de alterar a ordem das letras do nome de Pessoa e fazê-lo involuir, arrancá-lo ao hábito inveterado que tinha dele [...]. Pessoa, lido da direita para a esquerda, dava AOSSEP.'<sup>661</sup> The use of the verb 'involuir', here a derivation of 'evoluir', could be related to Deleuze and Guattari's mechanism of *becoming*, as stated in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Despite the fact that it is impossible to grasp the

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<sup>657</sup> *LI*, p. 22

<sup>658</sup> *LI*, p. 23.

<sup>659</sup> Llansol, 'Diálogo com Llull', in *LI*, pp. 97-112 (p. 104).

<sup>660</sup> *Ibid*, p. 109 and p. 105.

<sup>661</sup> *FP*, p. 87.

reason why Llansol chose this verb to represent the metamorphosis of Pessoa into Aossê, Deleuze and Guattari explain exactly the difference between ‘involution’ and ‘evolution’ as a result of *becoming*. Pessoa transubstantiated into Aossê is no longer a ‘resemblance, an imitation, or, at the limit, an identification’ with the Portuguese poet as we know him. ‘To become is not to progress or regress along a series. [...] [It i]s not an evolution, at least not an evolution by descent and filiation.’<sup>662</sup> Through the separation between evolution and involution, the philosophers (and to a certain extent, Llansol herself) are underlining the relevance of the *becoming* as a subliminal (imagetic) appearance that is not related to a previous *constructo* (neither by descent, nor filiation). Instead, it is born out of the new, out of the chaotic freedom of the text. Accordingly,

the term we would prefer for this form of evolution between heterogeneous terms is ‘involution,’ on the condition that involution is in no way confused with regression. Becoming is involutory, involution is creative. To regress is to move in the direction of something less differentiated. But to involve is to form a block that runs its own line ‘between’ the terms in play and beneath assignable relations.<sup>663</sup>

Pessoa does not become an animal in the Llansolian text as other authors do even if he ceases to be a person ([P]essoa) to become a *figure*, forming a ‘block’ between spaces and conditions – an interstitial being, or, as Llansol puts it, the *entresser*. In *Lisboaleipzig 1*, then, the *fulgorian* encounter between Aossê and Bach represents an attempt to conjure the possibilities of assembling music and literature, but Llansol recognizes that she is lost as she attempts to ‘reunir as águas espalhadas pela superfície da música, e de uma nova língua que esmiúça os efeitos do corpo de Pessoa’.<sup>664</sup> Pessoa’s shattered body – like his thought, through heteronomy – is the only way to grasp the fragmented interior of the poet. However, by dislocating Pessoa from his own centre, Lisbon, to Leipzig, Llansol is underlining how Pessoa is no longer a major poet, but a poet of a *minor language*, according to Deleuze and Guattari’s definition. The refusal of the mimetic process in the representation of Pessoa grants the poet the possibility of opening up his destroyed body to the multiplicity of languages, voices, or rivers, that intersect a European territory without borders, to encounters between ‘diversos’, in order to become a nomad, and thus deterritorialize Portugal. Llansol is mapping Pessoa’s (and her own) ‘interior space’,

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<sup>662</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 262-263.

<sup>663</sup> *Ibid*, p. 263.

<sup>664</sup> *FP*, p. 141.

in the light of what José Gil defined, in an essay about Pessoa's fragmented being, as 'aquele [espaço] em que não somente o puro interior e o exterior "se fundem" e se "interpenetram", mas em que também o *sentido* decorre naturalmente desse *facto*: a paisagem exterior, projectada no espaço interior, faz imediatamente sentido'.<sup>665</sup> The 'interior space' is then a landscape, as are Lisbon, Leipzig, Portugal, and Europe, but also the bodies of the authors in this text who represent the 'Corpo Cem Memórias de Paisagem'.<sup>666</sup> Through Pessoa, Llansol is thereby mapping a new condition, the interior condition, only attainable through the creation of *scenes of fulgor*. This movement within the text becomes a mirror of the movement of its own creator, thereby provoking a fragmentation of its identity and memory: Llansol and Aossê become one and the same, as *figures*; Llansol and Pessoa are one and the same, as Portuguese authors. According to Lúcia Castello Branco, this dislocation of Pessoa finds a parallel, again, in Deleuze and Guattari's *detritorialization*, since this 'processo de dessacralização do monumento histórico [Pessoa] [...] trata-se de inscrever, no seio de uma língua e de uma história maiores, uma literatura menor. E é justamente essa literatura, desterritorializada, que garantirá ao texto uma outra dicção, uma outra cartografia'.<sup>667</sup>

The deterritorialization of Pessoa does not occur solely in the process of dislocating his body from Lisbon to Leipzig. Llansol precipitates Pessoa's apparition in the text, by reducing him to Aossê (who no longer, like Pessoa, considers his body-mind binary divided into several heteronyms), thus conferring a unity on the Portuguese, a totalizing entity that historically never happened. Nonetheless, Llansol also adopts the *scene of fulgor* as a mechanism to shatter her own identity through the creation of a 'heterónimo feminino de Aossê': Infausta.<sup>668</sup> In this way, we witness a heteronymization, a double-detritorialization of Pessoa, first, as Aossê, secondly, when Infausta appears in the text. In *Um Falcão no Punho*, Llansol writes that she was searching for a new female figure in order to give continuity to the lineage of strong women, 'mães do texto', like Ana de Peñalosa or Hadewjich, who are prominent figures in the first two trilogies. Infausta is a female figure whose desire to penetrate the space of the text could only be controlled by her spirit of

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<sup>665</sup> José Gil, *O Espaço Interior* (Lisbon: Presença, 1993), p. 10 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>666</sup> *LC*, p. 10

<sup>667</sup> Lúcia Castello Branco, *Os Absolutamente Sós – Llansol, a Letra, Lacan* (Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2000), p. 39.

<sup>668</sup> *FP*, p. 112

‘perseverança e mansuetude’. The female heteronym learnt how to ‘coser como quem sorri’, leaving behind traces of embroideries and laces in the text (and in the library of the Llansolian house).<sup>669</sup> The appearance of Infausta takes place through a *scene of fulgor* in which the narrator is presented ‘vestida de branco e de lã, para purificar-me, o cordeiro, depois de ressuscitar três vezes, não morreu para sempre. / Diz-me que se chama Infausta, que é muralha, / e eu o guardo na última linha da voz’.<sup>670</sup> The apparition of the figure is still linked to a mystical notion of *fulgor* as in revelation, and the arrival of Infausta echoes Agnus Dei, whose purity (through the whiteness of the wool) speaks of Infausta’s virtue as the bearer of a morality contained by her own name. ‘Infausta’ thus contains the prefix –in as negation (or involution) of the following word, and ‘fausta’, the Portuguese female word for ‘fausto’, synonym of ostentation, and subsequent wealth or power, in the light of the Llansolian concept of the *prince*. Moreover, Infausta is also reminiscent of the Goethean *Faust*, the German astronomer who sold his soul to the Devil in return for eternal youth.<sup>671</sup> As such, Infausta can no longer be regarded purely as Pessoa’s female heteronym, but rather as the ‘chave da porta’,<sup>672</sup> as Llansol defines her, the key to the ‘interior space’ José Gil and Fernando Pessoa himself, in *Fausto*, talk about:

O espaço interior compõe-se assim de infinitos ‘dentro’ que segregam os seus ‘fora’ que se tornam outros ‘dentro’ para outros ‘fora’... (e o abismo abre-se também na percepção da consciência de outrem, na visão do olhar do outro...). Daqui em diante, deixa de haver centro, deixa de haver um foco estável, auto-referencial da consciência; a partir daqui, ‘as sensações rodam’ no ‘círculo [...] sempre equidistante do centro inatingível do meu ser.’<sup>673</sup>

Llansol abandoned Infausta to Aossê, to the infinite expression of the simultaneous interiority and exteriority of their bodies, ‘dans cet extérieur logé au-dedans du sujet que Lacan nomme “l’extime”, à la fois intime et au-dehors, dans une zone hors du symbolique mais néanmoins au coeur de la subjectivité’.<sup>674</sup> Infausta and Aossê’s scribal-bodily relationship will continue through the two volumes of *Lisboaleipzig*, in

<sup>669</sup> *FP*, p. 110.

<sup>670</sup> *FP*, p. 109.

<sup>671</sup> Pessoa also wrote about Faust. See *Fausto, Tragédia Subjectiva* (Lisbon: Presença, 1988). In Portuguese, ‘infausta/o’ can also mean ‘miserable’ or ‘discouraging’.

<sup>672</sup> *FP*, p. 112.

<sup>673</sup> Gil, p. 11, citing Fernando Pessoa, *Fausto, Tragédia Subjectiva*, p. 53.

<sup>674</sup> Jacques Lacan, cited in Maria Graciete Besse, ‘Le Texte Fulgurant de Maria Gabriela Llansol – entre nomadisme et dépossession’, *Savoirs et Clinique*, 8.1 (2007), 127-133 (p. 129),.

a circularity of beings from which they can no longer separate themselves. This circle alludes to Pessoa and his heteronyms, but also to the household of the Bach family, Johann Sebastian, Anna Magdalena and their children. Infausta is the messenger of a text in the imaginary space of *Lisboa-becoming-Leipzig*, and her encounter with Anna Magdalena once again underlines the matrilineal *continuum* of the Llansolian text dominated by ‘mães do texto’. Aossê is unaware of how the beguines penetrate the text as an *edenic space* of encounters, inasmuch as Anna and Infausta (and Llansol) are beguines who ‘no rosto de cada uma, se via claramente a incorporação imaginária do seu amante, sem elos e sem anéis’ (i.e, Bach and Pessoa as their lovers).<sup>675</sup> Accordingly, the two women write this text alongside each other, a book that ‘continuava pousado na superfície interior de uma abóbada’. ‘Sabes, poeta estrangeiro, que abóbada é essa?’, asks Anna Magdalena Bach.<sup>676</sup> Aossê, once again, does not know that the dome Anna is referring to is the ‘espaço povoado do que só é transmissível pelo conhecimento’, the *poetic gift* Aossê will no longer have (as Pessoa did, in his historical life), now possessed by Infausta, Anna, and Llansol as primary voices of this text. Interestingly, Anna Magdalena always refers to Aossê as ‘poeta estrangeiro’ (foreign in the sense of visitor): she is both hostess in the Bach’s family house, and a guest in the Llansolian text. In this sense, it could be said that Llansol frames Pessoa in the Deleuzian ‘foreign language’ of literature, once again deterritorializing him out of his condition as a poet (a third deterritorialization), this time leaving behind a gendered trace in the text, emphasising his incapacity or inability to write underneath the ‘abóbada’. Llansol annuls, then, Pessoa’s body *affectively*. In Spinoza, an *effect* is, paraphrasing Deleuze, the trace left by one body over another. Yet *affect* is the continuous experience of the *effect* over one’s body, or, as Deleuze puts it, ‘pas seulement l’effet instantané d’un corps sur le mien, elle est aussi un effet de la propre durée, plaisir ou douleur, joie ou tristesse’.<sup>677</sup> Consequently, *affecting* Pessoa’s body means, ultimately, the endurance of several rites of passage, ‘devenirs, des montées et des chutes, des variations continues de puissance, qui vont d’un état à un autre’, so that the *effects* of Pessoa’s existence are withdrawn from the text.<sup>678</sup> Llansol decisively imposes her jurisdiction upon the production of the text, establishing Anna and Infausta as primary writers of Aossê’s

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<sup>675</sup> *L1*, p. 56.

<sup>676</sup> *L1*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>677</sup> Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique*, p. 172.

<sup>678</sup> *Ibid*, p. 173.



poems, since, by pushing Aossê towards Bach (and to music), he loses control of the creative process, still in the darkness with regards to the *poetic gift*:

Sou eu que escrevo o texto de Aossê porque ele não tem vagina, dotado como é de um pénis incapaz de comunicar com clareza, por isso escreve que a voz de Infausta  
diz que  
deixo apenas alguns objectos nos móveis, poucos e simétricos,  
apago os lugares comuns e ofereço a linguagem aos animais;  
ou seja, é um sonho com três rostos: à esquerda do sonho, senta-se um homem absorto; ao centro, uma lareira; e, ao fundo, vai voltar-se um rosto para mim que talvez me queira olhar.<sup>679</sup>

Llansol, Anna or Infausta compose the text that Aossê is no longer allowed to write, since his biological condition endowed him with a penis, which prevented him from seeing the *scene of fulgor*, clearly illuminated by the source of energy or warmth emanating from the fire. In this dream of three faces, an unexpected encounter of the diverse, Aossê, the fire of the *fulgor*, and the third face (us, the reader, through whom the meaning of this scene only becomes a/effective?) are inexorably bound together in a circle that convokes both the 'interior space' of our nomadic landscapes (the figures, the animals, the *edenic* space), and the 'exterior space' of our historical condition (biology, nationality, or language), so that only in this triadic encounter does the text become apodictic.

Last but not least, by attributing a female heteronym to Pessoa, Llansol is thereby challenging the canonization of Pessoa in the scholarly context, when she affirms that the creation of Infausta is a process which is not grasped by Pessoa studies, 'entretidos na infausta tarefa de dar corpo a livros que o poeta nunca escreveu, ou em perpetuar a própria mitologia que deixou atrás de si na arca (e o que é essa arca senão uma simples nota de rodapé à imensa fragmentação que deixou escrita?)'.<sup>680</sup> It is not clear who Llansol is really referring to here, but this disapproval arises almost certainly from the fact that, like Pessoa's, Llansol's textual fragmentation process is still yet to be accommodated by existing theoretical paradigms. According to Fernando Arenas, Infausta is a creation that shares an intense proximity with Virginia Woolf's invention of Shakespeare's sister in *A Room*

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<sup>679</sup> *LI*, pp. 57-58

<sup>680</sup> *SH*, p. 99. Richard Zenith's study on Pessoa's heteronyms revealed the existence of a female heteronym: 'There was even a female persona: the hunchback and helplessly lovesick Maria José'. See Richard Zenith, 'Introduction', in Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet*, trans. by Richard Zenith (London: Penguin Classics, 2003), pp. vii-xxvi (p. viii).

of *One's Own*.<sup>681</sup> Arenas writes that Llansol's process of deterritorialization of Pessoa (which Arenas calls 'subversion') 'serve[s] her own cultural/ethical project', adding that these historical figures now transformed in the Llansolian text 'become subordinate to Llansol's own specific preoccupation with Portugal's relationship to western European culture or with the transhistorical destiny of Western culture (in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, as well as today)'.<sup>682</sup> Llansol's project, then, coincides entirely with the definition of *minor literature*: it performs a deterritorialization through the mechanism of transferring the figures from their historical context into her text. It is in every sense revolutionary, since it bequeaths the literary community (of readers and of writers) with a collective consciousness, in order to defy the cultural apparatus and the mechanisms of control of the narrative order. Finally, it is undeniably political, since by deterritorializing the figures through a revolutionary mechanism of writing, Llansol is giving shape to her literary 'utopia', the *edenic space*, not only in a wider European sense, but also (and most importantly) in the context of Portuguese culture as well.

#### **PESSOA AND BACH BECOME MEN 'WITHOUT QUALITIES'**

The encounter between Pessoa and Bach is no longer presented as a mere meeting, rather it is a *fulgorian* confluence of possibilities, a merging of music with poetry, in the same utopian sense that Lisbon merges with Leipzig. Llansol is constantly questioning Bach's and Pessoa's *dasein* (Heidegger's being-in-the-world), the ultimate aim of their existence. Since they are not the archetypal figures about whom we have learnt, they are no longer constrained by history and the biography that subsumes their lives. Pessoa and Bach *become* men 'without qualities' in Robert Musil's sense, asserting the word 'eigenschaften' as an ambiguous and almost untranslatable concept: moral 'qualities', indeed, but also attributes, or properties. If, as we have seen, Pessoa was dispossessed or deterritorialized of his 'qualities' (historical, bodily, biographical), Bach became the predominant male figure of the text. In the end, *he* was the host receiving the guest Aossê in his home. Llansol explains why Bach is present in her text:

Tal como os vejo juntos, Bach é o Mestre. Dominou o seu instrumento, a sua expressão, o caos que a cada um é dado em vida; no seu lugar próprio, a Capela de Leipzig fez confluír os cantos dos camponeses mortos em

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<sup>681</sup> In Chapter Four the question of whether Llansol could be Shakespeare's sister will be discussed.

<sup>682</sup> Arenas, pp. 157-158.

Frankenhausen e o quadro formal dos Príncipes que, no embate, os venceram; Bach aparece-me como Coração de Urso que, na entrada da Idade Moderna, depõe os seus mitos em Música, que em Bach é cheia da Razão de Deus. Do outro modo, no confronto, Bach teria perdido o senso, como Hölderlin, Nietzsche, e Pessoa.<sup>683</sup>

Bach, who is shown in *Lisboaleipzig* conducting a choir of children, is the master of this polyphonic text. Bach's music came to be the only solution to the unbearable cries of the vanquished losers of Frankenhausen: his music endows this text with a harmonic polyphony of voices, when the lack of coherence and the irrationality of Nietzsche or Pessoa can no longer be deciphered. One could state that Llansol chose Bach owing to her certainty that the encounter of Pessoa with the Bach family would undoubtedly produce *fulgor*.<sup>684</sup> The impact of this *fulgor* was further developed in 'O Ensaio de Música', the subtitle to *Lisboaleipzig 2*, intentionally entitled 'o ensaio de música', in which Bach and Aossê would definitively become nomadic. Moreover, Llansol explained both in interviews and in her fiction, how one day Bach entered the room in which she was writing, as a *figure*, but also as a melody, because his music became an obvious part of the author's quotidian existence: 'O meu real é estar a descascar estas ervilhas e ouvir Bach.'<sup>685</sup>

Although Llansol does not further explain the inclusion of Bach, she always underlined her own deterritorialization through the necessity of writing in a foreign language. One could infer that it is, among other reasons, the question of language that determines the entrance of Bach (or other German-speaking authors, like Rilke or Hölderlin) into the Llansolian text. Llansol does not include German-speaking authors at the expense of the exclusion of authors in other languages, quite the opposite: the polyphonous text comprises several languages as used by several authors who, in a real historical context, would not have been able to understand each other. Nevertheless, Llansol's blatant resistance to writing in her own language (Portuguese) could be seen as a constant process of self-deterritorialization, a self-imposition of a condition that no longer concedes her a space of her own, but permanently forces her to nomadism. The author endorses that decision, so that her language becomes unquestionably a 'foreign language' also: 'Quando chegar a Herbais, a minha língua perderá definitivamente o possessivo. Porque inútil. A

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<sup>683</sup> *FP*, pp. 95-96. See Chapter Three for a description of Coração de Urso.

<sup>684</sup> Llansol, 'O Espaço Edénico', p. 154.

<sup>685</sup> *L1*, p. 26.

língua que se tornaria lá transparente e verde, não estaria mais presa a um território.’<sup>686</sup> The constant questioning of her condition as an exile in a ‘terra aliena’ – like the ‘prolongamento do judeu deportado’, wondering how she shall ‘sing the song of the Lord in a foreign land’<sup>687</sup> – could only be understood considering Llansol’s admiration for Germanic languages that put the predicate at the end of the sentence:

Admiro as línguas que oportunamente colocam o predicado da frase como sua última palavra. E admiro-as porque tecnicamente o predicado, devido à sua flexão e à relativa liberdade de que dispõe quanto ao lugar que ocupa na sequência frásica, funciona, de facto, como uma espécie de mercado público ou leilão, onde as diversas estéticas disputam entre si o sentido efectivo que resultará da frase.<sup>688</sup>

Llansol’s statement about Germanic languages reveals several parallels with her own text: pushing the signification of a sentence towards its ending is equivalent to an opening up of the meaning, a constant suspension of the definitive denotation or an imposed canonical order. As such, the sentence can be left hanging in a perpetual hesitation of its uttering voice, or its author, nomadically dispersed in the text through the creation of *figures*, unfolded in the apparition of *scenes of fulgor*, or suspended in a continuous line expressed like this \_\_\_\_\_. The text is therefore deprived of its literary ‘qualities’, thus becoming itinerant, and travelling between different forms, and landscapes, inviting several *figures* to its core.

Despite being in the centre of Europe, the Llansolian text is, however, steadily grounded in the Portuguese coast, connected to the water and the sea, and the continuous-expansion of the language. However, the fact that Aossê and Llansol are still writing in Portuguese is no longer relevant in the *edenic space*, for in this space every language is a foreign language spoken/written/preached outside a recognisable map. Writing Pessoa is thus more than a *pretext*, because Aossê is not only a *figure*, but also a composition, a *becoming*, a ‘conjugação de possibilidades’<sup>689</sup> which exist under the vibration of ‘um grande arco em que espalhei a justiça e a desordem’.<sup>690</sup> This ‘dome’ is the *edenic space* that, like a room of one’s own, is a sea

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<sup>686</sup> *LI*, p. 29.

<sup>687</sup> Llansol refers to Psalm 136, ‘quomodo cantabimus canticum Domini in terra aliena’. See Llansol, ‘Em Paisagem Estranha’, in *LI*, pp. 86-87 (p. 86).

<sup>688</sup> *SH*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>689</sup> *FP*, p. 125.

<sup>690</sup> *LI*, p. 82.

of endless possibilities, similar to the ones Musil conjured in *The Man Without Qualities*.

It is precisely underneath the 'dome' that sustains the weight of history, tradition, and language that the protagonist of Musil's novel wished he had, indeed, no qualities. Ulrich's mind is troubled with the discomfort left by the legacy from fathers to sons, like a heavy burden, on the shoulders of the younger generation. Ulrich felt his heart 'compressed [...] with all the resistance of the primal instinct against this world petrified into millions of tons of stone, against this frozen moonscape of feeling where, involuntarily he had been set down'.<sup>691</sup> The 'dome' above his head is more than mere firmament. Here, Ulrich's desire to become a man without qualities is a longing to be removed from underneath that 'dome' which sustains tradition, protecting society and its civilized members from outside aggression, robbing them, at the same time, of freedom. Ulrich's total lack of belief in mankind and civilization is, as he puts it, a 'familiar malady of contemporary man',<sup>692</sup> a feeling common to a man lost in the maze of modernity, whose annihilated self determines an incapacity to survive in a society that contradictorily killed God when it most needed faith in a saviour. Musil turns his words into Ulrich's thoughts, stating that 'mankind produces Bibles and guns, tuberculosis and tuberculin. It is democratic, with kings and nobles; builds churches and, against the churches, universities; turns cloisters into barracks, but assigns field chaplains to the barracks'.<sup>693</sup>

Modernity's contradictions constantly trouble the self to the extent that a state of profound melancholia invades Ulrich's capacity to rationalize in a world with too many qualities. Hence, the character's melancholic condition no longer pushes him towards a state of annihilation or suicide, as the Romantics and Goethe would have it, but turns him into a wandering 'subject without nation', to borrow Stefan Jonsson's words.<sup>694</sup> Ulrich's wish to be in the *edenic space*, underneath Llansol's 'dome', is clear, since the society he lives in has cosmetically reinvented itself, becoming a 'pseudoreality' prevailing over a human's *poetic gift*.<sup>695</sup> As Musil points out: 'What makes this craving for the renovation of life into a *perpetuum mobile*',

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<sup>691</sup> Musil, *The Man Without Qualities* [MWQ], p. 136.

<sup>692</sup> *Ibid*, p. 105.

<sup>693</sup> *Ibid*, p. 22.

<sup>694</sup> Stefan Jonsson, *Subject Without Nation – Robert Musil and the History of Modern Identity* (London: Duke University Press, 2000).

<sup>695</sup> 'Pseudoreality prevails' is the first section of the novel after the introduction. MWQ, pp. 81-725.

thinks Ulrich, 'is nothing but the discomfort at the intrusion, between one's own misty self and the alien and already petrified carapace of the self of one's predecessors, of a pseudoself, a loosely fitting group soul'.<sup>696</sup> Ulrich wants to escape *pseudoreality*, and Musil performs that movement by endowing the text with a continuous desire for utopia, a desire to belong to a community of 'the rebels who wanted to bring new things and new people into the world'.<sup>697</sup>

To read Robert Musil is, states Stefan Jonsson, 'to sense an approaching catastrophe', for his 'narratives spiral downward from the daylight world of bourgeois conventions into the night of madness, the negativity of disorder, criminality and war'.<sup>698</sup> It is precisely with this sense of catastrophe – again, of apocalypse as renewal, rather than doomed fate – that *The Man Without Qualities* should be read alongside the Llansolian text, as a prophecy for the future, as an account of a decaying empire in which the spiral into madness could be seen as a forecast for a fallen Europe, but also as an escape to an 'utopian' space. The reading of this enormous novel in the light of Llansol's could provide material for a completely different research project. However, there are specificities in Musil's novel that confirm a close correspondence with the Llansolian text. In *Finita*, whilst discussing Nietzsche with Augusto Joaquim, Llansol explains how Musil got his inspiration from the German philosopher in order to write his novel. By putting these words in Musil's mouth (no longer as the Austrian writer, but as a Llansolian figure), Llansol is thus questioning Nietzsche's influence over her own writing: 'Mas que quer ele [Nietzsche]? A sua crítica não permite nenhuma crítica possível.'<sup>699</sup>

The correlations between *The Man Without Qualities* and Musil's literary project, in general, and Llansol's work, are underlined here, presenting *Lisboaleipzig I* as an example, and employing Deleuze and Guattari's theories on *minor literature*, *nomadism* and *deterritorialization*, always taking into account the primary objective of this thesis, as stated in the Introduction: to read Llansol not in the light of other authors or theorists, but instead to read these in the light of her literary project. Consequently, the following section will focus on four main aspects of *The Man Without Qualities* essential to carry out a close reading of the *scene of fulgor*. First, it will examine how the setting of the novel in the late Habsburg Empire contributes to

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<sup>696</sup> *Ibid*, p. 138.

<sup>697</sup> *Ibid*, p. 138.

<sup>698</sup> Stefan Jonsson, 'Citizen of Kakania', *The New Left Review*, 27 (2004), 131-141 (p. 131).

<sup>699</sup> *F*, p. 11.

the questioning of issues of territory and language in the light of the concept of *minor literature*. Secondly, it will show that Musil's search for endless possibilities endows his project with an urge for utopia, very similar to the Llansolian *edenic space*. Thirdly, Ulrich's search for what Musil calls 'the other condition' is, indeed, a mystical one, clearly influenced by Meister Eckhart, and close to the Llansolian reading of Eckhart and the medieval mystics, employed in the attaining of *fulgor*. Fourthly, the hermaphroditism of the relationship between Agathe and Ulrich, the madness of Clarisse (Ulrich's best friend), and their fascination with Moosbrugger, combine in my interpretation of *The Man Without Qualities* as an inclusive novel, responding to the exclusion imposed upon those who do not conform to the patterns of normality. What both Musil and Llansol propose, I suggest, is that, by allowing these monstrous creations into their texts (empty subjects, madmen and women, incestuous relationships, or murderers), they are thus contemplating the possibility of creating alternative spaces for those who society rejects – a community of rebels, in the Llansolian sense. Lastly, I would like to underline how Musil's and Llansol's projects put forward a new reading of the European map, creating a cartography of nomadic *figures* who search for a solution to a continent struggling to establish its own identity, stressing how

the project of a new life and the task of actualizing the utopian potentialities of humanity are inseparable from the task of mobilizing all the resources of modernity – scientific precision, rationality, the multiplicity of urban forms, even reinforced concrete – in the construction of a new European society.<sup>700</sup>

*The Man Without Qualities* provides important clues as to how Musil sought solutions for ontologically isolated and modern men at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although the novel was written slowly between 1918 (date of the first preliminary versions),<sup>701</sup> and 1942, when Musil died in Geneva (where he had lived in exile since Hitler annexed Austria to Germany, in 1938), the narrative time of the text covers the years 1913-1914, just before the start of the First World War. By freezing the narrative time in the course of a year, Musil is expanding molecular events – it could even be said 'pointillist' details, that replace 'substances with dots

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<sup>700</sup> Stefan Jonsson, 'Neither Inside nor Outside: Subjectivity and the Spaces of Modernity in Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*', *New German Critique*, 68 (1996), 31-60 (p. 60).

<sup>701</sup> See João Barrento, 'Prefácio', in Robert Musil, *O Homem Sem Qualidades*, trans. by João Barrento, vol. 1 (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 2008), pp. 17-26.

of pure sensation'<sup>702</sup> – in Ulrich's life during the course of that period. The project of *The Man Without Qualities*, divided into three parts, leaves indications of what Musil intended to attain with this unachieved (or unachievable) creation, since finishing it would involve a conflict with the expansion of possibilities and openings the author wanted to accomplish. As João Barrento, the translator of the novel into Portuguese, asserts, 'a sua conclusão seria uma insuportável contradição face à natureza do protagonista e à ideia de fundo que o sustentava'.<sup>703</sup> Musil's death interrupted the course of the novel in which the protagonist had become a *Doppelgänger* of the author, a nomadic character in Europe, aiming for the *poetic gift* in a text which could epitomize the process of writing a novel through the continuous transformation of life. In *The Man Without Qualities*, Musil was not only trying to explain how quotidian human actions were essential to the understanding of thought, but also to stress how science and technology failed to provide a safer future for men, becoming, in the words of the author, 'a savior of mankind or a criminal'.<sup>704</sup> If science cured diseases and enabled fast communication amongst peoples, conversely, it provided man with war machinery and ensuing destruction. As a result, Ulrich states, as if in a prediction of an uncomfortable burden he has to endure, that 'there is a nameless mood abroad in the world today, a feeling in the blood of more than a few people, an expectation of worse things to come, a readiness to riot, a mistrust of everything one reveres'.<sup>705</sup> If Ulrich is talking about Europe and its shattered identity, and the ultimate decadence of the Austro-Hungarian empire striving for survival in an era of rising nationalisms (which led to the outbreak of the First World War), Musil is, instead, referring to his own time of writing, the 1930s and the growing possibility of Hitler coming into power: 'A grand event is in the making. But no one has noticed', writes Musil, in the title to the last published chapter of the novel.

### **A high coefficient of deterritorialization**

The action of the book is triggered by the decision to implement the Parallel Campaign, a project to celebrate the jubilee of Emperor Franz Joseph and the unification of his people under the fatherland of Austria, which Musil curiously

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<sup>702</sup> Kelly Coble, 'Authenticity in Robert Musil's *Man Without Qualities*', *Philosophy and Literature*, 29 (2005), 337-348 (p. 338).

<sup>703</sup> Barrento, 'Prefácio', p. 18.

<sup>704</sup> *MWQ*, p. 43.

<sup>705</sup> *Ibid*, p. 330.



nicknames Kakania.<sup>706</sup> Rather ironically, however, the First World War was soon to start and there would not be a celebration: war had taken its course and fragmented Europe (and the empire) into a mosaic of countries. Ulrich, an Austrian dilettante who decides to take a ‘holiday from life’,<sup>707</sup> is the double of Musil-author, which in Llansolian terms, could clearly mean that Ulrich is (almost) the *figure* of Musil,<sup>708</sup> an ironic character with a sharp awareness of his fragmented self. The novel, according to Burton Pike, who translated it into English, is a ‘spiritual biography of an age and of an empire, and the spiritual autobiography and utopian vision of a man’.<sup>709</sup> Kakania is the peculiar definition for ‘neither a state, nor a nation, nor a federation, nor a union of states’,<sup>710</sup> as Jonsson puts it, but a crumbling empire with eleven major and several minor nationalities, which Ulrich cynically describes as the ‘Austrian ethnic stocks’.<sup>711</sup> The composition of the novel as an incessant gathering of fragments reflects the problems of nationalism, ethnicity, and the multiplicity of languages in the Austro-Hungarian empire, in which German was the predominant language, and Vienna the radial centre of a territory, which expanded from the Ukraine to Switzerland, from the Adriatic to Poland. Musil thus unveils the mendacious intentions behind the Austrian elite, epitomized by the characters Diotima or the section chief Tuzzi. These characters are the drive behind the Parallel Campaign, but they are also pretexts for Ulrich to continuously debate the current situation in the state, where ‘all citizens were equal before the law, but not everyone was a citizen’.<sup>712</sup>

Ulrich’s Vienna is a city in which ‘all the people need to be happy, because the soul is formed by what you accomplish, whereas what you desire without achieving it merely warps the soul’.<sup>713</sup> Vienna is presented as a vanity fair of futility and hollowness, characters wandering in the anguish of the impossibility of defining their own identity. In Austrian modernist novels, Vienna is a space in which an ‘eye’

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<sup>706</sup> Kakania comes from the ‘label *kaiserlich-königlich* (Imperial-Royal) or *kaiserlich und königlich* (Imperial and Royal), abbreviated as “k.k.” or “k.&k.” [...] On paper it was called the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, but in conversation it was called Austria’. *MWQ*, p. 29.

<sup>707</sup> Jonsson, *Subject Without Nation*, p. 44.

<sup>708</sup> Llansol explained that Musil’s characters were still not figures in the full sense, but mere possibilities. See Llansol, ‘O Espaço Edénico’, p. 162.

<sup>709</sup> Burton Pike, *Robert Musil: an Introduction to His Work* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1961), p. 122.

<sup>710</sup> Jonsson, *Subject Without Nation*, p. 219.

<sup>711</sup> *MWQ*, p. 491.

<sup>712</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29.

<sup>713</sup> *Ibid*, p. 27.

for an 'I' becomes a formula that sustains the ontological crisis faced by the authors during modernism. Andreas Huyssen explains how the architecture of Vienna, in which the city was visually oriented towards the Imperial Palace, forces the bourgeoisie to turn 'its back to the popular classes'.<sup>714</sup> Vienna and its circular space of the Ring, the panoptical illusion of freedom, the seeing and being seen of the Empire, 'exhibited an inevitable social pathology'.<sup>715</sup> Kakania is the space in which the self, erased from its subjectivity, apathetically accomplishes its everyday goals, fulfilling its existence with an absence of fear and incertitude, assured that life will bring prosperity and health. Yet, Ulrich's Kakania is also a space that has pushed the unwanted sons of its own territory (the gypsies or the Jews) beyond its margins, thus rejecting diversity. It is undoubtedly true that the novel 'examines the damaged structure of Austrian society',<sup>716</sup> but the architecture of Vienna that Ulrich carries on his shoulders, a heavy legacy which warps his soul, becomes his own shattered self. Ulrich explains how the proliferation of 'unliberated national minorities' in the empire,<sup>717</sup> brought it to its ruin, for its identity fragmented into several languages and kingdoms and fuelled the urge for independence in a territory dominated by Austria's stubbornness and abuse of power. The empire, Ulrich considers,

did not consist of an Austrian part or an Hungarian part that, as one might expect, complemented each other, but a whole and a part; that is, of a Hungarian and a Austro-Hungarian sense of statehood, the latter to be found in Austria, which in a sense left the Austrian sense of statehood with no country of its own. The Austrian existed only in Hungary, and there as an object of dislike; at home he called himself a national of the kingdoms and lands of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy [...] Meaning that he was an Austrian plus a Hungarian minus the Hungarian.<sup>718</sup>

Paradoxically, it is no longer modernity's quest for the meaning of the self that imposes upon Ulrich (and the modern man) a fragmented identity. Yet the fact that Ulrich inhabits an empire whose territory cannot be grasped completely, with languages whose meaning he cannot understand, ultimately destroys his own identity as an Austrian minus the 'other', unable to define himself, unable to affirm his subjectivity. One could thus witness a double fragmentation of the self, which propels the increase of nationalist movements: by annihilating the self and its

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<sup>714</sup> Andreas Huyssen, 'The Disturbance of Vision in Vienna's Modernism', *Modernism/Modernity*, 5.3 (1998), 33-47 (p. 40).

<sup>715</sup> *Ibid*, p. 40.

<sup>716</sup> Jonsson, *Subject Without Nation*, p. 230.

<sup>717</sup> *MWQ*, p. 490.

<sup>718</sup> *Ibid*, p. 180.

emancipation, 'the nation is always conceived as deep, horizontal comradeship', as Benedict Anderson explains, and its horizontality presupposes the annulment of the individual in the core of the colossal masses.<sup>719</sup> In this sense, the concept of *minor literature* could be applied to the Musilian text, since it reflects its coefficient of deterritorialization and also pursues a collective value. As stated before, a *minor literature* is not a literature of the minorities. Austria is, indeed, a minor state, in terms of population and territory. Nevertheless, it is the *core* of the Austro-Hungarian empire, assuming its strength from an order imposed over the rest of the territories (the German language), which sustains a political and ideological agenda that will ironically provoke its minority condition in a post-war Europe. Consequently, one should not consider *The Man Without Qualities* as a novel of *minor literature* as a result of Austria's predominant role in the empire. It is precisely because Ulrich's identity is fragmented into a search for his subjectivity, that, even if he speaks the major language, German, he is deterritorialized from his own self. His nomadic character allows him to detach himself from the foundational condition of his existence: his language and nationality. Musil wrote the novel after the war, after the fall of the Austro-Hungarian empire, and by placing such a character at its centre, Musil is writing a life sentence to his identity. Ulrich is destined to be deterritorialized because, literally, at the end of narrative time, in 1914, there would be *no* Austro-Hungarian identity left. Even if Musil writes in German, and at the core of the empire, his literary project could be considered *minor*, since the mechanism of deterritorialization, as the concept Deleuze and Guattari suggest, precipitates a movement *within* the territory – Ulrich's search for the 'other condition', away from *pseudoreality*, away from the constraints of History and science, away from that 'big hole called soul',<sup>720</sup> allows his quest to become a 'porous pretext for many possible meanings'.<sup>721</sup> The movement Ulrich carries out *away* from the decadence of modern society is always a movement *within* the text, since he is (almost) a *figure*, constrained by the limits of its author's creation even though he ultimately tries to escape them. Ulrich's movement within his language can thus be paralleled with the movement of the peasants and the working class who left the non-German speaking areas of the territory and migrated into *fin-de-siècle* Vienna seeking to improve their

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<sup>719</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 7

<sup>720</sup> *MWQ*, p. 198.

<sup>721</sup> *Ibid*, p. 270.

living condition. The self identity of the Austrian elite thus becomes unseen, as if in the vanity fair of Kakania the centre is no longer the Imperial Palace, but these bands who are thought to have jeopardized the importance of German language as the kernel of the empire. It is thus understandable why, as Andreas Huyssen points out, ‘the German-language writers felt increasingly embattled, and why language became such a central concern in Vienna and not in Berlin or in Munich’.<sup>722</sup>

**Musil’s project is Llansolian as well, for ‘ordinary life, too, is utopian’<sup>723</sup>**

*The Man Without Qualities* could be considered a commentary-novel, in the style of the encyclopaedic modernist authors. Musil’s references are unlimited, ranging from the constant paraphrasing of Nietzsche by Clarisse (and the hidden citations of Goethe by Arnheim), Kant, the Bible, Kleist, Homer and the Greeks, Novalis, Dostoyevsky, Alfred Loos, treaties on education, music, and politics. Profoundly influenced by Ernst Mach’s positivism (the subject of Musil’s doctorate), the novel opens, for instance, with an accurate description of a weather report, as if broadcast by meteorologists. To Walter Moser, this opening, the scientific description of the weather, shows how his writing interweaves moments of pure poetry and literary creation with factual aspects of scientific nature, insofar as ‘the writer refuses to write a certain traditional type of the novel and that he, nevertheless, accepts the genre “novel”’.<sup>724</sup> Musil’s background in science endows his text with a capacity to expand possibilities, establishing a conflicting dialectics between desires and doubts, largely influenced by Mach’s theories.

The relevance of science is not arbitrary here, for Ulrich’s quest is what makes the novel progress throughout its more than a thousand pages. Indeed, science allows the *continuum* of life through the development of technology that improves people’s lives and their sustainability. Nevertheless, positivism and the uncritical belief in scientific thought produced an unprecedented contingency for nihilism: the self becomes divided between the awareness of knowledge, and the emptiness of properties, or qualities, that no longer belong to him/her. It is the state of *despossessão* that shattered the Musilian self: “being beingless” is a modern description

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<sup>722</sup> Huyssen, p. 40.

<sup>723</sup> *MWQ*, p. 396.

<sup>724</sup> Walter Moser, ‘The Factual in Fiction’, *Poetics Today*, 5.2 (1984), 411-428 (p. 412).

of alienation when the light of knowledge fails to provide essential illumination'.<sup>725</sup> In his continuous quest for happiness and meaning, Ulrich is searching for Aossé's 'interior space', going deeper into the *edenic* self through the multiple extension of the world of possibilities. Such subjects are men who contemplate every possibility, because they actually inhabit that state of 'delicate medium, a hazy medium of mist, fantasy, daydreams, and the subjunctive mood':<sup>726</sup> a daydream condition that removes Ulrich from the twentieth-century, scientific, and moral qualities that a man of his age, in this European country, should have. Jonsson suggests that Musil's works in general, and this novel in particular, are an 'attempt to find an other human being', thus creates a fragmented subject, one who would 'resist assimilation into imperialist, nationalist, or fascist communities',<sup>727</sup> and which have taken advantage of scientific progress in order to exert fear over Europe.

The Musilian 'possibilities' open up the text, thus justifying its incompleteness. Fragmented into short chapters, the narrative plot moves back and forth, suspended in sections of pure sensation, advancing with intellectual or scientific discussions between characters, suspended again in the social parties and conventions at the Tuzzi's, progressing continuously in a dance which prevents the novel from attaining a totality. Musil resorted to 'essayism', precisely because he wanted to write a novel in which scientific thought would be at its core, instead of *narrativity*, or its writing techniques (metaphor, character development, or even according to Greimas, the reduction of the subject's function to its action).<sup>728</sup> This way of writing is not exclusive to Musil, and is also used by other German-speaking modernist writers, typical of the turn-of-the-century aestheticism, such as Herman Broch. Instead of the narration of facts, as in the narrative mode, one could thus propose an explanation of facts, as in a scientific text. To Musil, 'essayism' was the technique that allowed immense possibilities, the opening of the plot to several *scenes of fulgor*, expanding the space-time frame in a constant proliferation of betweenwhiles that do not establish a definitive or complete ending, but rather, as in scientific experiments, a result leading to another question leading to another experiment. Consequently, an 'essay' is

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<sup>725</sup> Allen Thiher, *Fiction Refracts Science: Modernist Writers from Proust to Borges* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2005), p. 72.

<sup>726</sup> *MWQ*, p. 11.

<sup>727</sup> Jonsson, *Subject Without Nation*, p. 262, and p. x.

<sup>728</sup> See Greimas, *Sémantique Structurale*.

no longer connected with the vague word 'hypothesis' [...] [but] more or less in the way an essay, in the sequence of its paragraphs, explores a thing from many sides without wholly encompassing it – for a thing wholly encompassed suddenly loses its scope and melts down to a concept – that he believed he could most rightly survey and handle the world and his own life.<sup>729</sup>

Musil asserts that 'essay' should no longer be translated or connoted with 'attempt' in the literary model. Rather, it should be understood as the expression of the possibility to endow the text with multiplicities, explanations, commentaries, footnotes, connecting the thoughts or paragraphs with contradictions or corroborations, accounted for by historical, literary, scientific, theoretical or mathematical references, in order to express a man's process of thinking or conjecturing. Musil thus pays a modernist homage to the fathers of his historical and literary condition, recurring to the technique of a non-assumed commentary, an open palimpsest of references. Yet, he also praises the legacy of the 'essayist' writers whose 'domain lies between religion and knowledge, between example and doctrine, between *amor intellectualis* and poetry; they are saints with and without religion, and sometimes they are also simply men on an adventure who have gone astray'.<sup>730</sup> So Ulrich's life is a constant search for those 'attempts' allowed by the 'essay', experimental and encyclopaedic thought and knowledge. 'Essayism' admits the possibility of *continuum*, and so the *perpetuum mobile* of the text thus expands in a quest for transcendence, very similar, then, to the Llansolian *fulgor*.

Like Aossê, Ulrich is an atomized self, no longer on the inside of his subjectivity (controlled by his stream of consciousness), nor on its outside (the *impostures* of the state apparatus), but is condemned to a condition of 'in-betweenness',<sup>731</sup> the Llansolian *entresser*, or the 'other condition' enunciated by Musil in the last part of the novel. The 'other condition' is usually defined as the culmination of a series of possibilities or projects Ulrich performs in order to be inscribed and understood in the world. Still, the 'other condition' does not grant a 'return of the individual subject's expressive relationship to the world'.<sup>732</sup> On the contrary, it once again bestows the subject with 'in-betweenness', always becoming

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<sup>729</sup> *MWQ*, p. 270.

<sup>730</sup> *Ibid*, p. 273.

<sup>731</sup> Jonsson, 'Neither Inside nor Outside: Subjectivity and the Spaces of Modernity in Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*', p. 56.

<sup>732</sup> Jonsson, 'Neither Inside nor Outside', p. 57.

double and open to possibilities. Ulrich himself articulates this duality in the following passage:

‘being on the inside’ and ‘looking at something from the outside,’ a feeling of ‘concavity’ and ‘convexity,’ a ‘spatiality’ as well as a ‘corporeality,’ an ‘introspection’ and an ‘observation,’ occurred in so many other pair of opposites of experience and in their linguistic tropes that one might assume a primordial dual form of human consciousness behind it all.<sup>733</sup>

In the core of this realm of possibilities, of binary experiences of life, a man has the opportunity to change, to mutate, to *become*. In German, the verb *werden* (to become) ‘is the hidden spring in Musil’s works’,<sup>734</sup> explains Burton Pike, so that *to become* is to attain the ‘other condition’, an illuminated state of utopia, the space of the Millennium. According to João Barrento, the Musilian Millennium, which anticipates the advent of Nazism and Hitler’s ascent to power, is borrowed from Saint John’s Apocalypse, thus referring to ‘a profecia quiliástica da vinda de Cristo e da ressurreição dos mortos antes do fim do mundo’.<sup>735</sup> The pivotal characters of the last section of the novel, Ulrich and Agathe, have to escape to the Millennium, to the ‘other condition’ that will allow their freedom in a Europe already terrorized by growing nationalisms, propelled by that ‘readiness to riot’ Musil talked about, which opens to endless possibilities, ‘and equally endless horrors’.<sup>736</sup> Jonsson asserts that the ‘other condition’ is an ultimate state of sublimation in order to accomplish the dissolution of the self. Contrary to other theorists who have defined the ‘other condition’ as the possibility to attain harmony within the text, Jonsson suggests that the dilution of the self in that space, neither on the inside, nor on the outside, places the subject in a landscape of annulment. This is, then, ‘a state of being where the subject relinquishes its essence, its individuality, in order to become a tiny nucleus of consciousness and energy in a field of social and historical forces’.<sup>737</sup> This nucleus of energy is, moreover, extremely close to the concept of the Llansolian *figure*: Ulrich and Agathe have no escape other than choosing *nomadic* exile, away from the social and the historical context of the novel, *becoming* in a state of *entresser*, which, in the end, allows their *deterritorialization*. To Ulrich, the Millennium was nothing but ‘a desire to live, with the aid of mutual love, in a secular condition so transcendent that

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<sup>733</sup> *MWQ*, p. 747-748.

<sup>734</sup> Pike, p. 29.

<sup>735</sup> João Barrento, ‘Nota do Tradutor’, in Robert Musil, *O Homem Sem Qualidades*, vol. 1, p. 659.

<sup>736</sup> Lisa Appignanesi, *Femininity and the Creative Imagination: A study of Henry James, Robert Musil and Marcel Proust* (London: Vision Press, 1973), p. 125.

<sup>737</sup> Jonsson, *Subject without Nation*, p. 91.

one could only feel and do whatever heightened and maintained that condition'.<sup>738</sup> Ulrich's world of possibilities is, in the end, the 'interior space' of Pessoa, since Ulrich describes that very same interstitial space as a 'domestic interior', a map composed by 'all these circular lines, intersecting lines, straight lines, curves and wreaths'.<sup>739</sup>

The similarities between Musil and Llansol are thus clearly revealed, especially when one establishes a parallel between the Musilian *possibilities*, the *other condition* and the *Millennium*, and Llansolian concepts such as *fulgor* and the *scene of fulgor*, or *edenic space*. Agathe and Ulrich will only reach the *Millennium* since their desire to achieve *fulgor* only becomes possible through the encounter between beings, endowing their mutual love with the *poetic gift*. For this reason, Musil's and Llansol's literatures are concomitant to what Ernst Bloch described as the 'utopian function of literature':

The not-yet-become of the object manifests itself in the work of art as one that searches for itself, shines ahead of itself in its meaning. Here anticipatory illumination is not simply objective in contrast to subjective illusion. Rather, it is the way of being, which in its turn wakes utopian consciousness and indicates to it the not-yet-become in the scale of its possibilities.<sup>740</sup>

Nevertheless, Musil and Llansol do not wish to definitively accomplish the utopian condition of literature, inasmuch as, for both writers, utopia is a means, not an end. Llansol is suspicious of the word utopia, preferring its *edenic* counterpart, because the former ultimately comprises a finality, and the text, she defended, like a body, should remain open. Musil's words, several years before, endorsed that very same principle: 'Utopia is not a goal but a direction.'<sup>741</sup> To Llansol, the *edenic space* is made up of its nomadic character, and of the fact that it is the movement of *detritorialization* within the text towards that utopian state that becomes relevant, for 'o facto de se estar a caminho para algo já faz parte do percurso'.<sup>742</sup>

At last, ordinary life can be utopian too, as the title of this section indicates, since human actions should allow for a utopian daily life. As Musil suggests, we

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<sup>738</sup> *MWQ* p. 949.

<sup>739</sup> *Ibid*, p. 134.

<sup>740</sup> Ernst Bloch, *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature* (Cambridge, London: MIT Press, 1988), p. xxxiv.

<sup>741</sup> Pike, p. 207.

<sup>742</sup> Ana Maria Pereirinha F. Pires, "Quando caminhamos à tarde pelo bosque" – Margens e Confluências na Obra de Maria Gabriela Llansol' (unpublished MA dissertation, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1993), p.xi.



should 'give up being possessive about our experiences', and relinquish them to the text and the creation of literary realms.<sup>743</sup> More than the certainty of becoming, it is the drive, the movement of mutation that is essential to the revolutionary character of the text. This is the Blochian 'not-yet-become' that bequeaths the text with multiple possibilities, for a man without qualities 'doesn't say No to life, he says Not yet! and saves himself for the right moment',<sup>744</sup> to a vigour only accomplishable through language, which only occurs when a writer searches for the 'interior space' of a *figure*, striving to establish, by way of *scenes of fulgor*, the surprising encounter of the diverse.

### **Mystics and the Feminine – the Mad(Wo)man, Hermaphrodites and Criminals**

If the accomplishment of the utopian state of the 'other condition' is not the ultimate aim of the Musilian text, one could say, borrowing Judith Ryan's words, that its 'aim, rather, is to divest mystical experience of its mystery by embedding it into a larger theory of human psychology'.<sup>745</sup> In fact, the Musilian possibilities are an obvious reflection of the influence of several medieval mystic writers on the Austrian, mainly Meister Eckhart, whose relevance in *The Man Without Qualities* rests in the choice of the expression 'without qualities' to define its protagonist. According to Genese Grill, this expression arises directly from the fact that, as we have seen before, the character is now dispossessed, yet also emptied of his moral, ontological or ideological qualities. With his spirit set free at last, Ulrich's absence of qualities coincides with the asceticism of the mystics: being dispossessed is equal to being disrobed of earthly qualities, or characteristics, so that there no longer exist the 'spiritual possessions or attachments in the form of belief, habits, preconceptions, hopes, in an extreme state of spiritual, material, and moral vagabondage'.<sup>746</sup> Ulrich thus becomes the vagabond, the wanderer or the *nomad*, like the Sufis or San Juan de la Cruz, barefoot and poor, devoting their bodies to God, not in order to be united or touched by Him, instead, to *become* one with Him.<sup>747</sup> In Llansol, the presence of Arabic, German, Spanish, and Dutch medieval mystics is extremely relevant, for the

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<sup>743</sup> *MWQ*, p. 396.

<sup>744</sup> *Ibid*, p. 483.

<sup>745</sup> Judith Ryan, *The Vanishing Subject* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 222-223.

<sup>746</sup> Genese Grill cited by Mark Jay Mirsky, in 'Introduction', in Robert Musil, *Diaries 1899-1941*, trans. by Philip Payne, ed. by Mark Jay Mirsky (New York: Basic Books, 1999), pp. xxxv-lv (p. 1).

<sup>747</sup> José Augusto Mourão, 'A Pele da Imagem: Em Torno de Eckhart e Maria Gabriela Llansol', *Revista de Comunicação e Linguagens*, 31 (2003), 136-151 (p. 141).

itinerancy of the mystics inspired the nomadic condition of her *figures*. In a text dedicated to Ramon Llull, she explains that ‘sem a difusão do eremitismo, não teria havido sustentação de estados místicos, nem qualquer hipótese de experimentação mística, e do aperfeiçoamento das técnicas metafísicas afins’.<sup>748</sup> Besides Meister Eckhart and San Juan de la Cruz, Llansol also establishes encounters with Hadewjich, Heinrich Suso, Ibn al-‘Arabī, and al-Hallāj.<sup>749</sup> The presence of the mystics in Musil and Llansol is reflected by an appeal to the ‘night’ to invade the world, becoming the dominant order over men. Following on San Juan de la Cruz’s poem *Noche Oscura*, the dark night is not an end, death, or pure darkness, because the soul, Llansol suggests, ‘deve geralmente passar primeiro por duas noites a que os místicos chamam purgações [...] ou purificações da alma e a que nós aqui daremos o nome de noites [...] porque a alma caminha como de noite, e na obscuridade’.<sup>750</sup> The *dark night of the soul* is, then, a ‘passagem, travessia, trânsito, purgação da tríade de pecados que atormenta o homem: o mundo, o demónio e a carne’, becoming a drive that activates ‘outras noites, uma série de etapas que o homem terá de passar até chegar à chama viva, que é a união directa com Deus’.<sup>751</sup> Like Llansol, Musil also believes in the *dark night of the soul* as a process of purification, which daylight cannot permit. In fact, Musil’s desire for light actually gives way to the night itself, seeking what he calls ‘daylight mysticism’ (*taghelle*), a state only accomplishable through the seeing and being seen of the dark night, a consistency, as he puts it, ‘unknown to the daylight senses, a blackness I could see through, a blackness I could feel through, and of which I too was made’.<sup>752</sup>

This *unio mystico* with God is only possible when the soul, dispossessed of its mundane qualities, endures a purging process in a being-outside a time and a place through which the mystical experience occurs. As such, in the mystical idea of timelessness, Grill suggests, ‘God gives birth to his son over and over and over

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<sup>748</sup> Llansol, ‘Diálogo com Llull’, p. 101.

<sup>749</sup> The spelling of these writers’ names is in accordance with the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Llansol uses different spellings, and most of the times she is not consistent amongst her texts.

<sup>750</sup> *LC*, p. 12. The author borrows this sentence from San Juan de la Cruz’s ‘Libro Primero’ of *Subida del Monte Carmelo*, a poem from the sixteenth century: ‘Y aquí las llamamos noches, porque el alma, así en la una como en la otra, camina como de noche, a oscuras.’ San Juan de la Cruz, *Subida al Monte Carmelo*, in *Obras Completas*, pp. 253-482 (p. 258).

<sup>751</sup> Raquel Ribeiro, “‘A noite a princípio é o homem sem casa’”: Vestígios da Escrita e a Aparição do Divino na “noite escura” de Daniel Faria’, in *Jovens Ensaístas Lêem Jovens Poetas*, ed. by Pedro Eiras (Porto: Deriva, 2007), pp. 79-92 (p. 86).

<sup>752</sup> Robert Musil, *Posthumous Papers of a Living Author*, trans. by Peter Wortsman (New York: Archipelago Books, 2006), p. 152

again, and there is no beginning, no end, no middle, then there is, after all, no narrative, no historical biblical story, no traditional novel'.<sup>753</sup> For Eckhart too, time is an ever present *continuum*, a space of in-betweenness, exactly in the same form as we witness in Llansol and Musil: the blurring of temporality turns into a 'timelessness' essential to reach *fulgor* or the 'other condition'.

Ulrich's and Agathe's *unio mystico* is, therefore, a reflection, not only of the influence Musil received from Meister Eckhart, but also of the importance Musil grants the female characters. Lisa Appignanesi mentions that the inclusion of strong women in Musil arises from the author's attempt to accomplish a completeness, or a totality of being. A woman is, then, the 'embodiment of possibility [...], the only figure within the Musilian universe who is capable of attaining crystallization within the limits of her own being'.<sup>754</sup> Agathe is the drive for Ulrich's desire to escape this world in search of utopia. By relying on the Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris, in which Isis was the sister, wife, and, finally, the mother of Osiris, Musil is presenting an incestuous relationship between Ulrich and his twin sister, long forgotten and absent from the novel until the last section, entitled 'Into the Millennium (The Criminals)'.<sup>755</sup> Agathe and Ulrich (now becoming criminals) yearn to flee as *one* into the Millennium, and their mystical/physical/intellectual fusion is acknowledged through the trope of incest, though Musil never actually mentions it. The scenes in which brother and sister appear correspond to an urge for passion and desire, and are charged with an intense *fulgor*, or a linguistic energy, to which Musil confers a mystical atmosphere: 'They were caught, engulfed, dazzled, swept away, raped by God, or else their soul opens to Him, enter into Him, embraces Him, with love and hears Him speak.'<sup>756</sup> Despite the fact that the sexual encounter never takes place in the current editions of the novel, Musil left annotations, drafts, and loose sections which show that incest did indeed occur. Whilst the being is dispossessed of all qualities, giving itself to God, struggling for survival, an incestuous relationship becomes the ultimate liberation of the self from society. In fact, according to Stefan Jonsson, 'incest represents the destruction of all ideological appellations of the subject, tearing apart the kinship structure through which groups are formed, and

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<sup>753</sup> Grill, cited by Mark Jay Mirsky, p. 1.

<sup>754</sup> Appignanesi, p. 87.

<sup>755</sup> See *MWQ*, pp. 729-1130.

<sup>756</sup> *Ibid*, p. 819.

dissolving the fabric of society'.<sup>757</sup> Incest is, therefore, the definitive possibility of remaining open when the lack of morality has destroyed the social *corpus*. Agathe and Ulrich, broken halves of each other, thus accomplish synthesis amongst beings, at once becoming hermaphrodites.<sup>758</sup>

The presence of the androgynous is a common feature in Germanic authors, as Raymond Furness points out, since the hybridism of the hermaphrodite was considered an ultimate state of perfection, or one in which 'separation and differentiation are a curse and fusion and similarity a blessing'.<sup>759</sup> To Ulrich, it is precisely the desire to present a harmony amongst beings that propels the need for the hermaphrodite. It allows the possibility of always being dual, one *and* other, as if 'they two were two no more, nor man, nor woman – / one body then that neither seemed and both'.<sup>760</sup> In the case of Musil, the presence of the feminine allows the protagonist to expand abundant possibilities through a postponing of the present time and its transformation into a mystical timelessness, thus admitting the existence of the double. Ulrich's duality is, to a greater extent, based on a *man* without qualities. Musil ultimately stresses the 'I and the not-I – feel the inner split, the inner disjunction of their togetherness',<sup>761</sup> by creating a double out of his image (like Eve being born out of Adam's rib) and especially by underlining that the other half is a woman. The prominence of Musil's words assumes an added importance here, since he does not refer to 'dissolution', but rather to 'disjunction', as in a state of *disembodiment*, an opening, a fragmentation of the body, of the self and of individuality. In the light of Musil, then – as in the case of Infausta and Aossê, two and the same –, the union of Agathe with Ulrich should not be seen as criminal: its incestuous nature permits the appearance of the hermaphrodite as the only way to attain duality, the double possibility of the ascetic life without qualities through the dispossession of the *unio mystico*.

Whilst Agathe and Ulrich are fleeing this world, Clarisse is falling into madness. Even if her actual madness does not manifest itself until a later stage, every section in which she appears is fuelled by an intense linguistic *fulgor*, in addition to the continuous palimpsests with Nietzsche's texts, expressed by the way her body,

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<sup>757</sup> Jonsson, *Subject Without Nation*, p. 208.

<sup>758</sup> The notion of the *hermaphrodite* in Llansol will be expanded in the following chapter.

<sup>759</sup> Raymond Furness, 'The Androgynous Ideal: Its Significance in German Literature Author(s)', *The Modern Language Review*, 60.1 (1965), 58-64 (p. 58).

<sup>760</sup> Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. by A. D. Melville (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 85.

<sup>761</sup> Musil quoted by Appignanesi, p. 154.

mind and speech behave in unison with a Nietzschean discourse. 'Perhaps madness is not necessarily a symptom of degeneracy',<sup>762</sup> she thinks, quoting Nietzsche's *Birth of the Tragedy*, while wandering through the hospice (a series of corridors, offices, doors, utility rooms, names, uniforms, not unlike a Kafkaian nightmare). Clarisse sends a letter to Ulrich,<sup>763</sup> yet it is completely incomprehensible, inasmuch as she has attained an 'other condition' of language, that is to say, a Deleuzian foreign language, without imposture, thus 'abandoning the grammar and semantics in favor of what she calls a "chemistry of words"'.<sup>764</sup> The existence of Ulrich is always counterbalanced by the appearance of Clarisse and Agathe, for the feminine in Musil is an attempt to grasp the other, the alter-ego of the masculine, so that a possible escape away from the human condition could be achieved. However, even if Clarisse 'mirrors Ulrich and Musil's dissatisfaction with the status quo', her femininity embodies a tragic ending, 'one which can most easily turn to self-destruction'.<sup>765</sup> Clarisse's nihilism is not a corollary of society's loss of masculine reason. The twins' desire to escape is a solution which contrasts with Clarisse's descent into madness, and so her fall becomes a symptom of how insanity is an *other* condition, or a result of living in this 'world without qualities'. Coincidentally, although Clarisse displays quite unstable behaviour throughout the novel, her madness becomes palpable only in the last section. If Ulrich's and Agathe's incestuous relationship is criminal from society's point of view, so the madman is to be expelled, or forgotten, like a criminal, from the orthodoxies of behaviour according to standardized forms of sanity. Clarisse's obsession with Nietzsche is not only reflected in her strange relationship of refusal and rejection towards her husband, Walter, or in her surreptitious love for Ulrich. Rather, her absolute fascination with the murderer Moosbrugger becomes extremely prominent in the text, reflected in the language that she uses to describe him. The reader can intimate that Ulrich is fond of Clarisse, from the descriptions of their encounters as intense *scenes of fulgor*, where it seems that her whole body and mind attain the 'other condition' of pure thought and contemplation. When a prostitute is found murdered, and Moosbrugger is presented as a freak in the media, Clarisse, clearly influenced by the notions of the Nietzschean Anti-Christ, becomes a

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<sup>762</sup> *MWQ*, p. 1063.

<sup>763</sup> See *MWQ*, pp. 773-777.

<sup>764</sup> Jonsson, *Subject Without Nation*, p. 205. Clarisse's letter corresponds to fragment 130 of the novel, pp. 773-777.

<sup>765</sup> Appignanesi, p. 140, and p. 137.

nomad wandering towards a condition that does not conform with the space-time conventions of a novel, in the realist sense. Before Ulrich's eyes, and in the middle of a conversation during which he tells her about Moosbrugger, Clarisse 'meets' the murderer in a state of pure hallucination, in what could be considered a Llansolian *scene of fulgor*:

'Is this the devil?' she thought. 'Has the devil turned into Moosbrugger?' [...] Then the prison where they kept Moosbrugger hidden opened like the refuge of a quiet bay. Clarisse's thoughts entered his cell with a shudder. 'One must make music to the end', she repeated to herself for encouragement, but her heart was trembling violently. When it had calmed down the entire cell was filled with her self. [...] Moosbrugger sat with his head in his hand, and she freed him from his fetters. (...) She laid her hands, a part of her own body, on his eyes, and when she withdrew his fingers Moosbrugger had turned into a handsome youth [...]. 'This is the form of our innocence', she noted in some deep-down thinking layer of consciousness.<sup>766</sup>

Here, Musil describes Clarisse dichotomously, black versus white, confident versus trembling, innocent versus Machiavellian, as if the world without qualities could be, at least, defined by binary categories, or in other words, the mad versus the sane. This long quotation foregrounds several aspects of the Musilian text that reverberate in Llansol's. First, the narrative is here presented no longer as in a *continuum* of thought, but fragmented into several ideas, sometimes even contradictory ones, as if in the antagonistic stream of consciousness, Clarisse could reach the 'other condition'. Secondly, Moosbrugger is not the murderer we know of, but his appearance before Clarisse has metamorphosed him into a *figure*, a nucleus of light, power, or energy, thus corresponding to Clarisse's evidently troubled faculty of perceiving reality, yet also consistent with the state of *fulgor* essential to the development of the text. Finally, their physical encounter shows a *fulgorian* contact in the in-betweenness of this world and the *other*, in which the self's 'innocence' can be fulfilled. The fact that Clarisse is in the room with Ulrich is thus presented in complete contradiction with her 'interior space', in which she is now in the *entresser*, between the living room of her house, and the prison; between her human and social conditions, and the 'other condition'; deterritorialized molecularly from the cells of her body to the cell of Moosbrugger. In Clarisse's eyes, something should be done for Moosbrugger, as he should not be killed by the society that produced the

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<sup>766</sup> *MWQ*, p. 154-155.

criminal, and in which ‘the really great crimes [...] come about because they are tolerated, not because they are committed’, as Lisa Appignanesi points out.<sup>767</sup> We never hear Moosbrugger speak, although sometimes we read his thoughts and the voices inside his head (something the judges called hallucinations), and he was lucky to possess a quality others lacked, since ‘it enabled him to see all sort of things others didn’t, such as lovely landscapes and hellish monsters’.<sup>768</sup> Always presented at a distance, either from Clarisse’s dreams, or from Ulrich’s descriptions, Moosbrugger thus becomes ‘a rampant metaphor of order’,<sup>769</sup> the power apparatus that tried to annihilate him by portraying him as pure insanity, exhibiting his fragile body through the spectacle of our inner fears and desires, and showing our fascination towards the madman, because, as Ulrich puts it, ‘if mankind could dream as a whole, that dream would be Moosbrugger’.<sup>770</sup>

Consequently, the murderer appears as the narrative flipside of Ulrich: an ‘I’ for an ‘Other’ of alterity. Moosbrugger puzzled Ulrich to the extent that the protagonist could not avoid thinking about the madman instead of his own life. Indeed, the murderer is present in several sections of the novel in which pure stream of consciousness invade Ulrich’s thoughts, seizing him ‘like an obscure poem in which everything is slightly distorted and displaced’, thus deterritorializing Ulrich from the space-time frame of the narrative.<sup>771</sup> In the wanderings through his cell, Moosbrugger’s thoughts explain how he felt an aversion towards women, a repulsion which resulted in his murdering the prostitute. For ‘women are women *and* men too’, states Moosbrugger, finally attempting to justify that the self is not separated into binaries of male and female, but is, in itself, moving towards a state of the hermaphroditism of desire.<sup>772</sup> As such, Moosbrugger is the monstrous alter-ego of Ulrich, a man with too many qualities, then, so many that he was able to destroy what science, progress and modernity provided him with. By placing Moosbrugger and Ulrich side by side, Musil is substantiating how the modern self is divided into male and female, the pure and the impure, the sane and the insane, in a state of duality always shattering the totality of his identity into pieces. The only way to achieve *fulgor* is by destroying these binaries, and fulfilling the union of all beings in

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<sup>767</sup> Appignanesi, p. 140.

<sup>768</sup> *MWQ*, p. 258.

<sup>769</sup> *Ibid*, p. 712.

<sup>770</sup> *Ibid*, p. 77.

<sup>771</sup> *Ibid*, p. 126.

<sup>772</sup> *Ibid*, p. 429.

the *edenic space*. Madness is, then, the counterpoint to sanity. Ultimately, our fascination with it arises from the fact that, as Foucault states, ‘tandis que l’homme de raison et de sagesse n’en perçoit que des figures fragmentaires – d’autant plus inquiétantes – le Fou le porte tout entier en un sphère intacte: cette boule de cristal qui pour tous est vide, est pleine, à ses yeux, de l’épaisseur d’un invisible savoir’.<sup>773</sup>

Only the madman, then, is allowed to see what is inside the crystal ball of our future, and he is not an appendix of our sane bodies, he is not a double of our fears and disquiet, but he is amongst us, reading with us, he is *us*, seeing what most of the time our restrained bodies cannot grasp. If Ulrich is thus ‘infected with Moosbrugger’s madness’,<sup>774</sup> as Jonsson writes, so are we all, mankind, infected with the extreme urge to exclude the other from our self-controlled society of order and happiness. By excluding criminals like Moosbrugger, we are, to a certain extent, refusing to allow the insane, the immoral, or the poor (wo)man into this realm of possibilities. It could even be asked, had the world of Musilian possibilities excluded Moosbrugger (and the criminals) from this text, how reduced would our paths of escape to the other condition become? If, as Jonsson states, ‘the incest takes the novel to the extreme of monstrosity’,<sup>775</sup> by allowing this monstrosity to occur, by choosing to include it rather than excluding it, and by presenting these visionaries and figures, I suggest, Musil is, like Llansol, welcoming the ‘evil’ into the text, for ‘the world cannot exist without evil, for evil brings movement into the world’.<sup>776</sup> Musil is thus inadvertently predicting the Llansolian ‘mal errante’.

## CONCLUSION

At the beginning of *Lisboaleipzig 2*, Llansol explains that her literary project aims at the *fulguration* of a lineage of writers, that recurs in all her works. Throughout history, she asserts, several lineages struggled for the freedom of thought, which is, ‘no meio de todas as catástrofes que a Europa viveu e levou a outros povos e continentes, a dádiva que igualmente lhes fez’.<sup>777</sup> According to Llansol, the existence of Europe for these writers (and for herself) is consequently established through binary forces: Europe is a space of freedom that endowed these writers with their

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<sup>773</sup> Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l’âge classique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), p. 32.

<sup>774</sup> Jonsson, *Subject Without Nation*, p. 197.

<sup>775</sup> *Ibid*, p. 208.

<sup>776</sup> Musil cited in Appignanesi, p. 154.

<sup>777</sup> *L2*, n.p..



creativity, and their *fulgor*. However, in order to establish itself as such, the continent had to curtail others' sovereignty, spreading its tentacular abuse of power, of greed and corruption, religious violence and intolerance through the idea of empire, colonialism, and oppression. Europe holds the seeds of catastrophe, or, as Musil posited, a 'readiness to riot', thus becoming the primordial cradle of rebels who dared to defy the state apparatus. Llansol suggests that this freedom of thought will not be accomplished if the creative process does not bequeath Europe with an urge for the *poetic gift*. This is not only her literary, but also personal project, since, in Llansol's eyes, becoming a *figure* is not a matter of chance, rather of necessity, because 'escrever é o duplo de viver'.<sup>778</sup>

Accordingly, *The Man Without Qualities* is a clear example of the decay of an era, and of the fall of Europe as seen through the narcissistic eyes of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Musil was, Hans Reiss writes, 'opposed to nationalism because culture was not a national matter nor was the writer the product of a nation'.<sup>779</sup> As a response to the growing nationalistic movements in Europe, and sensing its catastrophic outcome, Musil literally deterritorialized himself as a writer (in exile, at the end of his life). Nevertheless, he also deterritorialized (in the Deleuzian sense) his text and his characters from this world, moving them towards the Millennium,<sup>780</sup> where *fulgor* would be possible. To Musil, almost 'paraphrasing' Llansol,

writing is a doubling of reality. Those who write don't have the courage to declare themselves for utopian existences. They assume the existence of a country Utopia, in which they would be where they belonged; they call it civilization, nation, etc. But utopia is not a global goal or direction.<sup>781</sup>

The unfinished *Man Without Qualities* proves precisely that Musil, too, perceived the nomadic condition as the only solution for the intolerance and destruction that had hindered the path to the Millennium. Although it should be stressed that the novel pursues a path to the annulment of subjectivity, as we have seen, I disagree with John E. Toews who stated that 'for Freud, Schnitzler, and Musil transcendence did not mean escape into a realm of abstractions, pure forms, or timeless truths, but designated an inner-worldly process of the never-ending, open-

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<sup>778</sup> *FP*, p. 73.

<sup>779</sup> Hans Reiss, 'Musil and the Writer's Task', in *Musil in Focus – Papers from a Centenary Symposium*, ed. by Lothar Huber and John J. White (London: Institute of Germanic Studies, 1982), pp. 41-53 (p. 50).

<sup>780</sup> Llansol calls it 'reino milenário de que falava Musil'. *FP*, p. 71.

<sup>781</sup> Musil cited in Pike, p. 27.

ended work of self-destruction'.<sup>782</sup> At the beginning of the twentieth-century, the Musilian self was lost in a world with *too many* qualities. Even if the writer did not perceive society as a solution for Ulrich, the endless possibilities of his text opened a spiral of catastrophe and self-destruction, indeed, yet also of constant apocalyptic revelations, fabulations, visions, and mystical appearances in the middle of the dark night. Perhaps, as Llansol wrote, Musil's characters were so historically contingent that they could not escape their narrative condition, and therefore could not become *figures*. In this way, their only solution was self-destruction. Nevertheless, Ulrich's nihilism could also be seen as a state of hope, because his endless perambulations account for Musil's constant opening of the text through the mechanisms of the 'essay', allowing for drafts, questions, certainties, affirmations and negations all gravitating around constellations of beings. Indeed, as Ulrich asks one of the characters: 'You want to be nomads, nomads forever on the move [...] toward some other meaning, or state of being?'<sup>783</sup> The arrival at the 'other condition' is, therefore, the ultimate objective of the nomads. As such, Musil's characters do not pursue the way to annihilation, despite the catastrophic aura of the novel, for they were able to be invited, several decades after, to the Llansolian *edenic space*. In an interview *à propos* of the publication of the translation into Portuguese of Musil's *opus*, João Barrento traces a parallel between the Austrian writer and Maria Gabriela Llansol. For Barrento, the Llansolian search for "“existentes não reais” que, não sendo reais do ponto de vista da realidade empírica, têm uma existência' has a parallel with what Ulrich tried to accomplish with 'the other condition'.<sup>784</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of *minor literature* thus becomes particularly salient in the works of Musil and Llansol, because, as we have seen, *minor literature* does not account for the literature of a *minor* nation, a *minor* language, or a *minority* group. Instead, it is charged with a high coefficient of deterritorialization designing a revolutionary movement within the text, ultimately attaining a state of *becoming*, or *fulguration*. Llansol deterritorialized Bach and Pessoa by placing them in a new historical time; she deterritorialized Lisbon by fusing it with Leipzig; but she also deterritorialized Pessoa's poetry and his gendered body by creating Infausta, his

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<sup>782</sup> John E. Toews, 'Refashioning Subject in Early Modernism: Narratives of Self-Dissolution and Self-Construction in Psychoanalysis and Literature, 1900-1914', *Modernism/Modernity*, 4.1 (1997), 31-67 (p. 62).

<sup>783</sup> *MWQ*, p. 536.

<sup>784</sup> Lúis Miguel Queirós, 'É um livro que tanto se pode ler como se pode ir lendo nele: Entrevista com João Barrento', *Público, Ípsilon cultural supplement*, 18 April 2008, pp. 12-14 (p. 14).

female double or heteronym. In this way, Musil also deterritorialized Ulrich from his Kakanian condition, creating his binary counterpart, Agathe, in order to accomplish hermaphroditism as a state of perfection of being, towards the creation of a community of survivors.

As we will see in the next chapter, the only solution to the devastation which proliferated in Europe is a process of *becoming*, allowing the *figures* to metamorphose in the *edenic space*. As Llansol puts it, the union between freedom and the *poetic gift* will only be accomplished by a 'mutação libidinal', metamorphosis, hermaphroditism, the 'other condition' of the being. *Fulguration* will thus take place through the 'confronto/adequação dos afectos e da língua, sobre o solo de um lugar, que é sempre um corpo e uma paisagem falando-se'.<sup>785</sup> In this way, fulguration is necessarily double, deterritorialized, thus reaching the 'interior space' of the lineage.

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<sup>785</sup> L2, p. 6.

## Chapter 3

### FIGURES OF METAPHOR, FIGURES OF METAMORPHOSIS – TOWARDS A THEORY OF *BECOMING* IN FRANZ KAFKA AND LLANSOL

*'O monstro é justamente aquilo que a cultura não concebe, o inconcebível acontecendo e mesmo sendo, não sendo ser'.*<sup>786</sup>

Maria Gabriela Llansol

*'La honte d'être un homme, y a-t-il une meilleure raison d'écrire?'*<sup>787</sup>

Gilles Deleuze

The day on which Gregor Samsa woke up in the morning mutated into a bug, is a historic day for literature: from this moment onwards, a door was inexorably opened onto the monstrous. Paraphrasing Musil, 'if mankind could dream as a whole', that dream would be Gregor Samsa.<sup>788</sup> However, as Kafka writes in *The Metamorphosis* (1915), this 'was no dream'.<sup>789</sup> It was so real that Gregor's room, purposely created for a human being to inhabit for a short period of time, was now a Lilliputian space filled with a bed, a table, and a chair too small to contain his oversized body. In this way, Gregor's innocent question 'What happened to me?'<sup>790</sup> reflects not the ontological quest for a definition of the subject, but a momentarily state of irrationality that soon might go away. This irrationality did not go away – even when he thought that going back to sleep would be the solution in order to forget 'all this foolishness'.<sup>791</sup> Furthermore, Gregor does not ask 'who am I?', an obvious question when someone wakes up in the morning mutated into a bug. Instead, he wants to know 'what happened', to comprehend the process through which he *became* this *figure*. He does not ask 'Who', nor even 'Why' – he just wants to know 'How'.

Gregor metamorphosed into a bug is still very much a human being: his responsibilities haunt him more than his horrific carapace or the multiple little squirming legs, as if his current condition was some kind of societal punishment for missing the five o'clock train. He acknowledges the exploitation imposed by his boss

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<sup>786</sup> Llansol, 'Post-fácio a Sousa Viterbo ou a Linguagem dos Pássaros', n.p.

<sup>787</sup> Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique*, p. 11.

<sup>788</sup> Musil, *MWQ*, p. 77. The original quote: 'If mankind could dream as a whole, that dream would be Moosbrugger.'

<sup>789</sup> Franz Kafka, 'The Metamorphosis', in *The Metamorphosis and Other Stories*, trans. by Stanley Appelbaum (New York: Dover Thrift Editions, 1996), pp. 11-52 (p. 11).

<sup>790</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>791</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

– ‘getting up early like this [...] makes you totally idiotic. People must have their sleep’<sup>792</sup> – but, although he never called in sick at the office, according to his standards, being mutated into a bug could be considered something acceptable, whilst arriving late at work could not. Gregor is, therefore, a child of (this) society, ‘a creature of the boss’s, spineless and stupid’.<sup>793</sup> When the chief clerk visits him to find out why he missed work, Gregor is criticized for ‘neglecting [his] business duties in a truly unheard-of fashion’, thus becoming an irresponsible worker, ‘making an exhibition of peculiar caprices’.<sup>794</sup> Gregor’s determination to get out of bed in order to catch the train reflects the point of view expressed by Georg Lukács, for whom the subject matter of Kafka’s writing was, in fact, ‘the diabolical character of the world of modern capitalism, and man’s impotence in the face of it’.<sup>795</sup>

Being a bug does not scare Gregor. He certainly feels strange, and throughout the story, he tries to adapt himself to his new physical condition. However, he only realizes the disgust his body provokes when he sees his family’s horrified faces: when he is *seen* he acknowledges what he *is*. When Gregor speaks no one can understand him: ‘That was an animal voice’, states the chief clerk; even though his speech ‘had seemed clear enough to him [Gregor], clearer than before’, and it certainly seemed clear to the reader, who is able to read him perfectly. Gregor thus realizes that ‘his speech was no longer intelligible’,<sup>796</sup> and that as a result of his form, he could no longer be understood. Gregor’s mutation into an insect thus attest to his own self-alienation due to the fact that he now speaks a foreign language to his family, as an alien would; as Czechs would have done, in the German-dominant Austro-Hungarian Empire; or even as an immigrant would, in today’s Europe. He is now deterritorialized: the stigma of the other is in his voice, in his carapace, in his identity, and that difference propels his expulsion from the family nucleus, rejected and loathed by his parents and sister, for he cannot be contained in the unified discourse of the nation.

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<sup>792</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12.

<sup>793</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12.

<sup>794</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>795</sup> Georg Lukács, ‘Franz Kafka or Thomas Mann’, cited in Theo D’Haen, ‘The Liberation of the Samsas’, *Neophilologus*, 62.2 (1978), 262-278 (p. 263). For D’Haen, Gregor’s metamorphosis will finally bring a balance to the Samsas, since he was the sole provider of the house (instead of his father). Consequently, in Walter Sokel’s words, ‘Gregor’s relationship to his father thus represents an exact paradigm of the worker’s exploitation by his capitalist employer, as described by Marx.’ See Walter H. Sokel, *The Myth of the Power and the Self – Essays on Franz Kafka* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), p. 219.

<sup>796</sup> Kafka, ‘The Metamorphosis’, p. 19.

Despite this, Gregor Samsa still piously believes in kindness. He was certain that his family would be 'ready to help him', he felt comforted by them while waiting for the doctor, because if his current situation could not be explained by mankind, at least science would provide an answer to 'how' this happened and 'what' could be done to cure it. 'He felt that he was once more drawn into the circle of humanity.'<sup>797</sup> Gregor has faith in the human – at this point, in his head at least (and it could be suggested, in our heads as well), he still hopes that this could not be happening, because there is no such thing as metamorphosis. However, as the story demonstrates, Gregor's innocent belief and attempts to communicate with his family will soon be over when he sees himself rejected by them, violently injured, to the extent that his 'third attempt at communication results in death'.<sup>798</sup>

Tzvetan Todorov's theories on the fantastic as a struggle between the binary forces of the natural versus the supernatural could thus be applicable to Kafka in two different ways. According to Todorov, the fantastic text shows 'the penetration of empirical reality by an enigmatic event that remains unexplained', and its fantastic condition only abides 'as long as the case remains undecided and the explanation withheld'.<sup>799</sup> First, *The Metamorphosis* remains a fantastic text since it does not offer an explanation for Gregor's mutation into an insect, nor a solution to his new supernatural condition (even if Gregor dies at the end, and therefore the case closes without further explanation). Secondly, *The Metamorphosis* rejects the epithet 'fantastic' because it drives the text towards a normalization of the self in society, strange as it may seem, by portraying a movement from a supernatural into a 'natural' order, from an uncanny metamorphosis into a final 'harmonious' acceptance of the mystery. Indeed, as Walter Sokel writes, 'its final "naturalization" appears as "the banality of evil", the brutal callousness of the petty-bourgeois family in which the miracle dies, while the trivial round of everyday life triumphs'.<sup>800</sup> In reality, as the story progresses, one realizes how the supernatural event in *The Metamorphosis* no longer corresponds to a disruption of the quotidian normality of the Samsas. This family is finally 'liberated' from the uncanny: the metamorphosis

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<sup>797</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

<sup>798</sup> D'Haen, 'The Liberation of the Samsas', p. 267.

<sup>799</sup> Sokel, *The Myth of the Power and the Self* p. 11. Sokel is referring to Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, trans. by Richard Howard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975).

<sup>800</sup> *Ibid*, p. 157.

'hence functions, paradoxically, not as a "rupture" but rather as normalizing factor'.<sup>801</sup>

Gregor becomes a scapegoat for humankind because his benevolent acceptance of death is a relief for his family who can now live in peace. At the end of the story, as they leave the house for the first time in several months, they discuss 'prospects for the future', hopefully a bright and happy one, and acknowledge how Gregor's sister, Grete, 'had blossomed out into a beautiful, well-built girl', in an obvious contrast to her repulsive brother.<sup>802</sup> Gregor's death is also quite liberating for us, readers, unable to endure another sentence of that suffering for which we could do nothing but watch. Coincidentally, it was precisely because we were *watching* (and we wanted to watch) that Gregor was created. By reading this text, we, readers, are expiating our voyeuristic sins: Gregor's death allows us to continue living out our boring lives peacefully, in tune with a unisonous discourse, away from the different, from the other, and from the monster.

This chapter begins with an introduction to *The Metamorphosis* since this text brings together many questions raised throughout Kafka's works, and, most importantly, Llansol's. Kafka's presence in Llansol's texts is not as obvious as Hölderlin's or Nietzsche's, due to the fact that the Czech does not become a figure *strictu sensu*. Rather, he appears in the *aestheticum convivium* of Robert Musil, Fernando Pessoa, Emily Dickinson and Hölderlin, in *Onde Vais, Drama-Poesia?*,<sup>803</sup> and Llansol always positions him in parallel with Musil, as we have seen in Chapter Two. The multiplicity of voices in the Llansolian text, she acknowledges, was drawn from Kafka's rejection of the seductive character of literary creation, in other words, his resistance to the metaphor. By seduction, I believe, Llansol is referring to the mechanisms of power, which constrain the text to its *narrativity* – the relevance of the metaphor and the 'once upon a time' formula – in order to create characters which are submissive to a narrator's voice. Llansol states that

a sedução é uma relação de captação, dispositivo gestual e cénico de submissão de todas as vozes a uma única voz, ou por serem originárias a uma única, ou a esta deverem regressar para nela se fundirem. Kafka percebeu que a sedução era uma energia pesada e pegajosa, uma cena

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<sup>801</sup> D'Haen, 'The Liberation of the Samsas', p. 263.

<sup>802</sup> Kafka, 'The Metamorphosis', p. 25.

<sup>803</sup> *ODVP*, pp. 27-38.

armadilhada de vestes, de obrigações sociais, de origens étnicas e formulários, uma fatalidade de aprisionamento sem lei de reciprocidade.<sup>804</sup>

Kafka thus tried to liberate his text from that heavy presence of seduction, or the straightforward process of the metaphor, as we will see, rejecting an ‘originary’ voice (of Genesis) which would shape his whole narrative. Llansol here opposes the seduction of a narratorial voice, with the ‘fascination’ of the luminous appearance of the (possibility of being a) *figure* in Robert Musil, Virginia Woolf and Franz Kafka. It is, therefore, the writer’s fascination with the intense and vibratory nucleus of the *poetic gift* that allows the appearance of ‘figuragens’.<sup>805</sup> If the sole nature of the text lies in the Spinozan ‘affection’ and the mutual relationship between the *figures*, ‘não se pode inscrevê-la numa temporalidade linear e ficcional’,<sup>806</sup> as the ‘once upon a time’ mechanism would presume. It is then crucial to split the temporality and spatiality of a text, thus allowing its fulguration towards the development of the text through a ring of relationships (‘um anel indestrutível de afecto filial com o desconhecido’,<sup>807</sup> Llansol writes) between the *figures*. When a text like Kafka’s becomes subject to the linear orthodoxy of space-time, ‘as figuragens anulam mutuamente a sua luz própria; não se conseguindo libertar da história, continuam tentadas a elucidar o seu hipotético sentido’,<sup>808</sup> and consequently the *poetic gift* cannot be given. This is Kafka’s legacy to the Llansolian text – a progressive attempt to liberate the characters from the original constraints of the narrative voice, in order to defy metaphor and attain the *fulguration* of metamorphosis.

The scarcity of comparative readings of the Llansolian text reflects the lack of theoretical approaches to Llansol and Kafka, to which Marilaine Lopes Silva’s Masters dissertation, in 2007, in Brazil, is the exception.<sup>809</sup> Although Lopes Silva’s essay establishes an approximation between these two authors in relation to the

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<sup>804</sup> Llansol, ‘O Espaço Edénico’, p. 161

<sup>805</sup> *Ibid*, p. 162. Llansol adds the suffix *-agem* to the word ‘figura’, which grammatically implies a collection, a union, or gathering, thus creating ‘figuragem’. This word is also reminiscent of Latin, *figuratio* or *figurate*, i.e., a shaping, an imagining, or to form a *figure*.

<sup>806</sup> *Ibid*, p. 162

<sup>807</sup> *ATJ*, p. 26. As Carlos Vaz explains in relation to Llansol’s diaries, ‘em vez do calendário, é proposta, desta forma, a circularidade elíptica fulgorizante que é o sustento real da própria realidade da escrita [...] o texto em forma de um anel é sem dúvida a figura do próprio poço onde reside a realidade como um cilindro’. See Carlos Vaz, *Diários de um real-não existente – Ensaio Sobre os Diários de Maria Gabriela Llansol* (Fafe: Labirinto, 2004), p. 49.

<sup>808</sup> Llansol, ‘O Espaço Edénico’, p. 162 and p. 163.

<sup>809</sup> Marilaine Lopes Silva, ‘Texto, Lugar que Viaja – Território, Comunidade e Transmissão em Franz Kafka e Maria Gabriela Llansol’ (unpublished MA dissertation, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2007).



concepts of 'territory', 'community' and 'transmission', the author does not refer to metamorphosis, which, I believe, is the fundamental characteristic of both Llansol's and Kafka's texts. In my opinion, metamorphosis is the process through which the notions of community, territory and transmission can be grasped and fully understood in Llansol and in Kafka, thus integral to the construction of character in Kafka, and the transmission of knowledge (and the absence of filiation) in Llansol. Marilaine Lopes Silva states that Kafka's and Llansol's texts

comporta[m] certo grau de desterritorialização e de 'estranheiridade', mostrando como o lugar da literatura parece ser o do desajuste e da estranheza face a mecanismos que partem de noções totalizadoras, como a idéia de pertencimento a uma comunidade que se fundamenta na semelhança e na igualdade de seus membros, ou a idéia de uma linguagem literária que opere na ilusão da grandeza dessa ou daquela língua.<sup>810</sup>

One cannot help agreeing with this statement, yet, throughout her essay, Lopes Silva does not mention the process of metamorphosis, ignoring, then, the fact that the 'desajuste' and 'estranheza' towards a totalizing structure or discourse obviously results in a deterritorialization of the subject. This deterritorialization occurs not exactly in the sense of de-localizing it from a territory (a country, or a language), but, in the case of both Kafka and Llansol, of de-localizing it from its body, its historical *personae*, through the process of metamorphosis (dispossession).

The proximity between Kafka and Llansol could be understood, then, following Augusto Joaquim's theory of the organic text (as we saw in the Introduction), as a question of heteronomy, in parallel to Fernando Pessoa. Joaquim has no knowledge of the reason why Llansol resisted transforming Kafka into one of her figures, although he recognizes that what she did with Pessoa/Aossê reflects the importance Llansol attributed to the physical and luminous vibration of the body, to what Joaquim calls the 'funcionamento libidinal dos corpos'.<sup>811</sup> According to Joaquim, Kafka and Pessoa cultivated different types of heteronomy, a proliferation of libidinous conditions that became 'forças inintencionais e multidireccionais' of the whole text.<sup>812</sup> However, Pessoa and Kafka, states Joaquim, failed to accomplish the real *fulgor* of the liberated organic body, a body which grows with(in)/through/from the text. Kafka's and Pessoa's perennial anxiety, their ceaseless disquiet are, consequently, a result of the incapacity to acknowledge a *fulgorian* condition, so that

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<sup>810</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9.

<sup>811</sup> Augusto Joaquim, 'Nesse Lugar', p. 215.

<sup>812</sup> *Ibid*, p. 215.

they become submerged by visions of the absurd, or the unattainable states of the material body. They did not know that behind the creative process lay not only the possibility of encounter, but also the necessity for ‘pujança’.<sup>813</sup> Much of Kafka’s work could thus be used as a model for the Llansolian text, especially considering the fact that he allows the monstrous to become universal in his works. As Todorov puts it,

with Kafka, we are thus confronted with a *generalized fantastic* which swallows up the entire world of the book and the reader along with it [...]. Here in a word is the difference between the fantastic tale in its classic version and Kafka’s narratives: *what in the first world was an exception here becomes the rule.*<sup>814</sup>

In the light of Todorov, then, the encounter with the uncanny devours our attention in a vortex of pure vibration that defies the logic of ‘normality’, in a ‘dimensão pragmática que ultrapassa o domínio da racionalidade, da crítica, da comunicabilidade’.<sup>815</sup> Accordingly, the similarities between Llansol and Kafka could be seen on three levels that I will address in the three corresponding sections of this chapter.

First, the notion of the *figure* in Llansol is closely related to the Kafkian narrative *character*. However, Kafka’s primary hindrance to the creation of *figures* was their subjection to the narrative space-time conventions, thus restricting his (possibility of being) *figures* as ‘estóricas e metafóricas’.<sup>816</sup> Llansol uses the word ‘estóricas’, which does not have an equivalent in English but which could be translated as *storycal* – in order to refer to the narrative (story) condition of the figures, rather than their historical situation. Llansol states that Kafka tied down his own *figures* because they could not be liberated from their *narrativity*, although she acknowledges that they are no longer characters in the *storycal* sense, but hybrids which she calls ‘figuragens’. In the first section of this chapter, I will address how Kafka, although failing to create Llansolian *figures* in his text, also pursued a similar process of figuration. Rather than focusing on a specific work, I will present an

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<sup>813</sup> *Ibid*, p. 214, and p. 215. Joaquim uses the word ‘pujança’ here, evidently borrowed from Llansol. For Llansol, ‘pujança’ is the strength generated by the *figures* in the *community*, and it is presented in clear contrast with the hegemonic ‘power’ (of the Prince, of the state apparatus). *Narrativity* is sustained by power, whilst *textuality*, ‘tem por órgão a imaginação criadora, sustentada por uma função de pujança’. Llansol, ‘Para Que o Romance Não Morra’, p. 120.

<sup>814</sup> Todorov, *The Fantastic*, p. 174. (emphasis in the original)

<sup>815</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 659.

<sup>816</sup> Llansol, ‘O Espaço Edénico’, p. 162.

overview of the concept of the *figure* in the trilogy *A Geografia dos Rebeldes* (1977-1984), the birthplace of the first Llansolian *figures*.

Secondly, the notion of the monster in Llansol could also be paralleled with the transition from metaphor to metamorphosis that similarly operates in Kafka's texts, namely, as we have seen, in *The Metamorphosis*. Walter Sokel writes that Kafka's 'stories tend to present enactments of metaphors buried in language, not only in the German language in which he wrote but also in the universal symbolism of pre-rational thought'.<sup>817</sup> Gregor is 'like a cockroach', but Kafka drops the 'like' in order to manipulate the metaphor, Sokel explains. The (mis)use of the metaphor in Kafka and Llansol is one of the most crucial literary processes in their texts. The metamorphosis destroys the metaphor and its 'similarity' complex, in order to assume an entirely different entity in the text: Gregor as a human being mutated into a verminous bug, or a monster. The tension between the metaphor and the metamorphosis propels the creation of the *figures*, since these only appear through mutation. In the course of this chapter, I will develop the trope of the monster in Llansol, in relation to *Contos do Mal Errante* (1986), approximating the process of the metamorphosis with Deleuze and Guattari's theory of *becoming*.<sup>818</sup>

Thirdly, it is precisely because Deleuze and Guattari discuss the emergence of *becoming* in tandem with the necessity for *nomadism*, that the importance of the metamorphosis and the monster in Kafka and Llansol can only be grasped *vis-à-vis* the existence of a nomadic condition, the exile of an errant *figure*. We have seen in the Introduction how the Llansolian rebels traced a movement within the European map. Throughout this chapter I will highlight how, along the journey, these nomads ceased to be historical people and *became* Llansolian *figures*. Indeed, this process could only occur through a metamorphosis, but, as we will see, and according to Rosi Braidotti, the nomad embodies a historic necessity to become, to metamorphose, in order to escape its fixity, its unity or an imposed condition of language or nationality.<sup>819</sup> The movement of these nomadic *figures*, resulting from the process of *becoming* monstrous – or as Llansol puts it, of a 'mutação libidinal' – will finally

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<sup>817</sup> Sokel, *The Myth of the Power and the Self*, p. 36.

<sup>818</sup> The *becoming* was presented by Deleuze and Guattari in *Kafka* (1975), and later expanded in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980).

<sup>819</sup> See Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects – Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

liberate both the Llansolian and the Kafkian texts from *narrativity*. Nomadism and figuration are, then, the ways to attain freedom of thought and the *poetic gift*.

#### IN LLANSOL, THERE ARE NO CHARACTERS, BUT FIGURES<sup>820</sup>

The *figure* is one of the most interesting concepts of the Llansolian text. Unlike the *scene of fulgor* or the *sex of reading*, which could be regarded as truly original creations of the Portuguese author, the *figure* is, in fact, an appropriation Llansol developed through the reading of several influences, namely, religious iconography, and Meister Eckhart's theories on the image. We have seen how the birth of a *figure* is a sudden appearance corresponding to the mechanism of a *scene of fulgor*, and it could be presupposed that without *fulgor*, there is no *figure*, and vice-versa. However, while *fulgor* represents an intense and luminous state in the text, the *figure* is a nomad, in constant movement from one text to another, or literally from one house to another, not only in Llansol's fictional world, but also in the real life of the author (in the diaries).

When Llansol states that she writes in order to avoid the death of the novel, she acknowledges the fact that the novel will probably have to change its form (though not its content) in order to carry on its existence: 'Escrevo, para que continue, / mesmo se, para tal, tenha de mudar de forma.'<sup>821</sup> Llansol writes that the novel always assumed as 'nome genérico da **narratividade**'.<sup>822</sup> *Narrativity* is still very much constrained by the text's intention to narrate a truth, even when imaginary. The text is, therefore, cursed by verisimilitude. Llansol explains: 'Por detrás da magia do "era uma vez...", do exótico e do fantástico, o que nós procuramos são estados **fora-do-eu**, tal como a língua o indica, ao aproximar **existência e êxtase**.'<sup>823</sup> One could wonder, then, what Gregor's metamorphosis corresponds to, if not a state outside-the-self, in which the superimposition of existence and ecstasy allows the appearance of this (possibility of being) *figure*. In Kafka's story there is no 'once upon a time, a man woke up in the morning mutated into a bug'. Rather, there is Gregor's incomprehension of *how* he woke up with *that* body – was he metamorphosed into a bug, or had he always been a bug and not noticed? Could *that* happen to us? Not if the text is bound by verisimilitude. And

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<sup>820</sup> Rodrigues Lopes, *Teoria da Des-Possessão*, p. 42.

<sup>821</sup> Llansol, 'Para que o romance não morra', p. 116.

<sup>822</sup> *Ibid*, p. 118 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>823</sup> *Ibid*, p. 118 (emphasis in the original).

Kafka's story, in the light of Llansol's theory, is still very much compelled by the obligation of truth, of realism, even if realism is exactly the word missing from Kafka's texts. In my opinion, Kafka kills Gregor, at the end of his story, in an obvious attempt to show how the devoid subject is not a mere illusion but a reflection of the finitude of being, of failure, and of nihilism. Moreover, Kafka kills Gregor to stress the amorality of the Samsas as a family who represents the lack of morality, which drove a society shattered by aggressive capitalism and greed to a Europe on the verge of war. On the other hand, Kafka kills Gregor because his writing is still controlled by the necessity of verisimilitude, something which would not allow Gregor-turned-bug to exist, morally, in the real world, going to work in the morning, and living alongside humans. Kafka's text is still limited by the ideas first presented by Aristotle, to whom verisimilitude was the essential characteristic of Tragedy: 'For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action. [...] As in the structure of the plot, so too in the portraiture of character, the poet should always aim either at the necessary and the probable.'<sup>824</sup> Llansol thus challenges the Aristotelian necessity of verisimilitude, replacing it with *fulgor*.

The answer to the historical dissolution of the novel is a Llansolian effort to respond to the questions that will pave the way for her literary conjecture: 'Como continuar o humano? [...] / Para onde é que o fulgor se foi?'<sup>825</sup> It could be said that Gregor's metamorphosis is an (unaccomplished) attempt to 'continue the human', to open it up to the *fulgor*.<sup>826</sup> Contrary to a *narrativity* sustained by verisimilitude, *textuality* is the ultimate aim of *fulgor*. Thereby, the question raised in the Introduction, 'fulgor ou verosimilhança?',<sup>827</sup> can now be answered completely: one is obviously dependent on the constrained paradigm of the novel, while *fulgor* arises from its liberation. The text is no longer a mimetic representation of the real. Llansol is rejecting a Genesiac origin or a solution (*telos*) to the text, the question of the plot, the linguistic instances of author, narrator or reader, or even the space-time

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<sup>824</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. by S H. Butcher, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1902), §1450a, VI, 9 and §1454a, XV, 6 (p. 27 and p. 55).

<sup>825</sup> Llansol, 'Para que o romance não morra', p. 120 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>826</sup> Llansol explains that the need to create *figures* arises from the Nietzschean 'Death of God'.

'Quando deus ruiu, cada humano recebeu / quatro futurantes como trama ou rede. Não / sendo anjos, todavia, são na beleza sinal de / Uma leveza inconfundível. São figuras que / não sabem definir que figura somos e onde / se localiza a nossa humanidade, incerteza / que os enche de alegria.' *CLP*, p. 269.

<sup>827</sup> *OVDP*, p. 198.

conventions of narrativity. Instead, following on Pedro Eiras, *textuality* enables Llansol to subvert

o binómio [espaço-tempo] pensando ainda a categoria do escrevente, que conhece o ser ao revelar dentro do *cronos* o *kairos* da cena fulgor. Pensar o texto em termos de (mera) verosimilhança implicaria submetê-lo a critérios do senso comum ou de pensamento científico, subordinar a soberania do enunciador e a autotelia do mundo descrito/criado pelo texto a uma ontologia logocêntrica e anterior à escrita.<sup>828</sup>

When there is no original *logos*, and when the *cronos* was destroyed by the annulment of temporality, the *kairos* of the *scene of fulgor* enables the appearance of the *figure* neither as *mimesis*, nor as a person, but rather as the glittering nucleus of being. The nullification of the mimetic process essentially distinguishes the *figure* from the narrative character: whilst the character is bound by verisimilitude and the necessity of truth, the *figure* is created out of the *kairos* of the *scene of fulgor*; the character is usually a person, while *figures* can be animals, plants, objects, even sentences like ‘este é o jardim que o pensamento permite’,<sup>829</sup> or a decapitated head (like Müntzer’s); a character is a humanized being (even when it is dehumanized, it is always related to the human), whilst the *figure* is a being outside-the-self (‘fora-do-eu’), that is, pure metamorphosis.

This may seem contradictory, yet, the second thing to understand about the books of Maria Gabriela Llansol is that her *figures* do not correspond to historic characters: Pessoa, Nietzsche and Musil are not the same people we have learnt about from history books. The existence of these names in the text challenges the reader’s perception embedded in a culture that establishes a correlation between the figures and historically known people. Llansol is, therefore, developing Walter Sokel’s point of view on Kafka and the metaphor: Gregor is like a bug, but Kafka drops the ‘like’ in order to operate the metamorphosis. Similarly, if Llansol had stated that figure X is ‘like’ Pessoa, she would still be thwarted by verisimilitude: biographically we know Pessoa never met Bach because they belong to different historical periods. In opposition to verisimilitude, then, lies *fulgor*, and through *fulgoration* even the reader can escape his/her cultural paradigms, by replacing his/her previously established mindset for a new *fulgorian* one. For what Llansol intends by ascribing to these figures a historical name (possession), and by

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<sup>828</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 556.

<sup>829</sup> *FP*, p. 130.

deterritorializing them from their historicity (dispossession), is not a process of ‘identificação dessas figuras mas o da *desidentificação* dos nomes próprios que, libertos do seu estatuto de máscaras pessoais, deixam insinuar-se as inumeráveis diferenças que os constituem’.<sup>830</sup> Llansol recognizes that her figures (even the historical ones) are moving towards a progressive state of anonymity, towards a dispossession from a culture, a language, and a nationality that has given shape to their *pathos*, from which the text has now liberated them. ‘Vejo nesse anonimato crescente o fruto do trabalho figural de muitos que tiveram nome, nome que, por vezes, não silencio. A cultura sabe desses nomes, mas não saberá jamais mais do que isso. Aos anónimos, não pode promover. Ou, se preferirem, matar’, she explains.<sup>831</sup> Llansol anonymizes her figures in order to allow their existence in the *edenic space*, as if now mutated into something/someone else, they can open up to continuous landscapes of possibilities. By removing them from their historicity, Llansol is stressing how culture can no longer appropriate them as national symbols (as in the case of Camões), use them as victims of patriarchy (for example, Queen Santa Isabel), or distort their literary and philosophical legacy (like Nietzsche). Indeed, as Augusto Joaquim affirms, ‘não podemos, de facto, esquecer que nestes textos as figuras, antes de o ser, não o eram. Ou seja, a operação que sobre elas exerce o texto é efectivamente performativa’.<sup>832</sup> So, the figures are generated by the creative impulse of the text: it *creates* them, and this verb is consequently performative, producing meaning, it leaves a residue, driving the action of the text.

As we have seen in the Introduction, most of the characters in *Os Pregos na Erva e Depois dos Pregos na Erva* were still (possibilities of being) *figures* limited by verisimilitude. It is from *O Livro das Comunidades* onwards that Llansol’s *figures* cease to be merely human and historical names, by becoming mutated into something else – for instance, monsters. *O Livro das Comunidades* is, according to José Augusto Mourão, ‘uma emboscada de figuras’.<sup>833</sup> San Juan de la Cruz is a prime example of this process, for he could be considered the first *figure* to appear in the Llansolian *oeuvre*, in the full sense of the concept.

<sup>830</sup> Rodrigues Lopes, *Teoria da Des-Possessão*, p. 42 (emphasis mine).

<sup>831</sup> *P*, p. 100. From *Parasceve* onwards, the *figures* become anonymous. Llansol calls it ‘a geração sem-nome’. *P*, p. 56.

<sup>832</sup> Joaquim, ‘Nesse Lugar’, p. 213.

<sup>833</sup> Mourão, *O Fulgor é Móvel*, p. 90.

While several children copy *La Subida al Monte Carmelo*<sup>834</sup> by the Spanish mystic poet, Ana de Peñalosa dreams of a group of men and San Juan, sitting in front of the oven, roasting a lamb.<sup>835</sup> It was obvious, states the narrator, that at that moment San Juan was entering the ‘dark night of the soul’: he was lying on the tray, put inside the oven, and he stopped writing while from his canonized body ‘o fumo subia’.<sup>836</sup> In a presentation elucidating the ‘Lugar 1’ of *O Livro das Comunidades*, Llansol explained, sentence by sentence, the meaning of the first three pages of the book, which, on a first reading, seem completely incomprehensible. As we read Llansol, again and again, this text mutates into an intelligible narrative; what looked at first sight to be an assemblage of random and surreal ideas, become fragments (indeed, still fragments, pieces of a non-existent whole), beautifully connected with one another, actually generating meaning.

At first, the children copy because ‘copiar é uma forma real de aprendizagem’.<sup>837</sup> Learning how to write (and to copy) is an essential method in teaching how to read, and a fundamental process in Llansol – Ana de Peñalosa will do exactly the same with the texts of San Juan. Secondly, the oven, in this passage, is symptomatic since ‘o forno é um lugar de transformação’,<sup>838</sup> and the lamb is historically a sacrificial animal. The smoke ascends from San Juan’s body – as if San Juan himself is ascending to Mount Carmel – and we sense a ‘pulsão libidinal de todo o seu corpo que se liberta’.<sup>839</sup> The unified body of San Juan is no longer presented, rather it is replaced by a double of himself: there was the smoke-body (liberated, transformed and sublimated), and the canonized-body (real, historical, and mystic). Llansol uses the word canon here for, like San Juan’s, ‘canonizados são todos os nossos corpos, / quando apreensíveis e paralisados pelo mundo em que vivemos. Obedecem a um cânone, estão presos a um cânone.’<sup>840</sup> These two bodies, however, are not the same, and for that reason, from that *superimposition* of bodies, the *figure* of San Juan de la Cruz was born in the Llansolian text. Nonetheless, in the

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<sup>834</sup>In *Subida al Monte Carmelo*, San Juan de la Cruz describes how the soul must ‘subir hasta la cumbre del monte, que es el alto estado de la perfección que aqui llamamos union del alma com Dios’. See De la Cruz, p. 255.

<sup>835</sup> *LC*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>836</sup> *LC*, p. 12.

<sup>837</sup> Llansol, ‘Dizer com o “Lugar 1” de *O Livro das Comunidades*’, *À Beira do Rio da Escrita*, ed. by João Barrento and Maria Etelvina Santos (Colares: Gell, 2004), pp. 12-26 (p. 17).

<sup>838</sup> *Ibid*, p. 21.

<sup>839</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>840</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25.



midst of those ‘metamorfoses violentas, doces, rápidas, translúcidas e simples, existia o prisioneiro’;<sup>841</sup> in this way, the *figure* of San Juan was still not totally separated from the biography of the man who gave him his name. In *O Livro das Comunidades*, there is a *vertigo* of the image of San Juan *simultaneously* dying in Úbeda, and writing alongside Llansol: ‘Eu sonhava que, no meu quarto, ele ia principar a escrever o que já escrevera.’<sup>842</sup> There are, then, two San Juan: the first one, the discalced Carmelite, who died in Úbeda, in 1591; the second, a Llansolian *figure* who appropriates the writings, and sometimes the biography, of the poet, but who now lives in the *edenic space*, with Ana de Peñalosa (as he did, in real life), alongside Nietzsche, Müntzer and Eckhart. The poet stopped writing because his hand had paused, like Llansol’s, ‘sobre um traçado’, since a dash is always a halting moment of immobility, of hesitation, \_\_\_\_\_ after ‘percorrer muitas linhas até o encontrar no meio da página depois de um espaço horizontal branco que parecia uma outra margem ali na página’.<sup>843</sup> San Juan is no longer at the centre of his own texts, his language and his culture. Indeed, he lies on the margin of the page, metamorphosed into the palimpsestic voice of the commentary, a dash through which he could now write what he desired, since during his life he could not do so.

An almost identical process occurs with the appearance of Meister Eckhart – he did not know Ana de Peñalosa, but she became aware of his existence, one night, through a *scene of fulgor*. Similarly, Eckhart appears in *A Restante Vida* metamorphosed into a spider:

Uma presença estava naquele lugar, vivia no interior da solidão [...]. Um pouco mais além estava uma teia de aranha eternamente reflectindo, como há muito tempo transparente e abandonada; no canto mais ínfimo e mais diafanamente tecido, havia uma figura minúscula que lhe apareceu com perfeita nitidez e sem ilusão. Só, Eckhart. Tão pequeno, liberto na sua teia, a rememorar sem prisões a sua longa vida, e as doces excomunhões que sofrera.<sup>844</sup>

There are two main ideas in the above passage that expose how the appearance of Eckhart in the text reflects Llansol’s knowledge of both his Sermons, and his life. First, Eckhart-spider appears diaphanously in the web, a materialization connected

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<sup>841</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>842</sup> *LC*, p 16.

<sup>843</sup> *LC*, p. 13.

<sup>844</sup> *RV*, pp. 20-21.

through a ‘travessia do transparente, através do transparente’.<sup>845</sup> This idea of transparency is directly connected to the idea of an *image*, its duality through visibility and invisibility. The fact that Eckhart’s web is translucent does not necessarily denote that Ana de Peñalosa is able to see him. Indeed, she initially feels his presence, but only after she acknowledges his loneliness, a small and fragile being lost in the immensity of the web. Secondly, Llansol does not refrain from mentioning how Eckhart, now transformed into a spider, became freed of accusations of heresy, by Pope John XXII (who condemned twenty-eight propositions of his Sermons). Llansol chooses to metamorphose Eckhart into a spider, in my opinion, in accordance with Arachne’s punishment for weaving a tapestry depicting the scandals of the gods, ‘those crimes of heaven’, as Ovid tells us.<sup>846</sup> Instead of killing her, Athena decided she had to live ‘but hang’, in an extremely similar position to Gregor Samsa’s awakening at the beginning of *The Metamorphosis*: ‘Her head shrinks tiny; her whole body’s small; / Instead of legs slim fingers line her sides. / The rest is belly; yet from that she sends / a fine-spun thread and, as a spider, still / Weaving her web, pursues her former skill.’<sup>847</sup> Like Arachne, Eckhart is able to survive the excommunication, and unlike his biography, lives but hangs, continuing to weave stories from the web in the corner of the room Llansol invited him to inhabit.

José Augusto Mourão states that in Eckhart ‘a “originalidade” consiste em tornar a origem (*origo*) viva. “Tornar novo” não significa “tornar diferente” mas simplesmente “tornar vivo”’.<sup>848</sup> Llansol follows in Eckhart’s footsteps on the discussion of the dialectics of the visible and the invisible, considering how the question of the origin or the building of an image (*figuration*) always implies a process of de-figuration. Meister Eckhart’s definition of the concept of *image* established a connection between the Latin word *imago* and the German word *bild*, drawing on the ‘supernatural, magical and religious context of the West Germanic word *bilidi*’,<sup>849</sup> which, until the eleventh century meant, among other definitions, a ‘magical force’, ‘spiritual entity’, or a ‘miraculous sign’. From Eckhart onwards, however, as Wolfgang Wackernagel posits, this word ‘then began to designate a

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<sup>845</sup> Llansol, ‘Anexo’, in José Augusto Mourão, ‘A Pele da Imagem: em Torno de Eckhart e Maria Gabriela Llansol’, *Revista de Comunicação e Linguagens*, 31 (Lisbon: Relógio d’Água, 2003), 136-151 (p. 150).

<sup>846</sup> Ovid, p. 125.

<sup>847</sup> Ovid, p. 125.

<sup>848</sup> Mourão, ‘A Pele da Imagem’, p. 149.

<sup>849</sup> Wolfgang Wackernagel, ‘Establishing the Being of Images: Master Eckhart and the Concept of Disimagination’, *Diogenes*, 41.162 (1993), 77-98 (p. 78).

“being”, a “form” or a “formed thing”, and finally an “image” in the secular sense such as the representation or copy (*Abbild*) that a painting embodies; and to this semantic sense was added the metaphorical one of an image painted with words’.<sup>850</sup> Eckhart’s concepts are a cross between Latin and German, and he contributed extensively to the development of vocabulary on the image. Why is this relevant to the work of Llansol? Eckhart’s presence in Llansol is very much that of an image and its double, subject to a metamorphosis of form: an image thus appearing through a ‘miraculous sign’ created (*built*) as an image painted in words (*figure*). His contribution towards the de-representation of the image, approximated by a dispossession or dis-imagination, is extremely relevant to the study of the formation of the *figure* in Llansol. In fact, Silvina Rodrigues Lopes states precisely that a *figure*,

tem algo a ver com uma imagem, mas distingue-se dela radicalmente. Na imagem prevalece a analogia. A imagem possui com o objecto de que é imagem uma relação que faz dela totalidade – a imagem é ‘imagem de’. A figura é um todo múltiplo que não é ‘figura de’, nem se desdobra numa soma de ‘figura de X’ mais ‘figura de Y’ [...]. Nós reconhecemos múltiplas semelhanças, mas nem há nela uma semelhança que prevaleça nem as semelhanças se fixam (naquilo que seria um híbrido, ainda uma imagem). São os vazios da figura que lhe conferem um dinamismo infinito, isto é, uma força de metamorfose.<sup>851</sup>

Once again, a *figure* is not *mimesis* but the creation (*building*) of a *living* (‘vivo’): a figure is therefore metamorphosis. A *figure* is never analogous to something previous, but a composite made out of the new (not an original, biblical sense) and of the residual matter left by the passage of other *figures* through the text. We sense their resemblance to the faces, words or gestures of historical names, yet these *figures* are no longer characters, they are entities bound to metamorphosis, whose appearance will only be acknowledged through the existence of an *other*. We should thus partially agree with Roland Barthes, who stated that the definition of a character arises from the relational process of the narrative (the exchange between an author, a reader and a narrator embedded in the same cultural or linguistic code). Indeed, the formation of the *figure* also comes to light from a relational process, but not one that connects author, reader and narrator, rather, one that puts the *figures* side by side, in connection with each other, for ‘é o entre-dois corpos que faz o corpo

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<sup>850</sup> Wackernagel, p. 78.

<sup>851</sup> Rodrigues Lopes, ‘A Comunidade Sem Regra’, p. 221.

humano'.<sup>852</sup> A *figure* only exists in relation to another, in an exchange of the *mutual* ('mútuo') and of reciprocity. According to Augusto Joaquim, the *mutual* is a 'conversação espiritual'<sup>853</sup> developed through a physical (love) or textual connection among the *figures*. From these spiritual encounters 'cada participante sai modificado',<sup>854</sup> as in, for instance, the encounter between Bach and Aossê, in *Lisboaleipzig*, in which 'o poeta e o músico lêem, e não lêem, um no outro'.<sup>855</sup> Therefore, the ultimate affect of the *mutual* is metamorphosis: in the reciprocal relationship between the *figures*, they are modified by each other's actions and presences (*affected*), and this occurrence enables the *figures* to 'descobrir no outro a metamorfose da angústia do seu próprio pensamento', as Eiras explains.<sup>856</sup> The Llansolian text is not thereby confined to isolation: the nomadic condition of the *figures* (who literally migrate from text to text) contributes to the foundation of the community. There is no solitude – the *figures* establish an alterity-embracing dialogism as the ultimate instrument of survival of the community. If a *figure* is therefore defined from the *mutual* relationship it establishes with an *other*, Eiras writes,

toda a figura é um *ser-para*; a figura solitária, sem relação com figuras que a definam na sua diferença e transformem na sua identidade, é inconcebível. O estudo da figura convida ao estudo de um espaço para lá da figura, a comunidade, e de um espaço aquém da figura, o solipsismo. O mútuo recusa esta última solução tanto quanto se alimenta da comunidade para se constituir; permite portanto reagrupar experiências fragmentadas da realidade, sem estabelecer um sistema holístico do discurso.<sup>857</sup>

The *figure* is, consequently, a being-to(wards), a being outside-the-self fragmented through the text, bound to nomadism from text to text (fictional), or from house to house (literally, from Jodoigne to Herbais, from Lisbon to Sintra, as in Llansol's life). The appearance of the *figure* through the encounter between the diverse (acknowledging now that the diverse is the *mutual*) is a process of metamorphosis which corresponds to Kafka's desire of *becoming-animal*.

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<sup>852</sup> Mourão, *O Fulgor é Móvel*, p. 90.

<sup>853</sup> Joaquim, 'Conversação Espiritual', p. 240.

<sup>854</sup> *Ibid*, p. 240.

<sup>855</sup> *L1*, p. 62.

<sup>856</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 580.

<sup>857</sup> *Ibid*, p. 581.

## WRITING METAPHORS, BECOMING MONSTERS

On December 1921, Kafka wrote: 'Metaphors are one among many things which make me despair of writing. [...] Only writing is helpless, cannot live in itself, is a joke and a despair.'<sup>858</sup> Like Llansol, Kafka rejected the metaphor as the sole principle of writing, as if by depending on metaphors, writing was to be controlled by rules. The impossibility of releasing writing from its literary constraints truly caused Kafka anguish. Like Llansol, he does not reject writing in itself, but becomes aware of its limitations: their literary projects ultimately aim to attain *textuality*, rather than *narrativity*.<sup>859</sup>

Paul Ricoeur's starting point for the study of the metaphor refers to Aristotle's vision of this trope as the capacity of contemplating similarities. According to the Greek philosopher, the intensity of metaphors consists, writes Ricoeur, 'in their ability to "set before the eyes" the sense that they display', that is 'a kind of pictorial dimension, which can be called the *picturing function* of metaphorical meaning'.<sup>860</sup> Even and when metaphor is considered a *deviance*, the transference of the original name into a 'foreign' name (Aristotle), the fact is that, Ricoeur underlines, metaphor is always an act of predication rather than of denomination, as Aristotle would have it.<sup>861</sup> Ricoeur thus criticizes the Aristotelian concept of metaphor as analogy, since 'assimilation consists precisely in *making* similar, that is, semantically proximate', while predication involves 'a specific kind of tension which is not so much between a subject and a predicate as between semantic incongruence and congruence'.<sup>862</sup> This means precisely that, in the Aristotelian sense, metaphor was always conceptualized as *mimesis*, while Ricoeur stresses the conflict within metaphor, between similarity and difference. Metaphor is, then, a product of the imagination, the possibility of seeing likeness in the incongruence of a sentence when one cannot grasp its ultimate meaning. In fact, the imagination 'is the *ability* to produce new kinds by assimilation, and to produce them

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<sup>858</sup> Kafka cited in Stanley Corngold, *Franz Kafka: The Necessity of Form* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 54.

<sup>859</sup> Writing about Camões, Llansol affirmed that she felt obliged to interrupt the text 'porque desliza para a metáfora'. She wants to escape metaphor precisely because it is inexorably linked to *imposture* and the patriarchal order of Portuguese literature. *FP*, p. 32.

<sup>860</sup> Paul Ricoeur, 'The Metaphorical Process', in *On Metaphor*, ed. by Sheldon Sacks (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 141-157 (p. 142) (emphasis in the original).

<sup>861</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>862</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

not *above* the differences, as in the concept, but in spite of and through the differences'.<sup>863</sup>

Ricoeur's analysis of the metaphor is hence very close to the metamorphosis of the metaphor, as applied by Walter Sokel to Franz Kafka. According to Sokel, 'Kafka reverses the original act of metamorphosis carried out by thought when it forms metaphor [...]. Kafka transforms metaphor back into his fictional reality, and this counter-metamorphosis becomes the starting point of his tale'.<sup>864</sup> This process of 'counter-metamorphosis' is consummated by the transformation of the metaphor and it arises directly from the impossibility of accomplishing the literalization of the trope, that is, instead of 'Gregor is like a bug', we have 'Gregor is a bug although he is still human'. Accordingly, the incongruence of the previous sentence (rather than its congruence, in the light of Ricoeur) allows the metaphor to be effective. As such, there is no literality, there is no meaning, for Kafka's metaphors purely generate metamorphoses. Yet these are not endings, they do not attempt closure, but instead, they are constant beginnings. As Stanley Corngold explains: 'Gregor is at one moment pure rapture and at another very nearly pure dung beetle, at times grossly human and at times airily buglike. In shifting incessantly the relation of Gregor's mind and body, Kafka shatters the suppositious unity of ideal tenor and bodily vehicle within the metaphor.'<sup>865</sup>

Kafka felt incapable of creating metaphorical figures, or allegories, because metaphors falsify.<sup>866</sup> The impossibility of naming propels a movement towards the creation of alternative beings (yet not *alter*), which cannot be totally contemplated by language, by the process of writing, thus being subject to catachresis, a trope which involves the usage of a different name to signify something which cannot be contemplated by a language. According to Paul de Man, the process of catachresis is capable of inventing the most fantastic entities.<sup>867</sup> Catachreses can

dismember the texture of reality and reassemble it in the most capricious of ways, pairing man with woman or human being with beast in the most unnatural shapes. Something monstrous lurks in the most innocent of catachreses: when one speaks of the legs of the table or the face of the

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<sup>863</sup> *Ibid*, p. 146 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>864</sup> Walter Sokel cited in Corngold, p. 51.

<sup>865</sup> Corngold, p. 56.

<sup>866</sup> Corngold, p. 53.

<sup>867</sup> Paul de Man, 'The Epistemology of Metaphor', in *On Metaphor*, ed. by Sheldon Sacks (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 11-28 (p. 19).

mountain, catachresis is already turning into prosopopeia, and one begins to perceive a world of potential ghosts and monsters.<sup>868</sup>

Consequently, Kafka 'kills the metaphor' in order to allow the emergence of metamorphosis – of the text, of the figure, and of himself, as a writer.<sup>869</sup> By doing so, he is able to *become-animal*, and liberate (deterritorialize) the monster within himself.<sup>870</sup> In accordance with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of deterritorialization, the *becoming-animal* of Kafka (and, it should be added, of Gregor Samsa too) is established through three main factors: first, there is no separation between anthropomorphism of the animal (becoming-man of the animal) and catachresis, for they are both metamorphosis and *not* metaphor. Secondly, these metamorphoses operate a double deterritorialization (of the man from the animal, and vice-versa), to the extent that each one is 'immanente à l'autre, précipite l'autre, et lui fait franchir un seuil'.<sup>871</sup> Finally, this movement of deterritorialization becomes a 'voyage immobile et sur place', which can only be understood as a 'carte d'intensités'.<sup>872</sup> In relation to Llansol, it is essential to ask, then, if this 'carte d'intensités' does not correspond, in the end, to *fulgor*. For when Deleuze and Guattari explain that this constellation of conditions is a 'ligne de fuite créatrice qui ne veut rien dire d'autre qu'elle-même', they are assuming that these intensities are not generated by something other than pure creation. As a consequence, 'le devenir-animal ne laisse rien subsister de la dualité d'un sujet d'énonciation et d'un sujet d'énoncé'. In other words, there is no longer a separation between the becoming-animal of the writer and the becoming-human of the *figure*; instead, they become 'un seul et même procès, un seul et même processus qui remplace la subjectivité'.<sup>873</sup>

The mechanism of *becoming* lies in the annulment of subjectivity. The question of metamorphosis is essential to the understanding of Kafka's texts (not exclusively related to the homonymous short story, but especially concerning the bulk of his *oeuvre*). As such, the dissolution of the metaphor, and its replacement by metamorphosis through the creation of *figures*, is the core of the Llansolian text.

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<sup>868</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

<sup>869</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, p. 40

<sup>870</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari put it: 'Ce que Kafka fait dans sa chambre, c'est devenir animal, et c'est l'objet essentiel de la nouvelle. La première création, c'est la métamorphose.' See *Kafka*, p. 63.

<sup>871</sup> *Ibid*, p. 64.

<sup>872</sup> *Ibid*, p. 65.

<sup>873</sup> *Ibid*, p. 65.

The *figure* of San Juan appears in ‘Lugar 1’ of *O Livro das Comunidades*, a section where, as we have seen, there was a woman who did not want to have children.<sup>874</sup> This book advances by ‘lugares’ (what Llansol called ‘paisagens’, landscapes) up to ‘Lugar 26’ that could be read in contrast with the first one, since at the ‘end of the story’, Ana de Peñalosa mothers a new being (here Llansol is underlining here the difference between giving birth and being a mother, inasmuch as from that polarity a whole body of *figures* arises). According to Silvina Rodrigues Lopes, each section of *O Livro das Comunidades* corresponds to ‘um “agora”, um momento de concentração num fragmento de tempo, e é assim o elemento que suporta as relações estruturantes do texto: mobilidade/imobilidade, fragmento/todo, morrer/nascer.’<sup>875</sup> ‘Lugar 26’ could be considered a significant moment not only for *O Livro das Comunidades*, but for the Llansolian conjecture as a whole, for it opens itself up to a continuity of texts – ‘era o fim do texto, mas o fim provisório’<sup>876</sup> – by initiating the nomadic movement of the rebels, from the house of Ana de Peñalosa to the battle of Frankenhausem. Moreover, ‘Lugar 26’ opens the Llansolian text to the possibility of the monster: hitherto, we had witnessed uncanny metamorphoses; from this moment onwards we realize that these mutations do not always give shape to *figures* resembling humans, but can indeed generate something completely different from the paradigm of humanity.

Ana de Peñalosa states in ‘Lugar 26’: ‘Ali concebemos outra criança ou objecto, ou planta, ou animal, que substituiu Maya, a cadela perdida.’<sup>877</sup> Although genetically the child might be born from the union of Ana de Peñalosa and Nietzsche, in fact, the new being is the result of the metamorphosis of Müntzer’s horse Pegasus who, exhausted after the battle, ran to the polar region, and lay on the snow. Thus Coração de Urso was born in his place, ‘grande, pesado como um coração sem corpo’.<sup>878</sup> Sharing several names throughout the text, Coração de Urso had ‘garras levantadas’ due to his fear of the journey announced by San Juan de la

<sup>874</sup> Ana de Peñalosa is the woman ‘que não queria ter filhos de seu ventre’. *LC*, p. 11.

<sup>875</sup> Rodrigues Lopes, ‘Comunidades de Excepção’, p. 116. Llansol concurs: ‘se eu me concentrar num fragmento do tempo/ não é hoje, nem amanhã/ mas se eu me concentrar num fragmento do tempo, / agora, / esse fragmento revelará todo o tempo.’ *LC*, p.67.

<sup>876</sup> *LC*, p. 76.

<sup>877</sup> *LC*, p. 74.

<sup>878</sup> *LC*, p. 44. In Greek mythology, Pegasus was a winged horse that became a constellation, son of the head of Medusa, who was decapitated by Perseus. Interestingly, in Llansol’s books, Pegasus is Müntzer’s horse, and Müntzer is also a beheaded man. See ‘Pegasus’, in *Encyclopedia Britannica* <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/448740/Pegasus>> [accessed 21 December 2008]



Cruz: ‘Partamos para o exílio’, he said, holding up his paws.<sup>879</sup> Rodrigues Lopes establishes an interesting parallel between the claws of the newborn (Coração de Urso) and Lautréamont’s *Maldoror*, obsessed with ‘chaque animal impur qui dresse sa griffe sanglante’.<sup>880</sup> Yet, the claws of the newborn were not bleeding, in contrast, they were blossoming: ‘Sob as tuas garras floridas virei bailar.’<sup>881</sup> The claws make the newborn faulty by nature (he is no longer human), but his *figuration* no longer corresponds to the creation of a ‘normalized’ being. Furthermore, by allowing him to share several fathers (Nietzsche and Pegasus), and mentors (Müntzer and San Juan); by having a mother who did not breed him in her womb (Ana de Peñalosa), and by sharing the uncertainty as to whether the new being was a child, an object, a plant, or an animal, the Llansolian text is opening itself up to the monstrous. The blossoming claws of the new being are, as Silvina Rodrigues Lopes suggests, not mere ‘substituição do vegetal [...] pelo animal, pois aqui as garras dão elas mesmas flor. Não só não são sangrentas, mas reforçam a hipótese de comunicação para além do reino animal’.<sup>882</sup>

One should agree with the explanation here presented about the claws of the newborn, underlining the expression ‘beyond the animal kingdom’. Notwithstanding, the existence of claws also alludes to the need for defence, for in the preface to *O Livro das Comunidades*, A. Borges (Llansol?) lists three reasons why we should be afraid of this book. One of those is mutation: ‘Ninguém sabe o que é um homem. Os limites da espécie humana não são consequentemente conhecidos. [...] O mutante é o fora-de-série, que traz a série consigo. Este livro é um processo de mutantes. [...] Convém ter medo deste livro.’<sup>883</sup> We therefore need these claws to protect ourselves from the outside world, for once we are submerged in the process of mutation there is no return to an original space/time, an embryonic condition protecting the being as human. ‘O novo ser era um monstro’,<sup>884</sup> yet we will only realize this fact when we reach the second volume. If death and birth are structural relationships in *O Livro das Comunidades* (and appear in most of Llansol’s works), it is also essential to emphasize the mechanism through which the birth of the *figures* is witnessed through

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<sup>879</sup> LC, p. 48

<sup>880</sup> Isidore Ducasse comte de Lautréamont, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Éditions de la Table Ronde, 1970), p. 246.

<sup>881</sup> LC, p. 76.

<sup>882</sup> Rodrigues Lopes, ‘A Comunidade Sem Regra’, p. 224.

<sup>883</sup> LC, p. 9

<sup>884</sup> RV, 11.

a de-figuration: the metamorphosis. The first trilogy, writes José Augusto Mourão, 'regurgita de "nascimentos" e "mutantes": o porco que come F. Nietzsche ou vomita textos, o Urso, o peixe que vira Suso, a cadela Maya'.<sup>885</sup> The community is supported by the mutual connection, the generation of the figures: both birth and death are movements of transition propelled by *fulgor*, in which pure energy is transformed into the vibration of a body, and where the possession of the other is continuously latent in the text.

Consequently, one should also be afraid of birth. Humans habitually fear death, but we have seen how, with Llansol, death is also a moment of regeneration, rather than one of definitive ending. A birth, however, terrifies because one never knows what (or who) the text is generating, and how that birth will affect the development of textuality. In *Causa Amante*, King Sebastião 'dies' (or disappears), but is metamorphosed into a bush. Ana de Peñalosa disappears from *A Restante Vida*, and she is later metamorphosed into Hadewijch, who also disappears in order to become a hermaphrodite, in *Contos do Mal Errante*.

With Llansol, we witness not only metamorphoses of the *figures*, but also of the genres: in *Onde Vais, Drama-Poesia?*, the title already shatters the paratext, enabling a fusion of drama with poetry linked by an hyphen, conserving their individual characteristics by simultaneously destroying them.<sup>886</sup> This is what Marjorie Perloff refers to as the 'zero degree of genre'<sup>887</sup> in the pursuit of which Llansol writes both poetry and drama, 'à margem da língua, erra, desvia-se da sintaxe fóssil (ou fácil), ressemantiza (fulgoriza) as palavras', as Maria Esther Maciel explains.<sup>888</sup> Subsequently, Llansol configures a book assembling poetry, fragments, prose, diary entries, interviews, essays, in a 'topos sempre movediço, onde não existe propriamente entrelugar'.<sup>889</sup> In that amalgamation (suppression *plus* juxtaposition *and* superimposition), Llansol dwells on Fernando Pessoa's intent of moving towards the

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<sup>885</sup> Mourão, *O Fulgor é Móvel*, p. 91.

<sup>886</sup> Another interesting example is *Contos do Mal Errante*. As the title suggests, it should be comprised of short stories but it could be taken as a 'processo de participação-desconstrução do género', since none of the 110 fragments 'corresponde a uma descrição, institucionalmente aceite, de um modelo de conto'. See Rodrigues Lopes, *Teoria da Des-Possessão*, 61-62.

<sup>887</sup> Marjorie Perloff plays with Roland Barthes's title *Le degré zéro de l'écriture* (Paris: Seuil, 1972). See Perloff, 'Barthes and the Zero Degree of Genre', *World Literature Today*, 59.4 (1985), 510-516.

<sup>888</sup> Maria Esther Maciel, 'Llansóis de areia: uma leitura de *Onde vais, Drama-Poesia?*', de Maria Gabriela Llansol', *Livro de Asas para Maria Gabriela Llansol*, pp. 179-187 (p. 181). The title of Maciel's essay creates a new word, 'llansóis', out of Llansol and 'lençol' (bed sheet) of sand, alluding to its continuous flowing and movement.

<sup>889</sup> Maciel, p. 181.

*becoming* of a poet ‘que seja vários poetas, um poeta dramático escrevendo poesia lírica’.<sup>890</sup> In the text where Pessoa appears next to Bach there is, coincidentally, a metamorphosis of another kind, in which Lisbon plus Leipzig *become* Lisboaleipzig, a city now turned into ‘*centro de mapa*’.<sup>891</sup> This encounter between the two cities is not, according to Pedro Eiras, a ‘contracção literária pós-moderna da História’, representing instead the ‘possibilidade de criar *diálogos, textos* que a dispersão dos autores no tempo-espaço euclidiano impossibilita’.<sup>892</sup> We should, then, be afraid of birth in Llansol since it makes the encounter between animal and man effective, a fusion diluting their identities, ‘dans une conjonction de flux, dans un continuum d’intensités reversible’, as Deleuze and Guattari put it.<sup>893</sup> In this *becoming-animal* the metamorphoses are the motor of the writing.

The figure of the Adamastor in Portuguese literature is considered a monstrous creation epitomized by the metamorphosis of a figure into a rock, an episode of *Os Lusíadas* which could indeed be read as a metaphor for a ‘contravening principle to Portuguese imperialism’.<sup>894</sup> In *Os Lusíadas*, the first speech of Adamastor points out the audacity of the Portuguese sailors, whose curiosity about the other, about ‘segredos escondidos’, as Camões writes, has led to subsequent wars, greed and destruction: the Prince’s thirst for power. Adamastor said: ‘Ouve os danos de mi que apercebidos / Estão a teu sobejo atrevimento / Por todo o largo mar e pola terra, / Que inda hás-de sojugar com dura guerra.’<sup>895</sup> Llansol interprets the presence of the colossus in the same way, as we have seen in Chapter

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<sup>890</sup> Fernando Pessoa, *Obras Poéticas* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Aguilar, 1982), p. 133.

<sup>891</sup> *L2*, p. 112 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>892</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 587 (emphasis in the original). Note that something similar occurs with the rivers Tagus and Elster, in the *Lisboaleipzig* volumes: ‘Ao amanhecer era ainda Leipzig, mas o Elster deslocara-se progressivamente até se sobrepor ao Tejo deixando-os com o Atlântico, a Oeste, e, muito próximas – as planícies do Leste.’ *L2*, p. 93. Curiously, in the books in which the cities and the rivers *become* each other, Pessoa (person) encounters Bach (in German, besides the composer, it also means a stream or a small river).

<sup>893</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, p. 40.

<sup>894</sup> Josiah Blackmore, ‘The Monstrous Lineage of Adamastor and His Critics’, *Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies*, 7 (2005), 255-264, available at [www.plcs.umassd.edu/plcs7texts/blackmore.doc](http://www.plcs.umassd.edu/plcs7texts/blackmore.doc) [accessed on 27th December 2008]. Adamastor was a demi-god, one of the twelve sons (the Titans) of the Earth. The Titans staged a *coup* against Zeus in order to take control of the Olympus. The rebellion was crushed and the Titans were punished. In *Os Lusíadas*, Adamastor tells how he fell in love with Tethys, and ‘já não sei, já da guerra desistindo’, he was betrayed by a vision of the woman. Thinking he was holding her body, he was metamorphosed into a rock: ‘Não fiquei homem, não, mas mudo e quedo, / E junto dum penedo outro penedo!’ *Os Lusíadas*, V, 55, 1; and V, 56, 7-8. Camões, p. 162 and p. 163.

<sup>895</sup> *Os Lusíadas*, V, 42, 5-8. Camões, p. 159.

One, regarding the representation of Portuguese myths in her texts, notably, in the trilogy *O Litoral do Mundo* (1984-1988).

In *Da Sebe ao Ser* (1988), the beguines (Hadewijch, Psalmodia and Ana de Peñalosa) inhabit 'o jardim que o pensamento permite', which in this novel is the dock where the vessels are anchored, bringing the spices from the Indies. The women share the (good) hope of finding, 'por entre os monstros, o capitão que domou o grande *golém*',<sup>896</sup> Vê Gama, who defeated Adamastor. Usually, Llansol's texts referring to the Portuguese Discoveries are directly linked to the appearance of monsters. Nevertheless, instead of a tremendous creation that should be erased, or destroyed, by man, the Llansolian monsters (as well as the ones created by Camões) are incomplete beings suffering nostalgia for the human. They do not wish to *become* human, rather, as Llansol puts it, they miss the other half, they are remnants of the humans who created them, 'abandonando-os à beira do humano, simples *imitadores*'.<sup>897</sup> The fear of the monster is the fear of what we cannot understand, and a Llansolian humanism acknowledges that Adamastor, like other monsters, and like the Princes who represent the errant evil, are just images of power created by men in order to be overcome. The beguine Psalmodia is also aware of that dichotomy: should we fear the great golem, or accept him, and understand him? That is precisely why Psalmodia asks if the fearful images created by the Cape Espichel (instead of the Cape of Good Hope of the epic poem), were monsters, 'ou era do medo?'.<sup>898</sup> Like Da Gama, and even if presented with a heroic aura, Psalmodia also fears the great golem: 'Arrepiam-se as carnes e o cabelo / A mim e a todos, só de ouvi-lo e vê-lo', tells Da Gama, in *Os Lusíadas*, when the sailors glimpse the colossus for the first time.<sup>899</sup> If in the case of Adamastor it is his capacity to narrate his lineage that calls Da Gama's attention, Psalmodia recognizes instead that a monster is only an exterior (human) landscape of horror: 'Por que não amá-los?', she asks, explaining afterwards that we should love them since, 'os limites da espécie humana não são conhecidos'.<sup>900</sup> Da Gama is aware of Adamastor's humanity, and Camões grants the colossus a historiographic voice that could only be heard if the mythological lineage of the figure was indeed recognized by Da Gama/the reader.

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<sup>896</sup> SS, p. 35.

<sup>897</sup> SS, p. 21.

<sup>898</sup> SS, p. 19.

<sup>899</sup> *Os Lusíadas*, V, 40, 7-8. Camões, p. 159.

<sup>900</sup> SS, p. 22.

According to Josiah Blackmore, Camões designates Adamastor as both monster and figure, but naming the colossus as monstrous, ‘not only situates the apparition within a tradition of classical and epic monsters but also connects him to a contemporary critical practice of reading monsters as especially fecund cultural constructs’.<sup>901</sup> Interestingly, Blackmore’s contemporary interpretation of the Adamastor directly linked to a cultural or historical embodiment, could be compared to Llansol’s for whom the monster ‘ainda não foi dito’, and ‘dizê-lo cria novos monstros ou, então, o homem’.<sup>902</sup> According to Llansol, man (not the monster) produced wars, and by designing extra-human creatures (monsters), ‘o homem está a produzir um processo mimético de destruição’.<sup>903</sup> The monsters are consequently intrinsic to the *becoming-human*, or to the *becoming-animal* of the human. In the words of Saint Augustine: ‘Either these things which have been told of some races have no existence at all; or if they do exist, they are not human races; or if they are human, they are descended from Adam.’<sup>904</sup>

The Llansolian monsters are the sons of Adam, indeed, but like the *figures* shown before, they are orphans (motherless and fatherless). Unlike the monsters created by man, always a *mimesis* embodying an evil to be destroyed, the Llansolian monster is inside this text in order to be loved and accepted by the community. Throughout the Llansolian oeuvre, the monster is not born out of a beginning, of an embryonic state, but of a *becoming* a *figure* integrated in a web of complicities, or in

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<sup>901</sup> Blackmore, available at [www.plcs.umassd.edu/plcs7texts/blackmore.doc](http://www.plcs.umassd.edu/plcs7texts/blackmore.doc) [accessed on 27th December 2008].

<sup>902</sup> *SS*, p. 22.

<sup>903</sup> Rodrigues Lopes, *Teoria da Des-posseção*, p. 96.

<sup>904</sup> Saint Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. by Marcus Dods (New York: Modern Library, 2000), p. 532. Although the word Adamastor contains the name Adam, it has no connection with the garden of Eden, contrary to the definition of Adamastor stated in *Wikipedia* as ‘an inaccurate attempt at Latin for “imitative rival of Adam” (which would correctly be Adamaster)’. See *Wikipedia* <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adamastor>> [accessed 20 January 2009]. According to Carlos Rocha, whom I would like to thank for his reply to my query, ‘segundo o *Dicionário Houaiss*, “Camões teria encontrado o nome Adamastor em Sidônio Apolinário [*sic*] (Carmina, XV, 20) a designar um gigante”. José Pedro Machado, no *Dicionário Onomástico Etimológico da Língua Portuguesa*, não dá certeza sobre a origem do nome Adamastor, mas parece tratar-se de uma criação literária latina recuperada no Renascimento. Sempre a designar um gigante, surge como Adamastor em Sidônio Apolinário (436-483) e como Damastor (significando “o que ama, vencedor”) na *Gigantomachia* de Claudiano (370-404). Sem confirmar uma relação com Adamastor, Machado assinala dois outros nomes: Adámasto, do antropónimo altino Adāmāstus, usado por Virgílio (*Eneida* III, 614) e com origem grega: adámastos, ‘não domado, indomável’; Ádamas, do grego adámas, -antos, que significa, como nome, ‘metal muito duro’ e, como adjectivo, ‘que não se pode dominar ou quebrar; inflexível’. See *Ciberdúvidas da Língua Portuguesa* <<http://ciberduvidas.sapo.pt/pergunta.php?id=25304>> [accessed 20 January 2009]

what Giorgio Agamben called a 'condition of belonging'.<sup>905</sup> The words of Silvina Rodrigues Lopes echo that very same condition when she states that in the Llansolian text 'cada um está abandonado à comunidade fraternal da escrita'.<sup>906</sup> The abandonment of the *figures* to the 'labirinto iniciático' is a push towards the margins of society:<sup>907</sup> the monster is received inside the community, lying simultaneously outside the state. To a certain extent, these monsters, and remnants, could be the inhabitants of Limbo, and Agamben underlines how fortunate they are that God did not bless them. The inhabitants of the Limbo are 'irremediably lost, they persist without pain in divine abandon', writes Agamben, which is probably why these figures' 'great punishment – the lack of vision of God – thus turns into a natural joy'.<sup>908</sup> The Llansolian text lies in that Limbo because, still untouched by God, it holds a monstrous humanity allowing these figures to exist. Llansol exhibits the monster (her text) as a triumphant accomplishment of her writing, as Melville did with Ahab and Moby Dick, as Camões did with Vasco da Gama and Adamastor. She chooses to display these monstrous creations (man vs. monster, visible vs. invisible) because we want to see them, as we wanted to see Gregor Samsa as an insect, to experience the fear of witnessing such unbearable creatures. Llansol therefore challenges the concept of monstrosity, by stating that man is the monster (evil), not the *figure*. Monstrosity (the other, the different, the foreign) lies in the Llansolian text, displayed coincidentally as

totalmente transparente e opaco. Ao encará-lo, o olhar fica paralisado, absorto num fascínio sem fim, inapto ao conhecimento, pois este nada revela, nenhuma informação codificável, nenhum alfabeto conhecido. E, no entanto, ao exhibir a sua deformidade, a sua anormalidade – que normalmente se esconde – o monstro oferece ao olhar mais do que qualquer coisa jamais vista. O monstro chega mesmo a viver dessa aberração que exhibe por todo o lado a fim de que a vejam. O seu corpo difere do corpo normal na medida em que ele revela o oculto, algo de disforme, de visceral, de 'interior', uma espécie de obscenidade orgânica. O monstro exhibe-a, desdobra-a, virando a pele do avesso, e desfralda-a sem se preocupar com o olhar do outro; ou para o fascinar, o que significa a mesma coisa.<sup>909</sup>

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<sup>905</sup> Agamben, *The Coming Community*, p. 2.

<sup>906</sup> Rodrigues Lopes, 'Comunidades de Excepção', pp. 109-120

<sup>907</sup> *LC*, p. 75.

<sup>908</sup> Agamben, *The Coming Community*, p. 5.

<sup>909</sup> José Gil, *Monstros* (Lisbon: Relógio d'Água, 2006), p. 78.

## ENTRAPPED CHARACTERS, LIBERATED FIGURES

If Adamastor is presented as *becoming*-mineral (part of a series of *becomings* listed by Deleuze and Guattari, in *A Thousand Plateaus*), like Ahab's 'irresistible becoming-whale', he establishes 'a monstrous alliance with the Unique, the Leviathan', to the extent that 'there is always a pact with the demon', which, I suggest, is always a consenting pact.<sup>910</sup> Deleuze and Guattari's theory of *becoming* arises from a fierce critique of structuralism, a critique owing to the fact that this paradigm could not grasp a mechanism only attainable through writing: *fulguration*, or *fabulation*: 'Il n'y a pas de littérature sans fabulation, mais [...] la fabulation, la fonction fabulatrice ne consiste pas à imaginer ni à projeter un moi. Elle atteint plutôt à ces visions, elle s'élève jusqu'à ces devenirs ou puissances.'<sup>911</sup> There is no literature without becoming (*devenir*). And it concerns not only the *becoming* of the *figures* (as in Kafka and Llansol), but, moreover, the becoming of the writer him/herself. In Deleuze and Guattari's eyes, a writer is a sorcerer, a wizard, and only when s/he attains that condition will s/he enable his/her own metamorphosis: 'Writing is a becoming, writing is traversed by strange becomings that are not becomings-writer, but becomings-rat, becomings-insect, becomings-wolf.'<sup>912</sup>

The philosophers show how a number of critical paradigms fail to account for this. One of the main problems of later stage of Evolution, for instance, was that the relationships between animals and humans could only be established 'in terms of genealogy, kinship, descent, and filiation'.<sup>913</sup> The relevance of the *becoming-animal* was not understood by natural history either for which the existence of a *becoming* is always as resemblance, rather than pure existence. The problem lay in the fact that natural history could only theorize it in terms of relationships, instead of in terms of production.<sup>914</sup> Relationships between animals were, then, either established in series or in structures such as, 'a resembles b, b resembles c', or 'a is to b as c is to d'.<sup>915</sup> The example that transforms the 'like' of 'Gregor is like a bug', into the *figure* (trope) 'Gregor is a bug', is not even a metaphor, but a comparison. As we have seen, comparison and metaphor both establish relationships of *mimesis*, filiation, or resemblance with a primordial subject or object. Metamorphosis destroys this

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<sup>910</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 268

<sup>911</sup> Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique*, p. 13.

<sup>912</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 265.

<sup>913</sup> *Ibid*, p. 258.

<sup>914</sup> *Ibid*, p. 258.

<sup>915</sup> *Ibid*, p. 258.

relationship because it is sustained by *becoming*. Deleuze and Guattari believe in the existence of *becomings-animal* as reversible and mutual transformations ‘affecting the animal no less than the human’.<sup>916</sup>

It was stated above that the text produced (built) *figures*, but it is essential to underline that they share no resemblance to any previous subject, object, animal, or plant; a *becoming* shares no connection with *mimesis*, no correspondence to an *other*, and that is precisely why Llansol states that her *figures* are moving towards a progressive anonymity. *Becoming* is, consequently, ‘a verb consistency all its own; it does not reduce to, or lead back to, “appearing”, “being”, “equalling”, or “producing”.’<sup>917</sup> Therefore, when a Llansolian *figure* appears, it could more accurately be said to *become* in the text through the mechanism of *fulgoration*, the metamorphosis of the *figure*.<sup>918</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari are no longer concerned with the characteristics that an animal *post-becoming* might possess. In their mind, ‘what interests us are modes of expansion, propagation, occupation, contagion, peopling’.<sup>919</sup> How, then, does the proliferation of *becomings* occur? At the beginning of this chapter, I stated that the day Gregor Samsa woke up as a bug (*becoming-animal*), the door opened onto the monstrous. But we should ask whether the monstrous would have wanted to come in, since its existence would only produce meaning when it was shared with (or shown to) someone else. Doubtless, a mutated being, a *becoming-animal* is never alone, since it ‘always involves a pack, a band, a population, a peopling, in short, a multiplicity’.<sup>920</sup> No *becoming-animal* is alone, but belongs to a community, like the masses of rebellious peasants who inhabit the works of Llansol.

The monsters establish a blatant rupture with the central institutions which impose order (the state or the Church), detaching themselves ‘from the task of representing a world, precisely because they assemble a new type of reality that history can only recontain or relocate’.<sup>921</sup> Again, these beings cannot be

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<sup>916</sup> *Ibid*, p. 261.

<sup>917</sup> *Ibid*, p. 263.

<sup>918</sup> Coincidentally, Llansol mentions the link between metamorphosis and *fulgoration*:

‘Metamorfosear (mais tarde, direi *fulgorizar*) é um acto de criação. E criar é sempre criar Alguém. E este Alguém não é um exclusivo do humano.’ See *SH*, p. 191.

<sup>919</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 264.

<sup>920</sup> *Ibid*, p. 264.

<sup>921</sup> *Ibid*, p. 326.



accommodated in the unisonous discourse of a nation,<sup>922</sup> nor of history, nor do they require these superstructures. They just need each other, each pack, each band, each multiplicity ‘cross[es] over into each other’,<sup>923</sup> having no need for a primordial being. Therefore, they become an intensity, ‘an individual, a Haeccicity that enters into composition with other degrees, other intensities, to form another individual’.<sup>924</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of *becoming* shares surprising coincidences with the Llansolian concept of the *figure*. These coincidences occur on several levels, concerning especially how the *becoming* is not the descendent of an original or biblical ‘sin’, but a result of different instances of mutation. As we have seen in Chapter Two in relation to the *involution* of Pessoa into Aossê – a concept present in *A Thousand Plateaus*, but also used by Llansol – Llansol and the two philosophers resort to the same kind of examples when putting into words the mechanisms that sustain their theories. It cannot be accurately ascertained whether Llansol’s conjecture (or, at least, some of her concepts) arise from Deleuze and Guattari’s, and certainly not vice-versa.<sup>925</sup> Nevertheless, if we take into consideration the clear similarities between their theories, it could be suggested that both philosophers and Llansol meet in a theoretical matrix, a suggestion which should not be neglected.

First, to Deleuze and Guattari, the human or animal packs that exist in a community proliferate ‘by contagion, epidemics, battlefields, and catastrophes’.<sup>926</sup> In a similar fashion, it is precisely the bloodshed of Frankenhausem that binds the Llansolian community together. Secondly, they can only proliferate through contagion since they are sterile hybrids and in the event of sexual union, they do not reproduce or generate heredity. ‘The vampire does not filiate, it infects’, writes Deleuze.<sup>927</sup> Llansol’s theory on filiation is a continuous belief in the *odd love* (‘amor ímpar’), that is, the hope that the ‘hermafrodita não seja a figura final do humano, esperança que guarda os sexos em número ímpar, e os mantém abertos ao conhecimento do amor’.<sup>928</sup> Unlike Musil who saw the hermaphrodite as the solution

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<sup>922</sup> Homi Bhabha, ‘DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation’, in *Nation and Narration*, ed. by Homi Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 291-322 (p. 291).

<sup>923</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 274.

<sup>924</sup> *Ibid*, p. 279.

<sup>925</sup> It should be noted, though, that the encounter between the Deleuze and Llansol probably arises from readings of Spinoza.

<sup>926</sup> *Ibid*, p. 266.

<sup>927</sup> *Ibid*, p. 266. Deleuze is alluding to Voltaire’s entry on ‘Vampires’ for *Le Dictionnaire Philosophique*: ‘On n’entendit plus parler que de vampires, depuis 1730 jusqu’en 1735’. See Voltaire, *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Société littéraire typographique, 1784), p. 388.

<sup>928</sup> *CME*, p. 11.

to the *unio mystico* of Agathe and Ulrich, Llansol catalyzes this reaction into an *odd love*, a multiplicity of the Haecceity into several beings. The union between a man and a woman is no longer the solution to reproduction, nor is the hermaphrodite, despite having two genders: the union of the first two makes a pair (the singular *becomes* dual), and the second contains the pair in itself. In the dual there is no *plural*, no odd number, no excluded, no leftover: and, let us remember that, Llansol's theory is a theory of *remnants*. As such, the existence of the androgynous in Llansol is not, as Pedro Eiras notes, the mere 'negação da diferença dos sexos, mas a afirmação de um acolhimento da diferença do outro'.<sup>929</sup> Deleuze and Guattari share Llansol's perspective on reproduction versus *becoming*. The *becoming* is the only solution for the limitations of human reproduction in which 'the only differences retained are a simple duality between sexes within the same species'.<sup>930</sup> The philosophers aspire to a community created through symbiosis, underlining its differences not as negativity, but again, in Eiras' words, as 'acolhimento', as acceptance. The problem is that instead of reproduction or filiation, there is contagion involving not only humans and animals, but also bacteria, viruses, molecules, and microorganisms, symbiotically combined, metamorphosed and feeding off each other, to the extent that they are no longer 'genetic nor structural; they are interkingdoms, unnatural participations. That is the only way Nature operates – against itself'.<sup>931</sup>

A normal reaction to this proposal would be a catastrophic fear of epidemics – not only can the human be metamorphosed into an animal, but it can also proliferate like a virus, infecting other humans. We are not yet talking about the *state apparatus*, however, although real life shares unexpected resemblances with this mechanism, which both the philosophers and Llansol were willing to identify. In *O Senhor de Herbais* (2002), Llansol dwells on an interesting biological phenomenon which she called the 'aesthetics of mould' ('estética do bolor'). The *dictyostelium discoideum*, that Llansol nicknames 'diotima',<sup>932</sup> is a fungus whose multiplication is considered exemplary for the study of the mobility, communication or sociology of

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<sup>929</sup> Eiras, *Esquecer Fausto*, p. 623.

<sup>930</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 267.

<sup>931</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 267.

<sup>932</sup> *SH*, p. 61. Diotima was Hölderlin's muse (a nickname for Susette) to whom he dedicated several poems, and a figure in *Hölder de Hölderlin*. Coincidentally (or not), one of Musil's character in *The Man Without Qualities*, is called Diotima (also a nickname). Diotima of Mantinea is also a character in Plato's *Syposium*.

cells, since its capacity for moving (literally) from a singular organism to a unicellular aggregate is impressive. Llansol explains that her interest in the 'diotima' arises from two facts: first, the failure of some of the greatest literary figures to reproduce (she refers, among others, to Eckhart, Hadewijch, Pessoa, or Woolf); secondly, the fact that the garden of Eden created a 'cisão para a reprodução futura', because if Adam and Eve were destined to be one couple, 'não precisavam de ser reprodutores, sexuados, mas partes maravilhantes',<sup>933</sup> that is, they would only proliferate through *fulgor*. Accordingly,

o sexo seria o lugar fatal do mal-entendido, biologicamente útil para a multiplicação de um número incalculável de cópias humanas cindidas. Nesse caso, a reprodução pelo novo, o novo nascendo do novo por fulgor, seria uma afronta à ordem biológica reprodutiva. Uma tentação, em termos de continuidade da espécie. A tentação de criar singularidades irreprodutíveis.<sup>934</sup>

The *dictyostelium* is an amoeba that 'grows as separate, independent cells but interacts to form multicellular structures when challenged by adverse conditions such as starvation'.<sup>935</sup> To Llansol, the mechanism of reproduction of the 'diotima' is similar to the definition of a figure<sup>936</sup>, since it is neither a creator (in the Biblical sense), nor does it involve sexual reproduction. Instead of starving, the 'diotima' literally groups cells in communities, with each therefore sustaining the other. 'A primeira curiosidade desse agregado é a sua mobilidade, apesar de não possuir qualquer sistema nervoso, nem muscular', writes Llansol.<sup>937</sup> Once it finds a favourable *locus*, the community forms a kind of mushroom, whose extremities will contain living amoebae waiting for bacteria. The trunk of the mushroom is made of dead amoebae, without which the community cannot survive, expanding slowly and successively through this mechanism, until they find food. Probably, Deleuze and Guattari were not aware of the 'diotima', but their notion of *becoming* coincides with the expansion of the cells in the body of the funghi, since, for them, 'becoming [...] concerns alliance'.<sup>938</sup>

The question of alliance is, then, crucial for the formation of a community of *figures* by *becomings*, as it essentially concerns the state (as both condition and

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<sup>933</sup> SH, p. 62.

<sup>934</sup> SH, p. 62.

<sup>935</sup> See <[http://dictybase.org/tutorial/about\\_dictyostelium.htm](http://dictybase.org/tutorial/about_dictyostelium.htm)> [accessed 21 December 2008]

<sup>936</sup> SH, p. 63.

<sup>937</sup> SH, p. 63.

<sup>938</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 263.

power) in which and from which they are created. In the 'diotima', cells build up and expand, but just in reaction to a crisis (starvation). The same happens to the *figures*, state Deleuze and Guattari, for 'it is in war, famine, and epidemic that werewolves and vampires proliferate'.<sup>939</sup> Obviously, the philosophers were not just dwelling on the endless possibilities of metamorphosis. There is always a political apparatus hiding behind the scenes, and the same situation occurs with Llansol. *Becomings-animals* are not related to societies in general, but are inherent to 'hunting societies, war societies, secret societies, [and] crime societies'.<sup>940</sup> This is because in these societies there is no filiation, no family nucleus as societal matrix, no paradigmatic entity as a Biblical saviour, no Father figure of the nation, no 'modes of classification and attribution of the State or pre-State type or even serial organizations of the religious type'.<sup>941</sup> What is the Llansolian community of rebels if not a war society, or a society at war with the *state apparatus* imposed by the Prince? Again, here there is no family; there are several fathers (Nietzsche, San Juan), but not one originary mother (Ana de Peñalosa is 'mãe do texto' but not of the *figures*). Instead, there are hermaphrodites (Hadewijch) and a proliferation of mutated beings (King Sebastião); decapitated *figures* (Müntzer), alongside mystic poets turned into spiders (Eckhart); there are national iconic poets (Camões) being born outside their countries, and there is one poet (Pessoa) multiplied into several heteronyms (even that of a woman) who travelled miles into the heart of Europe to meet a composer (Bach), born several centuries before his time. These figures are deterritorialized, at war with their countries (with their languages, with their own history), which, in some cases, excommunicated them (Copernicus), expelled them (Spinoza),<sup>942</sup> or drove them to madness (Hölderlin). The becoming-animal is therefore the solution to war machine. Nevertheless, there are other examples, cases very clear to us, in which the becoming-animal is no longer one solution, but a *peremptory necessity*.

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<sup>939</sup> *Ibid*, p. 268.

<sup>940</sup> *Ibid*, p. 267.

<sup>941</sup> *Ibid*, p. 267.

<sup>942</sup> Spinoza, whose ideas clashed with the orthodoxies of Judaism, was accused of heresy and excommunicated from the Jewish community by his synagogue in Amsterdam, in 1656. 'The statement of excommunication, or *herem* (Hebrew: "anathema"), reads like a wild attack, suggesting that Spinoza was very much hated and despised.' Following from his excommunication, Spinoza adopted the Latin version of his first name, Benedictus, instead of the Hebrew, Baruch. Llansol resorts to both names in her texts, also calling him Bento, the Portuguese version, since Spinoza's father was a Sephardic Jew, expelled from Portugal by the Inquisition, who moved to Amsterdam in 1616. See Benedict de Spinoza, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, <[www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/560202/Benedict-de-Spinoza/281277/Excommunication](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/560202/Benedict-de-Spinoza/281277/Excommunication)> [accessed 19 September 2009].

[B]ecomings-animal in crime societies, leopard-men, crocodile-men (when the State prohibits tribal and local wars); becomings-animal in riot groups (when the Church and State are faced with peasant movements containing a sorcery component, which they repress by setting up a whole trial and legal system designed to expose pacts with the Devil); becomings-animal in asceticism groups, the grazing anchorite or wild-beast anchorite (the asceticism machine is in an anomalous position, on a line of flight, off the side of the Church, and disputes the Church's pretension to set itself as up as an imperial institution).<sup>943</sup>

Coincidentally, or not, Copernicus, Eckhart, San Juan, and Müntzer are all simultaneously present in this long quote. They subsume a number of *becomings*, movements essential to escaping several abuses of power: the Inquisition, colonialism, religious wars and other forms of oppression, or torture. Yet they also reflect the fear of the state driven to madness owing to the lack of control over the proliferation of an infection in its inhabitants who have chosen to live outside the boundaries of the nation, in order to suffer continuous transformations, *becomings*, or *fulgorations*. In this sense, Llansol could only entirely agree with Deleuze and Guattari when she concomitantly explained that: 'Os seres movem-se por metabolismo ou metamorfose. Em termos precisos, crescem para o Estado (em hierarquias temporais e sociais), ou crescem para a sua própria criação (numa expansão de singularidades).'<sup>944</sup> Kafka's beings are, in that sense, exemplary precisely because they refuse to 'grow towards the State', as they have to undergo different processes of becoming. Yet, Kafka himself is trapped in a sort of melancholy, a restlessness, which is founded on the recognition of the impossibility of liberation, what Albert Camus called 'la nostalgie des paradis perdus'.<sup>945</sup> Such anguish Kafka wished to share with humankind; however, the torment made him endure a series of *becomings* too. Deleuze and Guattari explained how only wizards, deterritorialized authors (or authors whose writing deterritorializes), can *become* – particularly taking into consideration that these *becomings-animal* always implied, among other principles, 'an initial relation of alliance with a demon'.<sup>946</sup> This alliance (again, coalition, community) between man and the demon occurs in Kafka exactly because his despair with metaphors derived from the fact that he also envisioned

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<sup>943</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 273.

<sup>944</sup> *SH*, pp. 190-191.

<sup>945</sup> Albert Camus, 'L'espoir et l'absurde', in *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), pp. 169-187 (p. 179).

<sup>946</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 272.

humans as hopeless. That is why Deleuze asks: 'La honte d'être un homme, y a-t-il une meilleure raison d'écrire?'<sup>947</sup>

The *becoming-animal* of Kafka does not involve exclusively a horrendous metamorphosis of man, it can also mean a demonic anthropomorphism of animals. The presence of animals in Kafka can be taken as an indicator of 'the far pole of dispossession from ourselves and each other, and we stand in the same relation to them as God does to us', as Peter Stine writes.<sup>948</sup> It is, then, because God left us and we lost our faith that we must 'escrever todos os seres',<sup>949</sup> allowing animals to punctuate our imaginary, not solely as metaphors for humans, but primarily as distinguishable from the lack of humanity of men.

The ape from 'A Report to an Academy' became-human and 'attained the educational level of an average European'.<sup>950</sup> He cleverly states that imitating humans is easy, but his report denounces how he was caged, drugged and abused, thus achieving (paradoxically) the state of calm, 'in the company of those people [who] restrained me especially from any attempt to escape'.<sup>951</sup> He is no longer free, but he is now content in his possibility of freedom – he calls it 'a way out', and he purposely does not name it freedom, since he has learnt quickly how humans 'fool themselves too often on the subject of freedom'.<sup>952</sup> By having the ape report on the exploitation of animals (now he works in vaudeville, which he specifically chose rather than the zoo, for burlesque is a way out whilst 'the zoo is just another cage'),<sup>953</sup> Kafka is stressing how both Darwinism (the survival of the fittest), and science, failed to understand animals, emphasizing the great divide between the kingdoms (animal vs. human).

Consequently, like Llansol's, Kafka's imaginary does not function through archetypes. Again, there is no biblical or originary sense arising from their bestiaries. This happens precisely because, according to Deleuze and Guattari, 'l'archétype procède par assimilation, homogénéisation, thématique, alors que nous ne trouvons notre règle que lorsque se glisse une petite ligne hétérogène, en rupture'.<sup>954</sup> The

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<sup>947</sup> Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique*, p. 11.

<sup>948</sup> Peter Stine, 'Franz Kafka and Animals', *Contemporary Literature*, 22.1 (1981), 58-80 (p. 61).

<sup>949</sup> *F*, p. 70.

<sup>950</sup> Franz Kafka, 'A Report to an Academy', in *The Metamorphosis and Other Stories*, pp. 81-88 (p. 81, p. 88).

<sup>951</sup> *Ibid*, p. 85.

<sup>952</sup> *Ibid*, p. 84.

<sup>953</sup> *Ibid*, p. 87.

<sup>954</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, p. 13.

rupture occurring in the *becoming-figure* of Llansol is very similar to the Kafkian *becomings-animal*. For instance, although Gregor Samsa never left his room, his desire to become a nomad was vociferously obvious. Yet Kafka did not concede him that opportunity, nor did he confer that very same possibility to Joseph K. in *The Trial*, or K. in *The Castle*; or to the jackals who wanted to get rid of the Arabs.<sup>955</sup> One could even affirm that Kafka imprisoned his figures: they could no longer escape, to the extent that, as George Steiner wrote, 'Kafka's fiction invites decipherment, and makes of this invitation a trap'.<sup>956</sup> Joseph K. is trapped in the suffocating and labyrinthine corridors of *The Trial*: we can hear and feel his despair when we acknowledge that we are also ambushed, alongside him, in this infernal pile of documents. Kafka writes:

K. turned towards the stairs to make his way up to the Interrogation Chamber, but then came to a standstill again, for in addition to this staircase he could see in the courtyard three other separate flights of stairs and besides these a little passage at the other end which seemed to lead into a second courtyard.<sup>957</sup>

In fact, like the tortuous corridors of the courthouse, so is K. caught up in the endless meanders of bureaucracy, a perpetual cycle of paperwork which generates yet more paperwork, bribing the judges, the lawyers, the office clerks, in a system corrupt with inefficiency. The same (yet another) K. cannot escape the condition of being unable to enter the Castle. 'The "No" of the answer was audible even to K. at his table. But the answer went on and was still more explicit, it ran as follows: "Neither to-morrow nor at any other time".'<sup>958</sup> K. is probably the freest of men, even as he is trapped by his desire to enter the Castle, confined to inhabit a village which assembles the most bizarre characters, the most sinuous alleys, once again creating the most labyrinthine map. K. is a stranger who looks through the keyholes in order to find out how time goes by so quickly, and the spaces resemble each other, in an endless *mise-en-abyme* of figures and mirror images. On the outskirts of the Castle, he was 'freer than he had even been, and at liberty to wait here in this place usually forbidden to him as long as he desired [...]; but – his conviction was at least equally strong – as if, at the same

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<sup>955</sup> See the short story 'Jackals and Arabs', in *The Metamorphosis and Other Stories*, trans. by Michael Hofmann (London: Penguin Books, 2007), pp. 199-203.

<sup>956</sup> George Steiner, 'A Note on Kafka's Trial', in *No Passion Spent*, pp. 239-252 (p. 239).

<sup>957</sup> Franz Kafka, *The Trial*, trans. by Willa and Edwin Muir (London: Vintage, 1999), p. 36.

<sup>958</sup> Franz Kafka, *The Castle*, trans. by Willa and Edwin Muir (London: Vintage, 2005), p. 25.

time there was nothing more senseless, nothing more hopeless, than this freedom, this waiting, this inviolability'.<sup>959</sup>

The millions of countrymen building the Great Wall are also confined to the vast territories of China. Once more, this is an absurd contradiction, as if (like K.) one could be trapped in the immensity of space within the limitations of our own bodies. The only way to liberate these men (detritorialize or dispossess them) is through *fulguration*, searching for the conditions outside-the-self, because not only literature, but also the human body became canonized by societal norms. These bands of nomads and hopeless workers 'had lost faith in themselves, in the wall, in the world'.<sup>960</sup> Yet, they cannot escape their condition, working for the emperor, even when they were literally detritorialized from their villages, now thousands of miles away, even if they do not know where Peking is, a dot in the middle of an infinite map; and even if they 'do not know which emperor is reigning, and there are even doubts as to the name of the dynasty'.<sup>961</sup> Considering all these circumstances, they remain faithful to the ruling order of the Princes.

In Kafka's story 'In The Penal Colony', the three main figures are held captive by their condition: the officer is imprisoned by the official discourse of the war machinery of the state apparatus; the condemned man is obviously incarcerated – he is going to be tortured, 'he'll learn it on his body';<sup>962</sup> and, finally, the explorer (who just arrived at the colony to attend the executions, and to examine the torture techniques) 'was neither a citizen of the penal colony nor a citizen of the country it belonged to'.<sup>963</sup> As a visitor, a foreigner, or a stranger, he was not entitled to have an opinion, he could not interfere in the state's affairs. These three characters share, however, a slight possibility of freedom which the text laboriously postpones. However, only the explorer will be able to escape in the end, on the boat, preventing the condemned man and a soldier from jumping into it. The explorer acknowledges the 'injustice of the proceedings and the inhumanity of the execution', but, then, who is he to 'interfere in someone else's affairs'?<sup>964</sup> Indeed, this is a very subtle Guantanamoesque situation: the explorer is nothing but a foreigner, invited by the

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<sup>959</sup> *Ibid*, p. 105.

<sup>960</sup> Franz Kafka, 'The Great Wall of China', in *The Great Wall of China*, trans. by Malcom Pasley (London: Penguin Books, [1917] 2002), pp. 58-70 (p. 60).

<sup>961</sup> *Ibid*, p. 67.

<sup>962</sup> Franz Kafka, 'In the Penal Colony', in *The Metamorphosis and Other Stories*, trans. by Stanley Appelbaum (New York: Dover Thrift Editions, 1996), pp. 53-75 (p. 57).

<sup>963</sup> *Ibid*, p. 62.

<sup>964</sup> *Ibid*, p. 62.



governor, whose hospitality he could not contest, so he silences and imprisons his voice because he can no longer speak for himself. And on the island, the prison continues to exist.

## CONCLUSION

As we have seen, the question of metaphor versus metamorphosis is essential to understanding the process of becoming of a writer. Only writers who refuse or reject the influence of metaphor can attain metamorphoses, or *fulgorian* states. In 'DissemiNation', Homi Bhabha addresses the question of metaphor relating it to how a nation compensates for the void of uprooting by transforming 'that loss into the language of metaphor'.<sup>965</sup> Bhabha explains that metaphor 'transfers the meaning of home and belonging, across the "middle passage", or the central European steppes, across those distances, and cultural differences, that span the imagined community of the nation-people'.<sup>966</sup> In order to 'metaphorize' the nation, one should possess 'a kind of "doubleness"', writing the cacophony of voices of modernity. It could be suggested, then, that to *figurize* or *fulgorize* the nation was, indeed, the only solution. Nevertheless, several pages later, Bhabha states that the migrants, exiles, and minorities who are not contained by the unissonous (*Heim*) discourse of nationhood,<sup>967</sup> are radically antimetaphorical, confined to an 'oral void', which represents the 'desolate silences of the wandering people'.<sup>968</sup> To some extent, these voiceless people are, like Gregor Samsa, or the Llansolian rebels, no longer open to the metaphor, because they are inexorably bound by metamorphosis.

The obvious *becoming-animal* in Kafka's *oeuvre* is *The Metamorphosis*: an attempt to respond to the entrapment to which he submitted all his characters. Although metaphorically, these *figures* have also become animals, for they have *involved* to an animality (Deleuze and Guattari) through an almost sinful desire of becoming-nomad without ever leaving their space. Both in Kafka and in Llansol, the escape is thus performed through language, and writing, because writing the minority condition is the only way towards deterritorialization. Being minor in Prague (as

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<sup>965</sup> Bhabha, p. 291.

<sup>966</sup> Bhabha, p. 291.

<sup>967</sup> *Heim* is a German word for home, or homeland. Bhabha writes: 'Wandering peoples who will not be contained in the *Heim* of the national culture and its unisonant discourse.' Bhabha, p. 315.

<sup>968</sup> Bhabha, p. 316.

Kafka was), in the 1910s, a polyglot and ‘nomad in between languages’,<sup>969</sup> is being Jewish between Czech and German languages; not being able to speak Hebrew; and having a complex relationship with Yiddish (‘il est souvent dédaigné ou redouté, il fait peur, comme dit Kafka’).<sup>970</sup> As a result, Kafka’s decision to write in German is the actual performing of a deterritorialization of the language, in Prague, the city he wanted to escape. As Scott Spector posits, ‘the Prague circle writers opened their eyes to see themselves precariously suspended between territories, with no firm ground beneath their feet, and grasped at the air’.<sup>971</sup> Becoming is always becoming-nomad in the Llansolian *edenic space*, curiously dominated by the German language, but in which, in the end, every language communicates. As Deleuze and Guattari state, ‘there is an entire politics of becomings-animal’, a politics that is not connected to the state apparatus, nor to religion. Instead, they continue, becomings ‘express minoritarian groups, or groups that are oppressed, prohibited, in revolt, or always on the fringe of recognized institutions, groups all the more secret for being extrinsic, in other words, anomic’.<sup>972</sup> This statement subtly encompasses two concepts I would like to discuss by way of conclusion: the question of the nomad and that of the foreigner.

Rosi Braidotti’s *Nomadic Subjects* (1994), and *Metamorphoses* (2002),<sup>973</sup> rely on a form of figuration which bears a strong relation to the Llansolian concept, by curiously placing the *figure* in an intimate union with the *nomad*. Braidotti’s reflection on nomadism and the nomadic condition is also a way of thinking through (im)migrations in Europe today, for instance, and considering how that mobility provokes contradictions, but also raises the question of hospitality within the continent. The nomad, Braidotti suggests, is not the homeless or the displaced, but rather ‘a figuration for the kind of subject who has relinquished all idea, desire, or nostalgia for fixity’.<sup>974</sup> Instead of surrendering to the imposed order of fixity, of belonging to a place, the *figure* aims at endless movements within non-spaces. In Llansol, by travelling from one place to another, within/throughout the text, the changing landscape will give shape to the content of the figure’s body, involving a

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<sup>969</sup> Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 14.

<sup>970</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, p. 46.

<sup>971</sup> Scott Spector, *Prague Territories – National Conflicts and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka’s Fin de Siècle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 20.

<sup>972</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 272.

<sup>973</sup> Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002).

<sup>974</sup> Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 22.

consequent ‘molecularisation of the self’.<sup>975</sup> The Llansolian text is an assemblage of rebels with the intent of ‘\_\_\_\_\_ser o excluído ou o mensageiro’.<sup>976</sup> The wanderers are *figures* of transition ‘without and against an essential unity’ because they are willing to metamorphose into *something/somebody*.<sup>977</sup> I therefore emphasize the words ‘thing’ and ‘body’ owing to the fact that, both in Kafka and in Llansol, the nomads are writing (or written) *figures*, which mean that their bodies are inscribed by a nomadic condition. When Llansol mutates into a *scribin’body* (literally, in Portuguese ‘corp’a’screver’),<sup>978</sup> a body-in-the-process-of-writing, she is thus becoming a *figure* of herself, disseminating in her body and in her text the very same nomadic expression of being. Braidotti’s texts are in unison with Llansol’s: ‘A figuration is a living map, a transformative account of the self – it is no metaphor. Being nomadic, homeless, an exile, a refugee, a Bosnian rape-in-war victim, an itinerant migrant, an illegal immigrant, is no metaphor.’<sup>979</sup> On the contrary, as we have seen, it is metamorphosis.

In Llansol, the issue of the host and the guest is essential to understanding the movement of the nomads in the *edenic space*. In *Lisboaleipzig 2*, for instance, the Bach family are waiting for a guest (Aossê) to arrive.<sup>980</sup> Nomadism thus builds the *edenic space* as a landscape of monstrous bodies, ‘cem memórias de paisagem’.<sup>981</sup> both, with a *hundred* memories, and simultaneously, *without* memories at all – dispossessed of or deterritorialized from them. The Llansolian text receives the nomad as foreigner within that ‘jardim que o pensamento permite’.<sup>982</sup> It is precisely the nomad’s condition *as* foreigner that allows him to be accepted by this text. Bound by fulguration, he must dispossess himself from the marks of a previous existence, thus becoming-animal, becoming-figure, becoming-monster. Both Kafka and Llansol were foreigners in their countries: Kafka was a foreigner within a language; Llansol, a foreigner in exile. As Llansol formulated it, Kafka did not accomplish liberation as

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<sup>975</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16.

<sup>976</sup> *L2*, p. 87.

<sup>977</sup> Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 22.

<sup>978</sup> Llansol wrote: ‘Há, pela última vez o digo, três coisas que metem medo. A terceira é um corp’a’screver. Só os que passam por lá, sabem o que isso é. E que isso justamente a ninguém interessa.’ *LC*, p. 10. In relation to the concept ‘corp’a’screver’ (*scribin’body*) Maria Alzira Seixo explained that ‘passa por esse “corp’a’screver” [*sic*], entidade prolongada, de forma por assim dizer inconsútil, entre o eu e a terra, o sujeito e essa tal paisagem de que só o corpo em escrita é memória concretizável’. Seixo, *A Palavra do Romance*, p. 27.

<sup>979</sup> Braidotti, *Metamorphoses*, p. 3.

<sup>980</sup> See the chapter ‘À espera de um Hóspede’, in *L2*, pp. 48-52.

<sup>981</sup> *LC*, p. 10.

<sup>982</sup> *FP*, p. 130.

a foreigner, and thus entrapped his figures. Moreover, Llansol soon understood that the question of the foreigner was essential to the element of hospitality – and we will see, in the next chapter, how in Llansol hospitality is always linked to the feminine. In the words of Anne Dufourmantelle,

to offer hospitality it is necessary to start from the certain existence of a dwelling, or is it rather only starting from the dislocation of the shelterless, the homeless, that the authenticity of hospitality can open up? Perhaps only the one who endures the experience of being deprived of a home can offer hospitality.<sup>983</sup>

These nomads, although revelling in their errant condition, always return home, to the *edenic space* of the text, in which a feminine figure awaits them, running the house in their absence, giving order to the chaotic polyphony of authors, animals, plants, and objects punctuating in the text. The figure is *simultaneously* a historical name and the consequent deterritorialization of the being from its body and its previous existence. The Llansolian text is simultaneously host and guest. Consequently, the *edenic space* is *concurrently* a space of movement, of nomadism, and of an (imaginary) fixity in an imaginary garden, a house, or a room of one's own, in which Ana de Peñalosa, Témia, Hadewijch, Psalmodia, Teresa d'Avila, or Llansol, in the end, the women, the beguines accept '*por visitantes \_\_\_\_\_ os mais excelentes – e olhou toda a natureza em redor. – Como ocupação \_\_\_\_\_ unicamente esta: Abrir as mãos estreitas – o mais que posso \_\_\_\_\_ para colher o Paraíso*'.<sup>984</sup>

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<sup>983</sup> Dufourmantelle, p. 56.

<sup>984</sup> L2, p. 141.

## Chapter 4

### ‘É PRECISO ESCREVER TODOS OS SERES’ – READING THE FEMININE AND NATURE IN VIRGINIA WOOLF AND MARIA GABRIELA LLANSOL

*‘Writing: a way of leaving no space for death, of pushing back forgetfulness,  
of never letting oneself be surprised by the abyss  
Of never becoming resigned, consoled.’<sup>985</sup>*  
Hélène Cixous

*The Cyborg Manifesto*, published in 1985, was Donna Haraway’s response to the Reagan Administration, an attempt to conjure the contradictions of ecofeminism and technology, and the enunciation of posthumanities.<sup>986</sup> The 1980s were a fertile decade to publish a left-wing feminist manifesto on cyborgs, ‘the awful apocalyptic *telos* of the “West’s” escalating dominations of abstract individuation’.<sup>987</sup> Twenty years later, Haraway reached the conclusion that the cyborg was no longer the *figure* for the twentieth-first century – it *was* our ontology and *gave* us politics.<sup>988</sup> However, in place of the cyborg, the techno-body and the cybernetic organisms there was now the *dog*. In *The Companion Species Manifesto* (2003), Haraway explains that ‘dogs, in their historical complexity, matter here. Dogs are not an alibi for other themes; dogs are fleshy material-semiotic presences in the body of technoscience’.<sup>989</sup> More recently, Haraway continued the theme in *When Species Meet* (2008), a text guided by two questions essential to an evaluation of the relationship between humans and animals, an encounter amongst beings in a context of globalization: ‘Whom and what do I touch when I touch my dog?’ and ‘How is “becoming with” a practice of becoming worldly?’.<sup>990</sup> In order to answer these questions, Haraway discusses concepts that, I suggest, are extremely important to the understanding of the appearance of animals and nature as *figures* in the works of Maria Gabriela Llansol.

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<sup>985</sup> Cixous, ‘Coming to Writing’, p. 3.

<sup>986</sup> Donna Haraway, ‘A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century’, *Socialist Review*, 80 (1985), 65-108. For the purpose of this thesis quotations will be taken from the same article reprinted in Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), pp. 149-181.

<sup>987</sup> Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*, pp. 150-151.

<sup>988</sup> The original quote reads thus: ‘The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics.’ *Ibid*, p. 150.

<sup>989</sup> Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, p. 5.

<sup>990</sup> Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), p. 3.

First, by touching the dog, the human *becomes with* him (we will see why I am using a personal pronoun instead of the third-person non-human pronoun 'it' later). 'To be one is always to *become with* many', explains Haraway.<sup>991</sup> Naturally, this mechanism of *becoming* is related to Deleuze and Guattari's *becomings*, discussed in Chapter Three. Since Deleuze and Guattari rejected the importance of loving a pet, dismissing a natural relationship between humans and animals, aiming instead towards abstraction, and refuting the idea of filiation established by a 'father' or the state apparatus, Haraway accused the philosophers of 'misogyny, fear of aging, [and] incuriosity about animals'.<sup>992</sup> Despite the fact that Haraway failed to recognize that Deleuze and Guattari also referred to bacteria as the force of symbiosis in the process of *becoming* – as we have seen in relation to Llansol and to the process of infection – she also stresses the relevance of bacteria due to their propensity to create communities, 'organisms [which] are ecosystems of genomes, consortia, communities, partly digested dinners, mortal boundary formations'.<sup>993</sup> This collective assemblage provokes a *becoming with*, since these figures become *with* each other, they are beings-in-encounter, 'mundanely here, on this earth, now, asking who "we" will become when species meet'.<sup>994</sup>

The *figure*, already obvious to readers of Llansol, leads us to the second concept proposed by Haraway. To Haraway, *figures* are assemblages of people 'through their invitation to inhabit the corporal story told in their lineaments' and 'nodes or knots in which diverse bodies and meanings coshape one another'.<sup>995</sup> To both Haraway and Llansol, *figures* exist where (or when) the 'biological and literary or artistic come together with all of the force of lived reality' to the extent that, as Haraway states, 'my body itself is just a figure, literally'.<sup>996</sup> Clearly, Haraway and Llansol drank from the same source. *Figuration* (also used by Rosi Braidotti, as we have seen) suggests an alternative reading of history because 'feminist theory proceeds by figuration at just those moments when its own historical narratives are in

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<sup>991</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4. (emphasis in the original)

<sup>992</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30.

<sup>993</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30.

<sup>994</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5. Haraway borrows the concept *becoming with* from Vinciane Despret's idea of domestication involving, for instance, humans and the animals they work with in laboratory experiments. Vinciane Despret, 'The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthro-zoo-genesis', *Body and Society*, 10.2-3 (2004), 111-134 (p. 122).

<sup>995</sup> Haraway, *When Species Meet*, p. 4.

<sup>996</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

crisis'.<sup>997</sup> Like Llansol, Haraway is adamant that a *figure* should be an entity which resists the power apparatus:

Figuration is the mode of theory when the more 'normal' rhetorics of systematic critical analysis seem only to repeat and sustain *our entrapment* in the stories of the *established disorders*. [...] We must have feminist figures of humanity. They cannot be man or woman; they *cannot be human* as historical narrative has staged that generic universal. Feminist figures cannot, finally, have a name; they cannot be native. Feminist humanity must, somehow, both *resist representation*, resist literal figuration, and still erupt in powerful tropes, *new figures of speech, new turns of historical possibility*.<sup>998</sup>

Haraway's *figure* is therefore extremely close to Llansol's. Although this concept has already been analysed in relation to Kafka, this chapter will consider how, in Haraway, the process of *figuration* is directly linked to feminism and a resistance to our entrapment in history.

In addition to the concepts of *becoming with* and the notion of the *figure*, there is, thirdly, the question of love for a 'significant other'. This concept arises from the fact that animals are constantly neglected when it comes to narrating a human history or accounting for relationships of love, nurturing, or surrogacy.<sup>999</sup> The animal is, Haraway states, 'forever positioned on the other side of the unbridgeable gap, a gap that reassures the Human of his excellence'.<sup>1000</sup> Ultimately, human exceptionalism leads to the logic that only humans can be murdered, while animals can be killed without involving any kind of sacrifice.<sup>1001</sup> Human exceptionalism excluded animals and other *living* from his history (the usage of 'his' should be purposely read as a trope to represent human history as a *male* one). Haraway and Llansol intend to challenge this lack of symmetry. Human history is *also* a history of the animal, because even according to the Cartesian divide, the enunciation of an 'I' always conveyed the exclusion of the 'Other'.<sup>1002</sup> As such, and following Llansol's

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<sup>997</sup> Donna Haraway, 'Ecce Homo, Ain't (Ar'n't) a Woman, and Inappropriate/d Others', in *The Haraway Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 47-61 (p. 47).

<sup>998</sup> *Ibid*, p. 47 (emphasis mine).

<sup>999</sup> In my opinion, Haraway is not speaking from Biology's point of view, but rather referring to Philosophy and the Humanities.

<sup>1000</sup> Haraway, *When Species Meet*, p. 77.

<sup>1001</sup> The question of sacrifice is enunciated by Jacques Derrida as the great divide between animals and humans. See "'Eating Well", or the Calculation of the Subject: An Interview with Jacques Derrida', in *Who Comes after the Subject?*, pp. 96-119.

<sup>1002</sup> Descartes was one of the first to affirm that animals were not able to reason, a notion that dominated scientific thought for many years. 'I do not deny life to animals [...]; and I do not even deny sensation, insofar as it depends on a bodily organ. Thus my opinion is not so much cruel to animals as indulgent to human beings [...]' since it absolves them from the suspicion of crime when

project as a narrative of the excluded, the polyphonic text of the voiceless, men's history of men is also a history of cohabitation, surrogacy and dedication, and conversely, of expulsion, rejection and extermination among beings. Haraway corroborates this: 'If I tell the story of the gold rush and the Civil War, then maybe I can also remember the other stories about the dogs and their people – stories about immigration, indigenous worlds, work, hope, play, and the possibility of cohabitation.'<sup>1003</sup> A history of the War is therefore concomitant with a history of the animal.<sup>1004</sup> A history of colonialism and oppression should always include – the absence of, the exclusion of, or the importance of – the animal, for we all are *significant others* in a complex web of *significant otherness*. Dogs, like cyborgs, are part of a larger structure, the *companion species*, which is not the same as 'companion animals' (such as pets). Rather, *companion species* bring together 'the human and non-human, the organic and technological, carbon and silicon, freedom and structure, history and myth, the rich and the poor, the state and the subject, diversity and depletion, modernity and postmodernity'.<sup>1005</sup> Haraway explains how the word 'companion' comes from Latin *cum panis*, meaning 'with bread'.<sup>1006</sup> On the other hand, 'species' derives from *specere*, meaning 'to behold'. *Species* is also the foundation for *respecere*, 'to respect', the core of Haraway's theory:

to hold in regard, to respond, to look back reciprocally, to notice, to pay attention, to have courteous regard for, to esteem: all of that is tied to polite greeting, to constituting the polis, where and when species meet. To knot companion and species together in encounter, in regard and respect, is to enter the world of becoming with, where *who and what are* is [*sic*] precisely what is at stake.<sup>1007</sup>

A theory of *companion species* should be considered as a solution to the growing isolation of the individual in this 'era of emptiness',<sup>1008</sup> a time in which networks of

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they kill or eat animals.' René Descartes cited in *A Companion to Descartes*, ed. by Janet Broughton and John Peter (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), p. 421.

<sup>1003</sup> Haraway, *When Species Meet*, p. 98

<sup>1004</sup> Haraway gives impressive examples of how dogs were used during the Spanish conquest of America (p. 98-99), or how the dog became the companion of the American torturer of prisoners in Iraq (p. 63).

<sup>1005</sup> Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, p. 4.

<sup>1006</sup> Haraway, *When Species Meet*, p. 17.

<sup>1007</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>1008</sup> Gilles Lipovetsky, *L'ère du vide: essais sur l'individualisme contemporain* (Paris: Gallimard, 1983).



communication seem to be finally operational, yet in which there is also a lack of respect among beings, *respecere* in ‘optic/haptic/affective/cognitive touch’.<sup>1009</sup>

With these concepts in mind, this last chapter is divided into two main parts, each containing two sections. In the first part, Llansol’s diaries will be analysed as texts that challenge the notion of autobiography (Philippe Lejeune), followed by a study on the presence of the feminine and of nature (in the light of Haraway and ecofeminism), in these same texts (the diaries). The second part comprises a close reading of Virginia Woolf’s *Flush* (1933),<sup>1010</sup> and Llansol’s *Amar um Cão* (1990), in order to explain how ‘dog writing [could] be a branch of feminist theory’.<sup>1011</sup> As such, in reading Llansol and Woolf side by side, it is essential to refer to works like *Onde Vais, Drama-Poesia?* (2000), *Parasceve* (2001) and *Jogo da Liberdade da Alma* (2003), texts in which the author reflects *through writing* about the process of writing itself, along with Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* (1929) and *The Waves* (1931). The proximity between these two writers will prove how some of Llansol’s concepts (the *odd love*, the *sex of reading*, the *scribin’body* and the *libidinous moonlight*), which are often woven together in women’s writing, could shed new light on Woolf’s literature. My ultimate aim is to read Llansol not *with* but *upon* Virginia Woolf.

#### AN ‘INTERCOMMUNION OF SUBJECTIVITIES’, READING LLANSOL’S DIARIES

Although still underestimated as a literary genre, diaristic writing is common in Portuguese literature and, for once, women writers are almost as productive as their male peers when it comes to the bulk of publications.<sup>1012</sup> However, to attribute the category of diary to some of these works is still not consensual. This is perhaps not surprising: diaristic writing was a radically new way of writing in Portugal when

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<sup>1009</sup> Haraway, *When Species Meet*, p. 164.

<sup>1010</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Flush*, ed. by Kate Flint (Oxford: Oxford World’s Classics, 2000).

<sup>1011</sup> Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, p. 3.

<sup>1012</sup> Portuguese women writers who published diaries, besides Llansol, are among others: Irene Lisbon, *Um Dia e Outro Dia. Diário de uma Mulher* (Lisbon: Seara Nova, 1936); *Solidão — Notas do Punho de uma Mulher*, vol. 2 (Lisbon: Seara Nova, 1939); *Solidão II* (Lisbon: Portugalíia, 1966) [posthumous]. Natália Correia, *Não Percas a Rosa: Diário e algo mais (25 de Abril de 1974–20 de Dezembro de 1975)* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1978). Florbela Espanca, *Diário do Último Ano (Seguido de um Poema sem Título)*, pref. by Natália Correia (Lisbon: Bertrand, 1981) [posthumous]. Wanda Ramos, *Intimidade da Fala* (Lisbon: & Etc., 1983). Teolinda Gersão, *Os Guarda-Chuvas Cintilantes (Diário Ficcional)* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1984). Agripina Costa Marques, *Diário Intermitente* (Lisbon: Ed. Autor, 1996). Luísa Dacosta, *Na Água do Tempo. Diário* (Lisbon: Quimera Editora, 1992); *Um Olhar Naufragado: Diário II* (Porto: ASA, 2008).

Vergílio Ferreira decided to publish, in 1980, the first volume of *Conta-Corrente*.<sup>1013</sup> Despite the fact that diaries had been published before – Miguel Torga is a supreme example – none had such an impact on Portuguese literary life as Ferreira's. When, in 1983, the Bertrand publishing house entered the first and second volumes of *Conta-Corrente* for the Casa de Mateus Fiction Competition, the jury awarded Ferreira the prize, but only after an intense discussion as to whether a diary could be regarded as fiction, or if it should fall within another category. At the time, one member of the jury, Maria Alzira Seixo, defended its eligibility:

É *Conta-Corrente* obra de ficção? Parece-me que sim. Há uma efabulação criativa de facto existente neste tão discutido 'diário' [...]. [*Conta-Corrente* é] uma obra que fundamentalmente se define pela interrogação [...], pela pesquisa romanesca ou ensaística e finalmente, neste caso concreto, pela indagação de um quotidiano que é o seu e que ele faz, que é o nosso e pelo qual todos somos responsáveis.<sup>1014</sup>

Later, dwelling on this issue, Seixo stated how Ferreira transformed the notion of fiction in Portuguese literature, as his series of diaries opened up a space in which one could now consider 'uma diferenciação de géneros em prosa'.<sup>1015</sup> The debate involving Ferreira could, therefore, be extended to other diaristic writers (irrespective of gender), for in Portuguese letters diary and autobiography go hand in hand with a (slight) possibility of fiction, through an obvious (yet sometimes unrecognized) blurring of boundaries. Paulo de Medeiros and Sonja Herpoel state that this is a problem which affects studies of autobiography in Portugal, since they share a lack of differentiation 'within the autobiographical texts, so that autobiographies, memoirs, diaries, and other texts all get reviewed together'.<sup>1016</sup> Although I do not wish to disagree with Medeiros and Herpoel, as far as the diaries of Maria Gabriela Llansol are concerned, it is almost impossible to establish a firm boundary dividing her diaristic writing from her fiction, and yet, *simultaneously* (even if it might sound

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<sup>1013</sup> Vergílio Ferreira published nine volumes of diaries entitled *Conta-Corrente* (1980-1987) and *Conta-Corrente, Nova Série* (1993-1994). See Vergílio Ferreira, *Conta-Corrente* (Lisbon: Bertrand).

<sup>1014</sup> Maria Alzira Seixo, 'Vergílio Ferreira e Pedro Tamen – ou Perplexidade e Sagesa', *Colóquio-Letras*, 71 (1983), 67-68 (p. 67). At the time, Ferreira concurred with Seixo, commenting in his diary: 'Há uma grande controvérsia do júri sobre se na "ficção" – que é um termo convencional, já fixado pelo uso – se pode incluir um diário. Mas obviamente que sim. [...] A importância do romance está nos seus valores estéticos e humanos. O resto é bisbilhotice. Ora com um diário passa-se exactamente o mesmo. Estou convencido, aliás, de que a maioria dos diaristas "inventam" mesmo os dados de que partem. [...] O que está em causa não é saber se os factos aconteceram, mas o modo como o autor os fez acontecer.' Vergílio Ferreira, *Conta-Corrente IV* (Lisbon: Bertrand, 1982), pp. 113-114.

<sup>1015</sup> Seixo, *A Palavra do Romance*, p. 221.

<sup>1016</sup> Paulo de Medeiros and Sonja Herpoel, 'Iberian Autobiography', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 85.2 (2008), 163-165 (p. 164).

contradictory) it is almost unfeasible to prove a proximity between her diaries and her biography. This occurs precisely because Llansol dissolves the notion of a diary as an autobiographical quotidian text, by shattering its general stylistic limits, thus becoming her own literary *figure*.

In *Le Pacte Autobiographique* (1975), Philippe Lejeune proposed that the autobiographical text should be comprised of one ‘récit rétrospectif en prose qu’une personne réelle fait de sa propre existence, lorsqu’elle met l’accent sur sa vie individuelle, en particulier sur l’histoire de sa personnalité’.<sup>1017</sup> Note here the expressions ‘real person’ or ‘own existence’ which therefore exclude the possibility of fiction. From the aforementioned list of women who published diaries in Portugal, there are some exceptions to Lejeune’s rule for autobiographical writing.<sup>1018</sup> In most cases, nevertheless, autobiography and diary writing are said to converge. According to Medeiros, in an article on diaries by three Portuguese women writers (Florbela Espanca, Natália Correira and Maria Gabriela Llansol), it is diaries’ ‘hybridism, their accentuated textuality which ignores the confines of genre and that lack of form which Robert Musil and Maurice Blanchot singled out as being constitutive of the genre’.<sup>1019</sup> All three of Llansol’s diaries hitherto published provide an interesting example of how that hybridism and textuality become concomitant with a strong (non-assumed) autobiographical signature.<sup>1020</sup> As we have seen throughout this thesis, *Um Falcão no Punho* (1985), *Final* (1987) and *Inquérito às Quatro Confidências* (1996) could be considered key instruments to grasping the specificities of the Llansolian text. Llansol’s diaries are, in some ways, metatexts to her novels,

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<sup>1017</sup> Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte Autobiographique* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), p. 14

<sup>1018</sup> For instance, in Teolinda Gersão’s *Os Guarda-Chuvas Cintilantes (Diário Ficcional)*, the title consists of both the words diary and fictional. Gersão underlines that ‘contradiction’ in an interview: ‘O “eu” e o tempo são os dois pilares em que assenta o gênero diário, mas aqui o “eu” não surge como uma unidade, porque a unidade do eu é também ficção, somos um feixe de coisas várias, algumas delas contraditórias. [...] Daí que chamar-lhe “diário” seja de certo modo provocatório.’ See Álvaro Cardoso Gomes, *A Voz Itinerante: Ensaio sobre o Romance Português Contemporâneo* (São Paulo: EdUSP, 1993), p. 161. For further references on the impossibility of defining the diary as a *genre* (in Portuguese women’s literature), see Fernanda Silva-Brummel’s article on Olga Gonçalves’s fiction, ‘O Diário de Ficção na Narrativa de Olga Gonçalves’, in *Metamorfoses do Eu*, pp. 187-196. See also Catherine Dumas’ article on poetry as ‘diary’ in Ana Luísa Amaral and Teresa Rita Lopes, ‘Diário em poesia, (im)provável escrita. José Gomes Ferreira, “Diário dos Dias Cruéis”, Ana Luísa Amaral, “Imagens”, e Teresa Rita Lopes, “Passagens do Diário que não escrevo”’, *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 85 (2008), 175-189 (p. 175).

<sup>1019</sup> Paulo de Medeiros, ‘The Diary and Portuguese Women Writers’, *Portuguese Studies*, 14 (1998), 227-241 (p. 229).

<sup>1020</sup> ‘Hitherto’ because, at the time of writing this thesis, Llansol had published three diaries only. As stated in the Introduction, however, Llansol left several notebooks unpublished, which are in the process of being digitalized by the Espaço Llansol Association.

fragments written day-by-day (or text-by-text)<sup>1021</sup> in which she reveals her theories and expands on the concepts integral to her literary conjecture, thus accounting for the nomadic character of Llansol herself, of her writings and *figures*. Moreover, these diaries reveal Llansol's ideas for a communitarian space where hierarchies between different realms do not exist, and where animals, humans, and plants live harmoniously in an 'intercommunion of subjectivities'.<sup>1022</sup>

In the introductory chapter to *Women, Autobiography, Theory – A Reader* (1998), Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson discuss the features of women's autobiographical writing and consider its definition within women's writing as a whole. They wonder: 'To what extent is it [women's autobiography] characterized by frequent digression, giving readers the impression of a fragmentary, shifting narrative voice, or indeed, a plurality of voices in a dialogue?'<sup>1023</sup> In their overview of texts that include authors and/or theories that have shaped the study of women's autobiography, Smith and Watson cite Estelle C. Jelinek stating that, unlike men's writing, 'irregularity [...] characterizes the lives of women and their texts, which have a "disconnected, fragmentary... pattern of diffusion and diversity" in discontinuous forms'. Jelinek suggests that this discontinuity in women's writing mirrors their daily existence and that their life writings are 'analogous to the fragmentary, interrupted, and formless nature of their lives'.<sup>1024</sup> Even if not *all* women's autobiographical writing is digressive or fragmentary in nature, this is certainly a common trend, which is why I believe Smith and Watson's interrogation of the genre to be particularly applicable to Llansol. Indeed, it is precisely fragmentation and digression that one notices when referring to the Portuguese writer. As Claire Williams suggests,

Her paragraphs are not always neatly arranged rectangles – justified, indented and evenly spaced on the page – but instead the language appears to have been taken apart and put together again in an order which defies logic [...]. The sense of the text too, naturally, is disrupted because

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<sup>1021</sup> Prado Coelho, 'Maria Gabriela Llansol, o Texto Equidistante', p. 100.

<sup>1022</sup> Thomas Berry cited by Donald A. McAndrew, 'Ecofeminism and the Teaching of Literacy', *College Composition and Communication*, 47.3 (1996), 367-382 (p. 370).

<sup>1023</sup> Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (ed.), *Women, Autobiography, Theory – A Reader* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), p.10.

<sup>1024</sup> Estelle C. Jelinek (ed.), *Women's Autobiography: Essays in Criticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), pp. 10, 17, 19, cited by Smith and Watson, p. 9.

sentences start *in media res*, end suddenly and are peppered with gaps, breaks and hurdles.<sup>1025</sup>

According to Isabel Allegro de Magalhães, influenced by Julia Kristeva's notion of 'women's time', fragments and ruptures are common in women's writing because, unlike male texts, which are dominated by the historic succession of time, women are confined to an interior space in which 'o tempo se desenha circularmente, ou em espiral'.<sup>1026</sup> This spiral flow of time produces multiple and simultaneous readings of the female world, and these narratives 'na sua fragmentação, na sua errância e aparente desordem, manifestam a associação constante de várias redes semânticas não hierarquizadas na memória'.<sup>1027</sup> Magalhães illustrates the blurring of boundaries in Portuguese women's narratives, by underlining a tendency to 'descronologizar' the text, and by presenting 'uma ruptura subterrânea com o símbolo do calendário e também com o do tempo da realidade social que mutila a interioridade do seu tempo, o que significa uma ruptura da ordem simbólica dominante'.<sup>1028</sup> The blurring of the notion of diary and fiction is constant in Llansol's diaries with the strength of that same subterranean rupture: 'Eu poderia escrever sobre os problemas do tempo em que vivemos mas só poderia falar deles, a partir do meu, do meu tempo, desdatando.'<sup>1029</sup> In fact, these diaries talk precisely about the 'des-datar' of time.

### *Um Falcão no Punho, a diary of nights*

At the beginning of *Falcão*, in contrast to the traditional form of the genre, Llansol states this should be a diary of nights instead of days.<sup>1030</sup> These nights – which also arise from San Juan de la Cruz's *dark night of the soul* – are an intense concentration of energy, which she never translates as darkness, in the pure sense of impossibility of seeing. Rather, the night is 'the opening onto what disturbs',<sup>1031</sup> an opening onto a realm of possibilities, kingdoms, and apparitions, be they animals, trees, objects or

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<sup>1025</sup> Williams, 'Speaking in Tongues', p. 235. In an interview, Llansol concurred: 'O que escrevo é uma narrativa, uma só narrativa que vou partindo, aos pedaços.' Lúcia Castello Branco, 'Encontros com Escritoras Portuguesas', p. 109.

<sup>1026</sup> Magalhães, p. 43.

<sup>1027</sup> Magalhães, p. 43.

<sup>1028</sup> Magalhães, p. 43.

<sup>1029</sup> *IQC*, p. 28.

<sup>1030</sup> Llansol has most likely borrowed this expression from Robert Musil, whose diary she was reading at the time. The Austrian writer states at the beginning of his first diary (1899-1904): 'I shall now write my diary and in gratitude call it my "Book of the Night".' See Robert Musil, *Diaries: 1899-1942*, p. 3.

<sup>1031</sup> J. Patocka cited in Dufourmantelle, p. 46.

humans. The reader soon realizes that the real world is not portrayed here. Furthermore, the Llansolian *living* and *figures*, which recur throughout her novels, also appear in the diaries; they are presences with whom the writer dialogues, companions in reading and writing, who appear in the middle of the dark night. This is why *Falcão* breaks the conventional rules that establish the limits of diary writing: a quotidian encapsulation in words of everyday life; an intimate dialogue with the writer's world or space, and his/her writing; and a reflection about the writer's contemporaneity. Llansol blurs the traditional definitions of narrator, author and character, and breaks the pact with the reader and his/her expectation of a diary, not only by deregulating the progression of the calendar, but also by bringing into the real world the parallel/alternative worlds present in her texts. Phillipe Lejeune explains that the autobiographical pact is established by an identity proper to the author, the narrator and the character, established 'sans aucune ambiguïté, par la double équation: auteur = narrateur, et auteur = personnage, d'où l'on déduit que narrateur = personnage même si le narrateur reste implicite'.<sup>1032</sup> This idea culminates in Lejeune's statement that there is no resemblance in autobiography, everything in it is real, 'elle ne comporte pas de degrés: c'est tout ou rien'.<sup>1033</sup> When one is, like Lejeune, considering the novel as an autobiographical text, this idea is extremely well-founded. Yet, in relation to the Llansolian text, we must ask what is at risk when the diary destroys this autobiographical pact?

There is a creative impetus associated with *Falcão*, written between 1979 and 1983, in which the author *gives birth* to several narrative strategies, concepts, and texts that will punctuate her future works. This diary became an intimate dialogue with the books Llansol had written up to this period, the ones she was writing at the time (the second trilogy), and her future texts-to-be (notably *Lisboaleipzig I*). The fictional fragments are interspersed with fleeting references to the author's real life, for instance, what she is reading at the time.<sup>1034</sup> Interestingly, Llansol is reading Musil's diaries while writing hers – he is in Herbais as a visitor to the Llansolian house and text. Moreover, Musil appears in *Falcão* as a *figure*, a fictional presence, even if *Falcão* is a diary that should account for its *author's* real quotidian life. The author establishes boundaries between the diary and fiction, or, as she writes, diary

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<sup>1032</sup> Lejeune, p. 16.

<sup>1033</sup> Lejeune, p. 25.

<sup>1034</sup> Llansol was reading, for instance, the Brontës (*FP*, pp. 26-29); Robert Musil (*FP*, pp. 60-61, p. 68 and p. 71); and Virginia Woolf (*FP*, p. 48).

and book, defining the diary as ‘o pano com que se faz a limpeza dos anos’.<sup>1035</sup> *Falcão* will filter the passage of time separating the wheat from the chaff within the text, underlining exactly what the writer wants to show. Furthermore, in the core of these diaries ‘existia uma figura que escrevia sobre outras mas que agora vai buscar a elas o seu alívio’.<sup>1036</sup> This *figure* is Llansol herself, she admits, because she also belongs to the ‘ordem figural’.<sup>1037</sup>

Through the enunciation of these figures, Paulo de Medeiros states, Llansol is ‘constructing her own self: through those figures, with them, and even against them’.<sup>1038</sup> A ‘baptismo figural’ occurs in *Falcão*, where some of the figures are not only named, thereby adopting a Llansolian identity, but also created, since this text is where they first appear.<sup>1039</sup> Here, Llansol introduces Bach to Pessoa, two *figures* that will only feature in a more complete form in *Lisboaleipzig 1*. The overlap between both books is striking – it could even be said that *Lisboaleipzig 1* is a diary in all but name, or the parallel novel that was written during the same space-time as *Falcão*. Llansol explains quite explicitly in *Lisboaleipzig 1* the meaning of the expression ‘falcão no punho’ – literally a falcon on the fist – and its intimate relationship with the act of writing. ‘Suspeitei que um falcão voava para o meu trabalho, com uma aura de nobreza, e vindo de um país do sul. / Não pousou no meu pulso, entrou no meu pulso.’<sup>1040</sup> Later, in *Lisboaleipzig 2*, Anna Magdalena Bach takes control of the text and the falcon settles on her fist – she becomes the falconer *as* the *figure*-writer of this text, by establishing a powerful connection with the ‘falcão peregrino’.<sup>1041</sup> According to Carlos Vaz, the falcon is not a metaphor for the vision of the narrator

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<sup>1035</sup> *FP*, p. 82.

<sup>1036</sup> *FP*, p. 81.

<sup>1037</sup> *FP*, p. 82.

<sup>1038</sup> Medeiros, ‘The Diaries of Portuguese Women Writers’, p. 237.

<sup>1039</sup> The expression ‘baptismo figural’ was coined by Rui Miguel Amorim, ‘O Diário e o Acolhimento’, *Ciberkiosk*, 2 (2000) <[www.ciberkiosk.pt](http://www.ciberkiosk.pt)> [accessed 7 December 2007]

<sup>1040</sup> *L1*, p. 38. Llansol links falconry with the South for it is known that this activity is extremely common in North African and Middle Eastern countries since medieval times. In my opinion, the presence of falconry in Llansol should be grasped by underlining the influence the Sufi poets and mystics (Ibn al-‘Arabī or al-Hallāj) exerted over the Portuguese writer. According to Ali Asani, the Sufis regarded birds as beings with a soul, with a special connection to God. See Ali Asani, ‘“Oh that I could be a bird and fly, I would rush to the Beloved”, Birds in Islamic Mystical Poetry’, in *Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*, ed. by Kimberley Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), pp. 170-175 (p. 172).

<sup>1041</sup> *L2*, p. 77. William P. Marvin states that women falconers usually prefer the ‘long-winged (true falcons, such as the peregrine) and short-winged hawks’. Coincidentally, Llansol’s mentioning of the peregrine is ironically reminiscent of the nomadic condition of her *figures*. See William P. Marvin, ‘Hunting and Falconry’, in *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia*, ed. by Margaret Schaus (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 386-387 (p. 386).

over her text, but rather, ‘uma transmutação monstruosa causada pela perda total de identidade ao lançarmo-nos sobre o espaço vocativo do vazio’.<sup>1042</sup> It should be added, nonetheless, that in the text, Anna Magdalena is the writer *but also* the falconer. In falconry, there is an intense relationship between the falconer and the bird, since after hunting, the animal always returns to the fist that raised it. In my opinion, the falcon on Llansol’s fist is, indeed, not a vision of the narrator but a ‘metavelozmorfose’ of writing,<sup>1043</sup> since the falcon is in the writing-flight, ‘voo a escrever’<sup>1044</sup> – the narrator is the *figure* of Llansol, simply a lone woman writer shut up in a room of her own, too human, unable to fly. Only through fiction could she accomplish it, and the falcon therefore provides the text with a continuous possibility of flight.

In *Lisboaleipzig 1*, written between 1978 (when Llansol was still in Jodoigne), and 1993 (when she was finally back in Portugal), the fragments are dated but not chronologically organized. Llansol prefers to alter the location and the date that usually appear at the top of the page in a diary, pushing them to the end of the entry: time and space thus become a signature challenging the paratextual conventions inscribed by the diary as a genre. It is, however, through the process of dating the text that Llansol is inscribing her own signature, thus leaving her authorial mark, as Derrida points out.<sup>1045</sup> Llansol displays the affinities between both her ‘fictional’ and ‘autobiographical’ texts, underlining precisely how the houses she inhabited conditioned the creativity of the texts:

Suspendo a construção deste texto porque todos os fragmentos que o compõem são, de facto, um **Diário**, escrito nas datas que indico e que escrevi em paralelo com livros que na altura, estava escrevendo; no entanto, o texto que aqui resulta não é um diário. [...] Ao reler-me, porém, essas passagens-metamorfose revelam-me que Jodoigne foi a casa das beguinhas, que Herbais foi o lugar de encontro de Infausta, de Aossê e de Bach, e que em Colares acabaram por encontrar-se os membros dispersos da comunidade.<sup>1046</sup>

The fictional life of the texts therefore intersects with the real life of the author. The *figures* inhabit the houses in which Llansol lived. Some days, facts, dialogues and

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<sup>1042</sup> Vaz, p. 69.

<sup>1043</sup> *JLA*, p. 152.

<sup>1044</sup> *LI*, p. 39.

<sup>1045</sup> Following on from Derrida, Julian Wolfreys writes that ‘dating is also a signing [...]. It is that gesture which seeks to fix or figure the singular as singular and unique, yet which is reiterable, the credit of the signature extended infinitely by the eternal return’. See Julian Wolfreys, ‘Justifying the Unjustifiable: A Supplementary Introduction, of sorts’, in *The Derrida Reader*, ed. by Julian Wolfreys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 1-49 (p. 35).

<sup>1046</sup> *LI*, p. 46 (emphasis in the original).



events occur in both *Falcão* and *Lisboaleipzig 1*, such as, for example, the move from Jodoigne to Herbais, the appearance of the *figures*, or the absence of the trees and the animals in Herbais, all left behind in the house in Jodoigne. Llansol writes, for instance, about the loss of the plum tree, *Prunus Triloba*, in the ‘fictional’ text *Lisboaleipzig 1*: ‘Sonho, esta noite, com o meu último olhar frontal a *Prunus Triloba*: / Ser árvore, é não partir. / *Prunus Triloba*, és uma árvore. / *Prunus Triloba* não pode partir. // Pus-lhe a mão no tronco – pedra de toque do nosso adeus.’<sup>1047</sup> Curiously, in the diary, Llansol also mourns the abandonment of *Prunus Triloba* – ‘árvore de todas as árvores’<sup>1048</sup> – ‘who’ had already become a *figure*, the voice of reason to which the author often listened.<sup>1049</sup> Even when the boundaries between ‘fiction’ and ‘autobiography’ are clearly established, Llansol continuously challenges the reader’s ‘horizon of expectations’, in the words of Hans Robert Jauss, creating a dialogical relationship between the text and its reader (or listener) which effectively (de)generates meaning.<sup>1050</sup> The horizon of expectation would consist of the reader’s ‘norms and values, but also of desires, demands and aspirations’,<sup>1051</sup> taking into account his/her social, cultural, historical or linguistic contexts. It is not entirely related to the expectations of the reader of a specific genre, but to the context in which s/he reads the text. However, according to Robert Holub, Jauss’ theory suggests that in works that are less obviously literarily shaped, there are other ways of objectifying the horizon of expectation:

First, one could employ normative standards associated with the genre. Second, one could examine the work against other familiar works in its literary heritage or in its historical surroundings. Finally, one can establish a horizon by distinguishing between fiction and reality, between the poetic and practical function of language, a distinction that is available to the reader at any historical moment.<sup>1052</sup>

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<sup>1047</sup> *LI*, p. 34 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>1048</sup> *RSL*, p. 62

<sup>1049</sup> Claire Williams points out that ‘although there is nostalgia’ for the loss of the beings, ‘there is not melancholy’. This occurs because in the Llansolian text ‘the depression associated with mourning for lost loved ones is transformed by the text into a different kind of energy’. To Williams, rather than resorting to nostalgia, Llansol channels the energy into the process of creation of *figures*. See Claire Williams, ‘A vida pós-dor: Maria Gabriela Llansol on love and loss’, unpublished paper presented at the conference *Psychoanalysis and Portuguese* (London: IGRS, 30 May 2008).

<sup>1050</sup> Hans Robert Jauss’s concept of ‘horizon of expectation’ was accomplished through his work on the Aesthetics of Reception in the 1960s. See Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. by Timothy Bahti, intro. by Paul de Man (Brighton: Harvester, 1982).

<sup>1051</sup> Robert Holub, ‘Reception Theory: School of Constance’, in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, ed. by Raman Selden, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 319-346 (p. 326).

<sup>1052</sup> Holub, p. 323.

As we have seen already, the Llansolian diary is able to subvert these boundaries: she subverts the genre by stressing that there is no difference between diary and narrative, fiction or autobiography. Indeed, she rejected literary heritage (that is the primary goal of textuality, the refusal of a Lyotardian notion of grand-narrative), and, in her texts, it is impossible to distinguish between fiction and reality.

The impossibility of moving Prunus Triloba also alludes to the antagonistic feeling expressed by Llansol amid a constant desire for nomadism – as Guerreiro puts it, a ‘lógica nómada da vida’<sup>1053</sup> (reflected in both Llansol’s personal experience, and the fate she confers to her *figures*) – and the necessity of putting down roots, of becoming rhizomatic like trees. It is, therefore, pertinent to ask whether Llansol’s exilic condition is the reason she created such nomadic *figures*. Is this the ‘unhealable rift’, the ‘essential sadness of exile’, Edward Said once commented on, reflecting on his own condition?<sup>1054</sup> Llansol knows this sadness, the incurability of exile, the loneliness. Perhaps this is why she created these imaginary figures to inhabit her space, and now provide company. There is no loneliness, because the *figures* create a pack, an alliance. Perhaps this is why Llansol is also nomadic, drifting away from mainstream discourses, taking several beings with her, and inviting the reader to join her. In the Llansolian text, travellers may arrive and depart, as visitors to/in the text, and Llansol receives them: she is thus both host and guest.

### **Ecofeminism, nature as ‘thou-ness’ in *Finita***

In place of a date on the first page of *Finita* (as the reader would expect), there is a photograph of Prunus Triloba, who is not *what*, nor *it*, but *he*, not only because ‘arbusto’ is a masculine word in Portuguese, but also since he is a being with a gender and a history, in the Llansolian text. Donna Haraway explains how only when an animal has a name and a sex, in other words, when it is *someone’s* pet can it be assigned a personal pronoun.<sup>1055</sup> In this case, Haraway continues, ‘the animal is a kind of a lesser human by courtesy of sexualisation and naming’.<sup>1056</sup> Haraway borrowed this idea from Gilquin and Jacobs who developed a study on the usage of

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<sup>1053</sup> Guerreiro, ‘O Texto Nómada de Maria Gabriela Llansol’, p. 68.

<sup>1054</sup> The whole sentence reads thus: ‘[Exile] is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted. [...] The achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of something left behind for ever.’ Edward Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2002), p. 173.

<sup>1055</sup> Haraway, *When Species Meet*, p. 206. Haraway is referring to the usage of ‘who’ or ‘s/he’ to animals in newspapers and publications.

<sup>1056</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

the relative pronoun 'who' with nonhuman animals.<sup>1057</sup> The scholars concluded: 'Although the use of (who) instead of (which) may give the impression of nonhuman animals being put on a more equal footing with humans, in practice they may still have an inferior status in terms of the organizations of the sentence.'<sup>1058</sup> Accordingly, Llansol asserts that each and every being should be allowed in the text. *Finita* is, then, a diary about beings and how they were invited to and accepted in the hospitable Llansolian text, questioning the structures imposed by history on men (or by men upon animals and nature), and the role of the feminine within this space.<sup>1059</sup>

In *Finita*, the reader reaches a tranquil coexistence with the *living* with whom s/he becomes, as a result of the solitude of reading and writing, 'absolutamente sós'.<sup>1060</sup> Llansol writes in *Falcão*: 'Não há literatura. Quando se escreve só importa saber em que real se entra, e se há técnica adequada para abrir caminho a outros.'<sup>1061</sup> Llansol's objective is, above all, to clear the way so that other *living* can penetrate the text, so that she can *become with* them, forming a *companion species* in *respecere*. This movement within the text is extremely close to Haraway's *Manifesto* and some ecofeminist theory that recognizes the kinship between women and animals, which, ecofeminists state, is an immediate consequence of their exploitation and subordination to a male/capitalist/colonizer society. Through stating that her *figures* are not limited to humankind, and by opening up the literary space to the *living*, Llansol seems to be suggesting, like Josephine Donovan, that 'boundaries between the human world and the vegetable and animal realm are blurred'; as a result, 'hybrid forms appear: women transform into natural entities, such as plants, or merge with animal life'.<sup>1062</sup> How does the woman know she is now a hybrid? She is from now onwards a *scribin'body* with 'olhos de lobo, os seus dedos são lápis, a sua

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<sup>1057</sup> The results are conclusive: out of the thirteen English language dictionaries, grammars, style guides, or newspapers analysed, only five accepted the 'who' instead of 'which'. The 'who' occurs when there is 'closeness with the nonhuman animal and/or features shared with humans'. See Gaëtanelle Gilquin and George M. Jacobs, 'Elephants who Marry Mice are Very Unusual: The Use of the Relative Pronoun Who With Nonhuman Animals', *Society and Animals*, 14 (2006), 79-105 (p. 99).

<sup>1058</sup> Gilquin and Jacobs, p. 99.

<sup>1059</sup> For further reading on *Finita* and history, see Pedro Eiras, 'Les années 70, ont-elles existé? – à propos de *Finita*, de Maria Gabriela Llansol', in *The Value of Literature in and after the Seventies: the Case of Italy and Portugal*, ed. by Paula Jordão and Monica Jansen (Igitur: Utrecht, 2007), pp. 127-140 (p. 134). <<http://congress70.library.uu.nl>> [accessed 27 August 2008]

<sup>1060</sup> *F*, p. 53. This idea of solitude is concomitant with Maurice Blanchot's 'essential solitude'. See Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, trans. by Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), pp. 21-34.

<sup>1061</sup> *FP*, p. 55.

<sup>1062</sup> Josephine Donovan, 'Animals Rights and Feminist Theory', *Signs*, 15.2 (1990), 350-375 (p. 372).

mão esquerda é um candeeiro sempre aceso’,<sup>1063</sup> becoming *simultaneously* a wo/human, an animal, and a writer, and illuminating the text with her left hand, because without writing ‘o metabolismo não será metamorfose’.<sup>1064</sup> This being could thus *become*, in the space of encounter among beings, a *someone*, ‘Alguém-animal ou Alguém-vegetal ou Alguém-outro’.<sup>1065</sup>

Llansol could, therefore, be said to be attempting to answer Agamben’s question regarding the origins of the split between animals and man (since, in most of the foundational religious texts of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, they coexisted in a surprisingly peaceful manner). Agamben asks:

What is a man, if he is always the place – and, at the same time, the result – of ceaseless divisions and caesurae? It is more urgent to work on these divisions and ask in what way – within man – has man been separated from non-man, and the animal from the human [...]. And perhaps even the most luminous sphere of our relations with the divine depends, in some ways, on that darker one which separates us from the animal.<sup>1066</sup>

The association of nature with women upheld by many ecofeminists could, nonetheless, be considered counterproductive for feminist theory.<sup>1067</sup> Greta Gaard is of the opinion that the continuous appeals to the ‘biological closeness’ between women and nature, as females and childbearers, tend to ‘become regressive’.<sup>1068</sup> In this sense, the metaphor of the womb did nothing to ‘challenge the dualisms of patriarchal thought, which associate men/reason/culture and define them in opposition to women/emotion/nature’.<sup>1069</sup> Yet some of the principles defended by ecofeminism could be considered a valuable contribution to an understanding of the Llansolian text. Carolyn Merchant’s *The Death of Nature* is one such example that

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<sup>1063</sup> P, p. 150.

<sup>1064</sup> P, p. 52.

<sup>1065</sup> P, p. 72.

<sup>1066</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, p. 16.

<sup>1067</sup> For more information on the first authors to pave the way to ecofeminist theory, see, among others: Susan Griffin, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978); Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (London: Women’s Press, [1978] 1991); Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* (London: Wildwood House, [1980] 1982); Elizabeth Dodson Gray, *Green Paradise Lost* (New York: Roundtable Press, 1981); Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development* (London: Zed, [1988] 1989); Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, *Ecofeminism* (London: Zed, 1993).

<sup>1068</sup> Greta Gaard, *Ecological Politics: Ecofeminists and the Greens* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), p. 20.

<sup>1069</sup> *Ibid*, p. 20. Haraway’s *Cyborg Manifesto* was, to some extent, a response to the radicalization of ecofeminism, because feminists such as Susan Griffin, Audre Lorde, and Adrienne Rich ‘have profoundly affected our political imaginations — and perhaps restricted too much what we allow as a friendly body and political language’. They ‘insist[ed] on the organic, opposing it to the technological’. See Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*, p. 174.

accounts for how mankind has gradually excluded nature from history, questioning how the commodification of nature occurred through the similar process of the subjugation of women by a male-centred society. The radical change in the relationship between humans and nature took place from the sixteenth century onwards with consequent 'costs of competition, aggression, and domination arising from the market economy's *modus operandi* in nature and society'.<sup>1070</sup> Europe became the centre of the mass-exploitation of primary resources in the new territories as a result of the merciless dominance of the white-male-European *conquistador*. According to Immanuel Wallerstein, the discoveries 'established the key economic, geographical, and political relationships on which the subsequent development of capitalism has been predicated'.<sup>1071</sup> Capitalism commodified nature and somehow suppressed the existence of communities organized by languages, roots and traditions. Before the 1500s, Merchant argues, 'the root metaphor binding together the self, society and the cosmos was that of an organism', and the daily interaction between humans and nature was grounded in strong, cohesive and organic communities.<sup>1072</sup> Nature became a casualty of the capitalist order, but deities and myths were also strategically erased by the ruthless European power, as, for instance, in the case of Central and South American civilizations.<sup>1073</sup>

The sixteenth-century Scientific Revolution progressively replaced the idea of 'the earth as a nurturing mother' with the necessity to 'mechanize and rationalize the world'.<sup>1074</sup> If nature was indeed providing resources and sustaining our development, it was also the origin of 'wild and uncontrollable' disorders and

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<sup>1070</sup> Merchant, *The Death of Nature*, p. xvi.

<sup>1071</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein cited by William Hamilton Sewell, *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 87.

<sup>1072</sup> Merchant, p. 1.

<sup>1073</sup> Even if it may sound contradictory, Octavio Paz explained how the conquest of the Americas was not only accomplished by the overwhelming power of the Spanish, but also because the gods abandoned their people prior to the arrival of the *conquistadores*, probably anticipating their violence. Paz writes: '¿Por qué cede Moctezuma? ¿Por qué se siente extrañamente fascinado por los españoles y experimenta ante ellos un vértigo que no es exagerado llamar sagrado – el vértigo lúcido del suicida ante el abismo? Los dioses lo han abandonado. La gran traición con que comienza la historia de México no es la de los tlaxcaltecas, ni la de Moctezuma y su grupo, sino la de los dioses. Ningún otro pueblo se ha sentido tan totalmente desamparado como se sintió la nación azteca ante los avisos, profecías y signos que anunciaron su caída.' See Octavio Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed. (Mexico DF: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1984) p. 85.

<sup>1074</sup> Merchant, p. 2. The Scientific Revolution corresponds to a series of events that took place in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the emergence of scientific thought and the development of the experimental method. Science became an independent discipline and nature was then seen 'as a machine rather than as an organism'. See 'Scientific Revolution', in *Encyclopedia Britannica* <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/458717/physical-science/32542/The-scientific-revolution#ref=ref406942>> [accessed 4 February 2009].

diseases, provoking ‘violence, storms, droughts, and general chaos’.<sup>1075</sup> Just as ‘wild and uncontrollable’ women had to be burnt as witches during the Inquisition, so too did nature have to be tamed, disciplined by men. According to Merchant, the interaction between men and nature changed rapidly. Medieval society was based on a hierarchy ‘metaphorically modelled on the organic unity of the human body’, and at the top of the pyramid there were ‘feudal lords and territorial princes’.<sup>1076</sup> Yet, when the levelling of the hierarchies gradually started to occur, a new kind of organic community was formed, ‘growing out of peasant experience and village culture’,<sup>1077</sup> giving primacy to the community and ‘the collective will of people’.<sup>1078</sup> A third phase witnessed a revolutionary movement of peasants whose main objective was the ‘overthrow of the established society’.<sup>1079</sup> In a similar way to Llansol, Merchant regards Thomas Müntzer and the Anabaptist communities as exemplary of the endeavour to create an organic utopia through an egalitarian distribution of wealth. To Llansol, the defeat of the Anabaptists in 1535 represents the rupture which separated the human from humanity. ‘These groups, along with the intellectuals who identified them, shared a belief in the emergence of a new age of liberty and love in which God would appear from within and there would be equal sharing of food, clothing, and property among all people.’<sup>1080</sup> To Merchant, these communal and revolutionary societies are the foundation of the ecological movements in the post-industrial era. The *edenic space* therefore concurs with an urge for ecotopia.<sup>1081</sup> The peasant movements – the quintessence of the awareness of the exploitation of nature by men – were rapidly silenced by the heavy machinery of the Industrial Revolution, the emergence of modern science and its ‘fathers’: Descartes, Newton and Bacon. As a result of industrialization, European cities grew out of proportion, people were displaced, wetlands dried, nature was transformed into a machine ready to serve men’s wishes. Fen, farm and forest were followed by plague, famines and tempests.<sup>1082</sup> At the same time, Cartesianism established the great divide between

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<sup>1075</sup> Merchant, p. 2.

<sup>1076</sup> Merchant, p. 69 and p. 70.

<sup>1077</sup> *Ibid*, p. 76.

<sup>1078</sup> *Ibid*, p. 76.

<sup>1079</sup> *Ibid*, p. 79.

<sup>1080</sup> *Ibid*, p. 79.

<sup>1081</sup> See Ernest Callenbach’s *Ecotopia* (London: Pluto, 1975), which Merchant considers the first book examining the harmony between men and nature without excluding modern technology. Significantly, ‘it is women who in this back-to-nature society organize the secession and then hold the positions of power.’ Merchant, p. 96.

<sup>1082</sup> Merchant, p. 69.

animals and humans.<sup>1083</sup> Luc Ferry explains how predefined Cartesian hierarchies also ‘taught’ humans how to gaze at the ‘other’ (here Ferry is alluding to the colonized, but one could extend the reference to the mad wo/man, the monster, the animal, the ones who speak what we can not translate):

We go from God to man, from man to animals, from animals to vegetables, then to minerals. We accept that within each class there exists another hierarchy (from the wise man to the fool, from higher mammals to the earthworm, and so on). [...] The ‘primitive’ – *subhuman* or ‘*supermonkey*’, according to Buffon’s extraordinary formula – would be defined as one who, *stricto sensu*, situated *beneath* humanity but *above* animals, would fill the void between the two kingdoms.<sup>1084</sup>

Men animalized the other, reducing nature and animals to a *non*-status at the bottom of the pyramid of beings. ‘Nature is a dead letter for us. Literally: it no longer speaks to us for we have long ceased [...] to attribute a soul to it.’<sup>1085</sup> Ferry is therefore urging for a new global utopia of environmentalism. But, he asks, ‘is a nontyrannical, nonmetaphysical humanism possible?’<sup>1086</sup> If, by expressing an exceptional affinity between animals and women, ecofeminists failed indeed to accomplish Ferry’s ‘nonmetaphysical humanism’, one should not disregard the importance of this movement which emphasized the relationship between ‘sexism, speciesism, racism, classism and heterosexism’,<sup>1087</sup> asserting strongly, in the words of Jeremy Bentham, that the issue with animals is not ‘Can they *reason?*, nor Can they *talk?* but, Can they *suffer?*’.<sup>1088</sup> Ecofeminism proclaimed an ethic that, in constant combat against the ‘manstream’<sup>1089</sup>, and through the establishment of ‘all inclusive wholes’<sup>1090</sup>, would ultimately attain a sense of wholeness among beings, because ‘both women and men are “in/with/of nature”’.<sup>1091</sup> Similarly, Agamben taught us that

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<sup>1083</sup> Luc Ferry stated that Cartesianism was a ‘doctrine that went the farthest in devalorizing nature in general and animals in particular’. See Luc Ferry, *The New Ecological Order*, trans. by Carol Volk (London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. xxix.

<sup>1084</sup> Ferry, p. 13. (emphasis in the original)

<sup>1085</sup> *Ibid*, p. xvi.

<sup>1086</sup> *Ibid*, p. xxii.

<sup>1087</sup> Gaard, p. 46.

<sup>1088</sup> Jeremy Bentham cited by Ferry, p. 27 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>1089</sup> The concept of ‘manstream’ was developed by Janis Birkeland in ‘An Ecofeminist Critique of Manstream Planning’, *The Trumpeter*, 8 (1991), 72-84, cited by Greta Gaard, *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), p. 23.

<sup>1090</sup> Marti Kheel, ‘Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology: Reflections on Identity and Difference’, in *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism*, ed. by Irene Diamond and Gloria Ferman Ornestein (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1990), pp. 128-137 (p. 135).

<sup>1091</sup> Ariel Salleh, *Ecofeminism as Politics: Nature, Marx and the Postmodern* (London: Zed Books, 1997), p. 13.

if the caesura between the human and the animal passes first of all within man, then it is the very question of man – and of ‘humanism’ – that must be posed in a new way. [...] We must learn instead to think of man as what results from the incongruity of these two elements [man and animal] and investigate not the metaphysical mystery of conjunction, but rather the practical and political mystery of separation.<sup>1092</sup>

This caesura, mentioned by Agamben, prompted the exclusion of animals and plants from the hierarchies defined by humans.<sup>1093</sup> Whether it was men who disregarded nature’s voice, or nature who just simply stopped ‘talking’ to us, Llansol suggests that the fact is that these beings became the victims of men’s greed. ‘Quando é que o homem [...] se julgou a forma única e exclusiva?’<sup>1094</sup> Although Llansol cannot be fully understood through the ecofeminist movement, the proximity between what ecofeminists defended and her conception of the being is clear. This kinship, present in Llansol’s day-to-day writing, is an attempt to restore a sense of wholeness thus allowing these ‘reais-não-existentes’ a state of companionship among beings.<sup>1095</sup> Just as Llansol changed the pronoun from an ‘it’ to a ‘he’ when referring to *Prunus Triloba*, so should women in general, according to Rosemary Radford Ruether, address nature as ‘thou’: ‘We must respond to a “thou-ness” in all beings. [...] We respond not just to a “I to it”, but as “I to thou”, to the spirit, the life energy that lies in every being in its own form of existence.’<sup>1096</sup> Nature is always ‘thou’ in the Llansolian text. By revealing her ignorance in defining the human – ‘Não sei dizer o que é um humano’<sup>1097</sup> – Llansol shows that the diary is no longer just a cloth to clean up history, but rather a bestiary of animals and trees to be read by men, but also by plants, ‘para que elas se aproveitem do facto de eu saber escrever’.<sup>1098</sup> One must write all the beings because they were once refused a voice. Llansol’s text is an elegy to the *living*, she writes *them* and *to them*: ‘Ó queridos animais, / é para vós que escrevo.’<sup>1099</sup> Thus, the main role of the diary becomes the inclusion of the *living*, in contrast to the exclusion imposed by man(kind). The diary documents and expands the domestic sphere of the house, including the *living* in this cosmos.

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<sup>1092</sup> Agamben, *The Open*, p. 16.

<sup>1093</sup> *F*, p. 124.

<sup>1094</sup> *F*, p. 125.

<sup>1095</sup> *F*, p. 22.

<sup>1096</sup> Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk* (London: SCM Press, 1992), p. 87.

<sup>1097</sup> *F*, p. 74. Hélène Cixous states something similar: ‘At this point I discovered that I didn’t know where the human begins. What is the difference between the human and the nonhuman?’. See Cixous, ‘Coming to Writing’, p. 31.

<sup>1098</sup> *F*, p. 156.

<sup>1099</sup> *JLA*, p. 23.



Although Llansol tried to distance herself from the concept of women's writing,<sup>1100</sup> this synchronic condition of being a woman and a writer is something that she does not entirely reject or avoid. Her house is, like the house of other women writers, 'lugar de passagem do tempo, carregada de memórias, local secreto, de uma intimidade quente, quase uterina, onde o presente decorre e onde sobretudo o passado permanece, vivo nas coisas que dele falam, que o evocam'.<sup>1101</sup> To Llansol, the diary is a room of her own, and this *oikos* is the space of writing (the 'lugar' that witnesses the writer becoming *figure*), but also the space in which Llansol exposes what troubles her, verbalizing how she feels destroyed by 'coisas ferozes de uma realidade social a que, no íntimo, nunca aderi'.<sup>1102</sup>

Cleaning, sewing, mending, shopping and gardening are the verbs contained (or constrained) within the space of the house, historically the tasks of female domesticity. Still, by assuming these roles as female, Llansol is not, in any way, affirming or imposing her gender in contrast to another (masculine). Instead, to water the plants, to darn, or to cook are tasks which Llansol adopts freely because they are inexorably closer to another imperative task: the act of writing. 'Devo concluir que nasci, à imagem de todas as mulheres, para fazer renda?' She replies: 'Talvez tenha sido isto, fazer renda, que eu primeiro tenha desejado. No seu lugar, comecei a escrever.'<sup>1103</sup> If the diary is a cloth for cleaning, it is also the stitches with which Llansol embroiders her patchwork map, repairing the tears made by men and history, and presenting her cosmic cartography of beings who hem in the *edenic space*. In *Finita*, Llansol cleans the house of writing, sweeping the corners of the signifiers, restoring the feminine and nature in the quotidian figurative order.<sup>1104</sup> Moreover, while sewing fragments together, Llansol is permanently creating new openings for the centrifugal disseminations of beings.<sup>1105</sup> These include Llansol herself, who, in the following statement, towards the end of *Finita*, implodes the definition of a diary, rejecting the gendered mark of its paratext, calling it, surprisingly, a biography:

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<sup>1100</sup> *FP*, p. 140.

<sup>1101</sup> Magalhães, p. 36.

<sup>1102</sup> *F*, p. 112.

<sup>1103</sup> *F*, p. 23 and p. 22. The association between women's writing and embroidery is shared by Cixous: 'What women know how to do': "'Knitting.'" "No-sewing." "No-making pastry." "No-making babies." [...] Act like a woman? I don't know how. What does she know that I don't know? But to whom should this question be put?' Cixous, 'Coming to Writing', p. 28.

<sup>1104</sup> 'A ordem figurar do cotidiano', according to Maria de Lourdes Soares. See Soares, 'O Diário de Llansol: a Ordem Figurar do Cotidiano', in *Um Corp'a'screver 2*, ed. by Paulo de Andrade and Sérgio Antônio Silva (Belo Horizonte: FALE/UFMG, 1998), pp. 55-65.

<sup>1105</sup> Guerreiro, 'O Texto Nómada de Maria Gabriela Llansol', p. 68.

A narrativa que a estas páginas vai estando subjacente não precisará, finalmente, de ficção. Será um livro póstumo, ou um livro antigo, e chamar-se-á, referindo-se a uma mulher, **Biografia**. Não por eu ser escritora, ou uma mulher que dá testemunho; mas por ter nascido vivo.<sup>1106</sup>

### *Inquérito às Quatro Confidências, fear and writing*

Paulo de Medeiros reads *Inquérito* as a diary ‘under the sign of death’ in which there is a constant and subliminal presence.<sup>1107</sup> In fact, *Inquérito* is haunted by death, the imminent and real death of Vergílio Ferreira, with whom Llansol establishes an intimate dialogue, in a ‘procura de um *corpo de fulgor e de penetração* face ao desaparecimento do corpo físico’.<sup>1108</sup> Medeiros states that *Inquérito* could be read in tandem with Ferreira’s *Conta-Corrente*, ‘inasmuch as it too is a philosophical text, but its textuality is far more excessive and transgressive’.<sup>1109</sup> Llansol’s diaries thus share with Ferreira the undecidability of belonging to what Maria Alzira Seixo called a ‘género de oscilação’.<sup>1110</sup>

*Inquérito* is a text about fear and against the fear of writing. ‘Escrita e medo são incompatíveis’,<sup>1111</sup> hence one must write to retaliate against the paralyzing effects of fear. In *Inquérito*, Llansol dates the pages, but does not locate the events. It could be intimated that she is in Lisbon, but the absence of a geographical location provokes a smooth transference from biography to fiction, and in doing so, Llansol steers the ‘the effect of death, the annulment of being’.<sup>1112</sup> At the opening of *Inquérito*, she establishes pairs of concepts that make possible the rewarding combat against fear: ‘Cão e livro, medo e autonomia, raiz e força, companheiros e acompanhantes. Nada mais doce do que / um lugar solitário, liberto do medo, / ou quando o medo liberta.’<sup>1113</sup> Llansol thus presents a series of procedures that will facilitate the ‘annulment of being’, mechanisms that will be confided to Ferreira (the author) who will metamorphose into ‘o Mais Jovem’, while Llansol also mutates into ‘a rapariga que saiu do texto’.<sup>1114</sup> The relationship between Ferreira and Llansol

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<sup>1106</sup> *F*, p. 186. (emphasis in the original)

<sup>1107</sup> Medeiros, ‘The Diaries of Portuguese Women Writers’, p. 230.

<sup>1108</sup> Vaz, p. 109 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>1109</sup> Medeiros, ‘The Diaries of Portuguese Women Writers’, p. 230.

<sup>1110</sup> Seixo, *A Palavra do Romance*, p. 224.

<sup>1111</sup> *FP*, p. 13.

<sup>1112</sup> Medeiros, ‘The Diaries of Portuguese Women Writers’, p. 238.

<sup>1113</sup> *IQC*, p. 14.

<sup>1114</sup> *IQC*, p. 53 and p. 60.

represents a ‘mapping of the scribal relation between their texts’,<sup>1115</sup> that is to say, *Inquérito* is a diary of *scribin’bodies*, and the verbs used in the text confirm that same physical movement. The book opens with ‘eu vou’,<sup>1116</sup> attesting to Llansol’s erratic *personae*, in this case, accompanied by Vergílio (*figure*) and a dog (Jade?). Even when the verbs are not motions, they are ontologically connected to the task of being-in-the-world, accounting for the transgressive nature of *Inquérito* as a philosophical text. To ask, to affirm, to open, to answer, to distinguish, to confound, to translate, among others, to inquire: these actions/verbs are an insight into the processes through which Llansol will reveal the ‘quatro confidências’, the core of the Llansolian project summarized in four concise points:

Nada somos. [...] Os nossos actos são menores do que nós. [...] Não há contemporâneos, mas elos de ausências presentes; há um anel em fuga. Na prática, é uma cena infinita – o lugar onde somos figuras. [...] Há um lugar edênico [...]. [D]eram-nos um nome, o nome por que nos chamam, mas não é um consistente – é um verbo. O nosso verbo, por exemplo, é escrever.<sup>1117</sup>

These secrets suggest that human actions have consequences in history. When man excluded animals from his realm, and divided beings into hierarchies, he was opening an incurable caesura between kingdoms – a split that only literary texts can counterbalance. Men and animals should be transmuted into *figures* in order to be allowed into the *edenic space*. To ‘write’ is their verb since they no longer respond to the name they were given: ‘O nome exclui o que o verbo admite e diz.’<sup>1118</sup> *Figures* are actions, verbs, and, like verbs, they should be conjugated with other beings. So, Llansol and Vergílio go together (in unison, *ensemble*) in search of a verb. Through writing, they will find the *there is*. The Llansolian *there is* opens the text to the possibility of the appearance of beings that ‘there are’, *somewhere* waiting to be summoned: note that the verb ‘haver’ conjugated as *há* is both affirmation, confirmation of existence, and the possibility of future.<sup>1119</sup> Llansol and Ferreira find

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<sup>1115</sup> Medeiros, ‘The Diaries of Portuguese Women Writers’, p. 240.

<sup>1116</sup> *IQC*, p. 7.

<sup>1117</sup> *IQC*, p. 48.

<sup>1118</sup> *IQC*, p. 40.

<sup>1119</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos also sees the Llansolian *there is* as an opening of endless possibilities. Santos presents a very interesting parallel between the *there is* and the *il y a* of Levinas and Maurice Blanchot. ‘[In Llansol], o “há” parece distinguir-se do de Blanchot e de Levinas. Ao “há” como densidade existencial do próprio vazio, acrescenta outra dimensão: não sendo um vazio com nada [...], mas um vazio preñado de possibilidades, de densidade existencial, não será um não-sentido (como em Lévinas), mas o lugar de possibilidades de sentido; o “há” de Llansol é um lugar de encontro com o ser ou o lugar onde os seres chegarão à sua coincidência [...]. Enquanto para Levinas, a única possibilidade de sair do “há” é o ser-para-o-outro, numa relação des-inter-essada, em Llansol não se

some comfort in that possibility, since while the *there is* exists, writing is an unfinished *continuum*, and the project continues, strongly. This is why, even after Ferreira's death, *there is* the possibility of his existence. Even after Llansol's own death, *there is* a text waiting to be opened and read: 'Faça a sua parte! Sem medo, sem medo, sem medo', Vergílio demands.<sup>1120</sup>

Although the *figuration* of nature is not as strong in *Inquérito* as it is in the previous diaries, Llansol once again underlines the equivalence between nature and humankind. Humans have a name, gender and social status, yet only their actions can establish a daily combat against fear, death and solitude. Mapping this combat is Llansol's objective. 'To map' is another action and this is exactly why Llansol writes:

\_\_\_\_\_ durante meses procurei uma geografia – não uma biografia, e muito menos uma ficção –, sobre as relações deslumbradas e doridas entre escritores. [...] A certa altura, escrevi mesmo que essa geografia era, antes e sobretudo, uma signografia-sobre-o-mundo.<sup>1121</sup>

Llansol's diaries map a daily struggle against a writer's solitude, becoming neither biography, nor fiction. To borrow Blanchot's words, this text is 'neither finished nor unfinished: it is [...]. Beyond that it is nothing'.<sup>1122</sup> If *Falcão* and *Finita* are centrifugal diaries, one could argue that *Inquérito* is definitely a centripetal one. Every being, verb and *figure* converges on a ceaseless centre: Maria Gabriela Llansol. This clash between centripetal and centrifugal forces within the diary is clear in autobiographical writing, a genre that stresses a 'procura introspectiva do centro',<sup>1123</sup> although it contradictorily reveals 'o *eu* disperso, que se dá a conhecer por justaposição'.<sup>1124</sup> Neither biography, nor fiction, but a signo-geo-biography in the world. As a consequence, 'não há texto autobiográfico'.<sup>1125</sup> Or is there?

#### FLUSH AND JADE, TWO DOGS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR

Virginia Woolf once explained that she was so exhausted after writing *The Waves* (1931) that she decided to write *Flush* immediately after: 'I lay in the garden and

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trata de sair do "há", mas de procurar no "há" a coincidência do próprio ser.' Maria Etelvina Santos, *Como Uma Pedra-Pássaro Que Voa*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>1120</sup> *IQC*, p. 184.

<sup>1121</sup> *IQC*, p. 167.

<sup>1122</sup> Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, p. 22.

<sup>1123</sup> Clara Rocha, p. 27

<sup>1124</sup> Clara Rocha, p. 27.

<sup>1125</sup> *CL*, p. 11.

read the [Elizabeth Barrett and Robert] Browning love letters, and the figure of their dog made me laugh so I couldn't resist making him a Life.'<sup>1126</sup> Flush was, in fact, a cocker spaniel, the pet of the British poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861). As a biography, *Flush* can be placed alongside Woolf's other biographical writings, like *Orlando* (1928), and it accounts for Flush's life supported by a thorough list of sources at the end of the text – essentially Barrett Browning's letters and poems. The narrative follows Flush from birth to death, although the biography is delayed by a short introduction in which Woolf presents the historical lineage of the spaniel breed – a section similar to Herman Melville's genealogy of the whale in *Moby Dick* –, accounting for how pedigree sustains class structures in the dog-society.

Although Flush was a real dog now transformed into a literary figure, there are some biographical details in Woolf's life that might explain why she chose to write the biography of a dog and how this is relevant to establishing a comparison with *Amar um Cão*. According to Quentin Bell, Flush is partly 'a work of self-revelation', because the narrator is 'Virginia herself but an attempt is made to describe Wimpole Street, Whitechapel and Italy from a dog's point of view, to create a world of canine smells, fidelities and lusts'.<sup>1127</sup> In fact, Woolf used the metaphor of the animal to describe people in general, namely her siblings, because an animal was usually a synonym for an object of affection. Woolf was able to portray with such accuracy the idiosyncratic behaviour of a cocker spaniel because she herself had a spaniel called Pinka, a puppy given to her by Vita Sackville-West. The fact that, as Bell points out, Pinka 'became, essentially, Leonard's dog'<sup>1128</sup> is not totally irrelevant to our understanding of Woolf's *biographical* relationship with animals. Lady Ottoline wrote to her shortly after the publication of *Flush*: 'Don't you sometimes hug your dog – I did my darling Socrates – hugged him & hugged him – and kissed him a thousand times on his soft cheeks.'<sup>1129</sup> Interestingly, Bell states that Woolf would have strongly replied 'No', because she was not, 'in the fullest sense of the word, a dog lover'.<sup>1130</sup> Here lies a tension between Llansol and Woolf – Woolf did not 'love' dogs, yet, in contrast, Llansol's book *Amar um Cão*, is a set of guidelines explaining *how* to love a dog according to *textuality*. Quentin Bell argues that

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<sup>1126</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell*, 23 February 1933, cited by Flint, 'Introduction to *Flush*', in Woolf, *Flush*, pp. xii-xlvi (p. xvi).

<sup>1127</sup> Quentin Bell, *Virginia Woolf – A Biography*, vol. 2 (London: Hogarth Press, 1973) p. 175.

<sup>1128</sup> Bell, p. 175.

<sup>1129</sup> Bell, p. 175 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>1130</sup> Bell, p. 175.

*Flush* is not so much a book by a dog lover as a book by someone who *would love to be a dog*. In all her emotional relationships, she pictured herself as an animal. [...] Her dog was the embodiment of her own spirit, *not the pet of an owner*. *Flush* in fact was one of the routes which Virginia used, or at least examined, in order to *escape from her own human corporeal existence*.<sup>1131</sup>

The question posed by Woolf and Llansol is not whether to love a dog, but rather *how* to love him. In the case of *Flush* and Jade (also a cocker spaniel), it should be stressed that they interestingly challenge the conventions of literary canons by addressing how marginal figures might define their identity through literature. In *Os Cantores de Leitura* it was stated that there is no autobiographical text, yet the Llansolian reader has been aware, since *A Restante Vida*,<sup>1132</sup> that in the life of Maria Gabriela Llansol there was a dog called Jade. In this way, a shift is performed within the text – Jade is no longer a biographical dog that once existed, but instead becomes a ‘textual dog’: ‘Entre *Amar um Cão* e o cão que eu amei há apenas *o ressalto de uma frase*. Com um deles vivi; o outro era o cão textual que nos acompanhava, ainda antes de o ter encontrado no futuro que nos veio a reunir.’<sup>1133</sup> The textual dog Jade is now intrinsically detached from the real one. It is irrelevant whether Llansol *owned* Jade, or not, since that ‘ressalto’ makes the text stumble, creating a gap which generates meaning and opens the narrative sequence to an edenic possibility of existence.

Woolf wanted to escape her ‘human corporeal existence’ by writing the life of a dog and by extension criticizing issues of class, gender and power not only during the Victorian period (the narrative time of *Flush*), but also during her own time. Just as *Amar um Cão* is essentially described as a ‘mapa para atravessar sem dano de vida o campo de minas em que se tornou a nossa cultura’,<sup>1134</sup> so *Flush* should be read as a ‘testimony to the lives that have never been narrated, the inscrutable and therefore unrepresentable, the discarded and therefore wasted’.<sup>1135</sup> By giving a literary life to *Flush*, Woolf proclaims his identity as a *figure*: she gave him a voice

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<sup>1131</sup> Bell, pp. 175-176 (emphasis mine).

<sup>1132</sup> Llansol writes ‘Jade’ for the first time: ‘E o próprio cão Jade se sentava à mesa e, com os olhos tão doces, tomava a palavra.’ *RV*, p. 44.

<sup>1133</sup> *SH*, p. 234 (emphasis mine).

<sup>1134</sup> Augusto Joaquim, ‘geometria de frases imagens cola’ [sic], in Augusto Joaquim and Maria Gabriela Llansol, *Desenhos a Lápis com Fala – Amar um Cão* (Lisbon: Assírio e Alvim, 2007), pp. 75-87 (p. 84).

<sup>1135</sup> Pamela L. Caughie, ‘Flush and the Literary Canon: Oh Where Oh Where Has the Little Dog Gone?’, *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature*, 10.1 (Spring, 1991), 47-66 (p. 61).

able to pronounce an identity from which he would have been banned historically. Rather than an existence confined to a footnote in the life of a woman poet, Flush is a Llansollian remnant, a 'vida restante'.

Whilst *Amar um Cão* is considered important in Llansol's oeuvre, *Flush* is not one of Woolf's most canonical texts. Among other reasons, it is known that Woolf dismissed *Flush* 'by a way of a joke',<sup>1136</sup> calling it a 'silly book' and 'a waste of time'.<sup>1137</sup> Quentin Bell recalls that Woolf knew that 'the critics would like it [*Flush*] for reasons which did her no credit; she would be admired as an elegant lady prattler'.<sup>1138</sup> Woolf chose to write about Barrett Browning, however, with the purpose of shedding light on a poet who attained popular recognition, but whose poetry no one was reading anymore.<sup>1139</sup> 'Woolf understood that the fascination with Barrett Browning's life had prevented readers from fully appreciating the politics of her writing.'<sup>1140</sup> In other words, biography and text became so incestuously connected that the common reader forgot how to listen to literature, focusing rather on the details of its author's life. In my opinion, Woolf wrote *Flush* precisely because Browning's life was too scrutinized: instead of writing a biography of the poet, she accomplished it through the eyes of her dog, and, in so doing, 'stretch[ed] the limits of literary canonicity'.<sup>1141</sup> By establishing an almost physical resemblance between Browning and her dog – 'yes, they are much alike'<sup>1142</sup> – Woolf is, I suggest, showing how *Flush* and Browning are *companion species*. In this case, the word *companion* appears to be literal, for Flush (the dog but also the text) mirrors Browning's confinement – 'a bird in a cage would have as good a story'<sup>1143</sup> – endured while living with her father. Their lives were parallel, the dog felt, because 'he and Miss Barrett lived alone together in a cushioned and firelit cave'.<sup>1144</sup> If the dog became the uttering voice of this patriarchal imprisonment, Wilson, the maid, became its silent

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<sup>1136</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Letter to Donald Brace*, 27 January 1933, cited by Anna Snaith, 'Of Fanciers, Footnotes, and Fascism: Virginia Woolf's *Flush*', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 48. 3 (Fall 2002), 614-636 (p. 618).

<sup>1137</sup> Woolf cited by Pamela L Caughie, 'Flush and the Literary Canon', p. 47.

<sup>1138</sup> Bell, p. 174.

<sup>1139</sup> In *Flush*, Woolf makes a call for readers of Browning's poem *Aurora Leigh*, stating that 'since such persons are non-existent it must be explained that Mrs Browning wrote a poem of this name'. Woolf, *Flush*, p. 109. Woolf was extremely influenced by *Aurora Leigh*, to which she dedicates a chapter in her *Second Common Reader*. See 'Aurora Leigh', in *The Second Common Reader* (London: Harcourt, 1986), pp. 202-213.

<sup>1140</sup> Snaith, p. 615.

<sup>1141</sup> Flint, p. xvii.

<sup>1142</sup> Woolf, *Letter to Gladys Mulock*, 13 October 1933, cited by Flint, p. xvii.

<sup>1143</sup> Woolf, *Flush*, p. 26.

<sup>1144</sup> *Ibid*, p. 24.

witness. Symptomatically, Woolf dedicates a five-page footnote to Lily Wilson, Browning's maid who was never given a voice of her own, and whose life 'is extremely obscure and thus cries aloud for the services of a biographer'.<sup>1145</sup> Wilson is a Llansolian *life that is left*, a remarkable example of 'the great army of her kind – the inscrutable, the all-but-silent, the all-but-servant maids of history.'<sup>1146</sup> In the light of this mere (even if long) footnote, it would be unfair to consider *Flush* as 'ladylike' literature, since, according to Pamela Caughie, 'Flush's life may not stand for the lives of women we know; rather, it may stand as a testimony to the lives that will never be narrated'.<sup>1147</sup>

Caughie's point of view clashes with other scholars who see *Flush* as a text about the oppression suffered by Victorian women poets.<sup>1148</sup> Caughie prefers to focus on *Flush* essentially as a text about class, stating that to read it 'in terms of its representation of women's experience may be to perpetuate the modernist tendency to gender popular literature and culture as female'.<sup>1149</sup> In *Virginia Woolf and Postmodernism*, Caughie uses postmodern theory in order to propose a different reading of Woolf, one which deviates from both feminist and modernist paradigms. These frameworks, she states, are no longer applicable to Woolf since they have separated her art (modernist) from her politics (feminist), consequently disregarding that 'Woolf was not only concerned with modernist aesthetics and feminist politics; she was concerned as well with the nature and status of fiction itself'.<sup>1150</sup> What therefore interests me in this comparison between Woolf and Llansol is not so much the importance of a modernist style or of women's writing in both authors, but to stress how Woolf, like Llansol, 'changed continually as a writer',<sup>1151</sup> challenging the literary canon – indeed, a patriarchal one – and constantly testing, exploring, manipulating and experimenting with writing and language. As we will see, Woolf's writings could be literally read in the light of some of Llansol's concepts. As such, I

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<sup>1145</sup> Woolf, 'Woolf's Notes', in *Flush*, pp. 108-115 (p. 109).

<sup>1146</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>1147</sup> Pamela Caughie, *Virginia Woolf and Postmodernism – Literature in Quest and Question of Itself* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 162.

<sup>1148</sup> This is the opinion of Susan Squier, to whom the similarities between Browning and her dog attest to 'equat[ing] their marginal positions in society so that Flush's life comes to represent the "marginalization and oppression of Barrett (and, by implication, of all women)".' See Susan Squier, *Virginia Woolf and London: The Sexual Politics of the City* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), p. 125.

<sup>1149</sup> Caughie, *Virginia Woolf and Postmodernism*, p. 162.

<sup>1150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>1151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.



would like to propose a reading of Llansol and Woolf that goes beyond women's writing and modernist (or in Caughie's case, postmodernist) theories, thus putting forward a reading of Woolf *through* Llansol or, rather, Llansol *upon* Woolf.

### Companion species out of the *common light*

The similarities between Barrett Browning and her dog could be seen not as a correspondence between women and dogs as a result of their shared marginality, but rather in the light of Haraway's concept of *companion species*. Dog and owner acknowledge each other in their first meeting:

There was a likeness between them, as they gazed at each other each felt: Here am I – and then each felt: But how different! [...] Between them lay the widest gulf that can separate one being from another. She spoke. He was dumb. She was woman; he was dog. Thus closely united, thus immensely divided, they gazed at each other.<sup>1152</sup>

What is striking about *Flush* is not the confinement suffered by women poets during the nineteenth century, but the proximity established by Woolf between humans and animals, using, like Llansol, 'the presumed, customary split' among realms in order to 'examine the way assumed hierarchies function within society'.<sup>1153</sup>

Anna Snaith argues how the initial description of the spaniel pedigree in *Flush* is directly connected to Woolf's denouncing of the rising ideas of purity of the race in Europe.<sup>1154</sup> Flush is a pure-breed living within the aristocratic sphere, and, like Kafka's dog, he will soon discover that 'the dogs in London are strictly divided into different classes'.<sup>1155</sup> Owing to his breed, Flush is kidnapped by smugglers from Whitechapel (at the time, London's slums).<sup>1156</sup> It is also as a result of his class that, once in Italy, 'Flush felt himself like a prince in exile. He was the sole aristocrat among a crowd of *canaille*'.<sup>1157</sup> Whilst Flush's pure-breed qualities could correlate to class distinction between men, Woolf is simultaneously mocking these hierarchical

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<sup>1152</sup> Woolf, *Flush*, pp. 18-19. This gaze is described by Llansol as 'olhar à cão' (*SH*, p. 226), the way she wanted to regard Vergílio Ferreira, when he was dying, because this gaze is 'um performativo para atravessar o emaranhado de hesitações que o acometera nas fragas da vida'. An 'olhar à cão' would help Ferreira to conceive his 'corpo frágil que lhe coubera, enfim dotado de uma capacidade de existir superior à que jamais reconhecera. Na prática, acrescentar uma *alma crescendo*'. *SH*, p. 239.

<sup>1153</sup> Flint, xvi.

<sup>1154</sup> Snaith, p. 630.

<sup>1155</sup> Woolf, *Flush*, p. 23.

<sup>1156</sup> From this section, it could be inferred that Woolf is presenting another statement about class in London society. Whitechapel is a world 'where vice and poverty breed vice and poverty'. Woolf, *Flush*, p. 63.

<sup>1157</sup> *Ibid*, p. 74.

categories, stating how ‘we [humans] have to admit that their [dogs’] aristocracy was founded on better reasons than ours’.<sup>1158</sup>

This is precisely where Woolf encounters Llansol – or Flush meets Jade – since the fusion of the animal and human kingdoms thus allows Flush to exist beyond his biography and literary life. In order to portray a dog’s life, Woolf resorted to the metaphor of smell (recall that, in Llansol, there is no metaphor, but metamorphosis). Humans cannot experience the sense of smell as dogs can, and Woolf suggests this by stating that ‘the greatest poets in the world have smelt nothing but roses on the one hand, and dung on the other’.<sup>1159</sup> Consequently, poets (and ultimately men) could not understand what it is like to be a dog and dwell in a world of smells. To Flush, ‘love was chiefly smell; form and colour were smell; music and architecture, law, politics and science were smell. To him religion itself was smell’.<sup>1160</sup> When he moves from London to Florence, Flush will seek out for new ‘raptures of smell’,<sup>1161</sup> in sum, a new life filled with ‘olfactory abundance’<sup>1162</sup> now ‘veined with human passions’.<sup>1163</sup> Jade, on the other hand, states: ‘Não vejo, farejo com o meu farofarol’.<sup>1164</sup> For Jade, in place of smell, everything was *text*.

In the same way that Flush will experience new smells throughout his canine life, Jade ‘quer aprender a ler sobre um texto que eu porei a arder por ele’.<sup>1165</sup> Reading (*upon*) is paradigmatic in Llansol. Yet, since we established the birth of Jade as the archetypal *scene of fulgor*, it is crucial to underline how birth, reading and writing go hand in hand in the Llansolian text, a fact supremely attested to in *Amar um Cão*. There are two dogs, as we have stated: the real dog, Jade, and the textual one. In his drawings accompanying the latest edition of the short story, Augusto Joaquim explains that Jade is ‘o primeiro cão’ and that his birthplace (‘no lugar

que toda a planta acolhe’)<sup>1166</sup> ‘começam todos os cães’. Jade is also the *last dog* of this text because ‘depois deste, cão não é cão’: instead, after Jade, all dogs become *figures*.<sup>1167</sup> This is clearly explained in the text, because in the *scene of fulgor*

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<sup>1158</sup> *Ibid*, p. 7.

<sup>1159</sup> *Ibid*, p. 86.

<sup>1160</sup> *Ibid*, p. 86.

<sup>1161</sup> *Ibid*, p. 86.

<sup>1162</sup> Craig Smith, ‘Across the Widest Gulf: Nonhuman Subjectivity in Virginia Woolf’s *Flush*’, *Twentieth Century Literature*, 48.3 (Autumn, 2002), 348-361 (p. 353).

<sup>1163</sup> Woolf, *Flush*, p. 88.

<sup>1164</sup> *SH*, p. 215.

<sup>1165</sup> *AC*, p. 42. (emphasis mine)

<sup>1166</sup> *AC*, p. 39

<sup>1167</sup> Augusto Joaquim, ‘desenhos (1943- 2003)’, in *Desenhos a Lápis com Fala*, pp. 31-71 (p. 37).

of the beginning, we witnessed two births: one is a ‘ser-de-vida’, the other, a ‘ser-de-texto’.<sup>1168</sup> The textual dog is still related to the first one by name, gender and birthplace, but the Jardim da Estrela where the real Jade used to play is now transformed into a ‘metonímia de um mais amplo espaço edénico’.<sup>1169</sup>

The relationship between Jade and the human (a child) in *Amar um Cão* echoes some passages of *Alice in Wonderland*. Like Alice and her friends, both Jade and child are constantly challenged by philosophical questions about language and its realms, learning and reading, and how these binaries are connected.<sup>1170</sup> If, in the first instance, this relationship would be strange because she is a human and he is a dog, in the second instance, the Llansolian text enables this relationship precisely because they belong to different worlds. Yet, in *Amar um Cão* (contrary to the literary process of anthropomorphism) the dog does not speak like the human; rather it is the human who must find a common language with the animal, in order to be understood. The dog asks the child why she is playing alone: ‘Por necessidade de conhecer. De conhecer-te’, she replies.<sup>1171</sup> The child does not wish to play with the other children, instead ‘o cão do futuro é o meu verdadeiro interlocutor’.<sup>1172</sup> Through a play on words, Jade allows her into his realm – ‘entraste no reino onde eu sou cão’<sup>1173</sup> – and, later in *O Senhor de Herbais*, Llansol consolidates this idea with another dialogue that corroborates why the dog-realm is the supreme example of the realm of languages: “‘Queres um jardim?’”, perguntaram-lhe. “‘Não, não quero um lugar onde tudo tenha nome’”, respondeu a menina, rasgando no bibe apenas algumas cores. “‘Então, entraste na linguagem’”.<sup>1174</sup> For Llansol, like Wittgenstein, language is a game through which the child will learn how to penetrate the dog-realm, as the dog will learn how to read in the precise interval, line or gap created in the text marking the distance between ‘os perigos do poço’ and ‘os prazeres do jogo’.<sup>1175</sup> As Pedro Eiras points out, in relation to Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), ‘o

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<sup>1168</sup> João Barrento, ‘Um Berço de Perguntas – Amar um Cão (1)’, in *Um Ser Sendo – Leituras de Amar um Cão*, ed. by Maria Etelvina Santos, João Barrento and Cristiana V. Rodrigues (Colares: Espaço Llansol, 2007), pp. 5-17 (p. 6).

<sup>1169</sup> Barrento, ‘Um Berço de Perguntas’, p. 6

<sup>1170</sup> It is worth noting how these dialogues are reminiscent of Gregory Bateson’s (meta)dialogues with his daughter about language. See Gregory Bateson, ‘Metalogues’, in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp. 1-50.

<sup>1171</sup> *AC*, p. 41.

<sup>1172</sup> *AC*, p. 42.

<sup>1173</sup> *AC*, p. 41.

<sup>1174</sup> *SH*, p. 219.

<sup>1175</sup> *AC*, p. 42.

jogo não pode ter essência, a não ser aquela que ele mesmo decida, precisamente, pôr em jogo. E nesse sentido, todos os jogos de linguagem se podem tornar jogos de vida ou de morte, isso só depende do jogador'.<sup>1176</sup> The game between the dog and the child is precisely a game of life and death to the extent that the 'wheel' (risk/danger/fear) can only exist in relation to the 'game' (fruition/pleasure/daring), since these are the elements essential to the process of reading *upon*, i.e., learning. As such, like Llansol and Vergílio, Jade is learning how to write and to read against fear of the dangers of the wheel. 'Ensinar Jade a ler é escolher o caminho do fulgor e não o da verosimilhança',<sup>1177</sup> writes Maria Etelvina Santos, because to Llansol 'ler é ser chamado a um combate, a um drama',<sup>1178</sup> and Jade, 'partindo a trela',<sup>1179</sup> asks the child to fight with him (not *against*, but *with*), a combat from which he feels 'ter saído vencido, mas com rebeldia'.<sup>1180</sup> Jade learns how to read while he is *written* by Llansol, and although he hardly speaks in the short story, once again in *O Senhor de Herbais*, Llansol gives him a voice, witnessing, like Flush, his companion as a *scribin'body*. 'Flush could not read what she was writing an inch or two above his head. But he knew just as well as if he could read every word, how strangely his mistress was agitated as she wrote', Woolf notes.<sup>1181</sup> Similarly, Jade explains his reading-writing relationship with his owner's body:

já te falei da minha dona? os sentimentos // que a assaltam de madrugada acordam-me, excitam-me, inquietam-me, e ela diz-me que são a sua autobiografia [...] de repente, ela levanta o lápispona [*sic*], e diz 'sentem-se' [...] a ponta desce sobre o caderno, a ferrar-lhe o dente como eu faria, e forma-se um halo de luz à volta dela [...]. Tantas vezes cheirei o seu corpo inteiro, ainda não sei, menino, não saberei, na bacia enevoadada do nosso afecto, não a distingo da aurora, do emaranhado natural do seu jardim, do prato de leite e de comida, da voz que me diz o nome, da graça de me ter sentado entre os legentes do caderno, ladro-o, ladro-a, ganindo aos saltos a vida.<sup>1182</sup>

<sup>1176</sup> Pedro Eiras, 'Como se faz um jogo das comunidades? – Maria Gabriela Llansol e o desconhecido', unpublished paper presented at conference *30 Years Since the Book of Communities* (University of Liverpool, 5 September 2007). See also Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations by Ludwig Wittgenstein*, trans. by G.E.M. Anscombe, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958).

<sup>1177</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, 'A Fraternidade do Ímpar – Amar um Cão (2)', p. 19.

<sup>1178</sup> *OVDP*, p. 18.

<sup>1179</sup> *AC*, p. 42. Barrento and Maria Etelvina Santos underline that the breaking of the 'trela' by Jade should be read as an anagram of 'letra'. Ivan Cupertino Dutra had already referred to the same idea: 'Jade precisou de partir a trela para aprender a ler. Trela = letra.' See Ivan Cupertino Dutra, 'Transbordagem (ou amarra um cão: a letra atrela)', *Boletim/CESP*, 14.17 (January/July, 1994), 32-38 (p. 35).

<sup>1180</sup> *AC*, p. 40.

<sup>1181</sup> Woolf, *Flush*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>1182</sup> *SH*, pp. 222-223.

Dog and child/owner are, therefore, the *lectants* and the writers of this text, barking at it, staging a combat established through an ‘alma crescendo’.<sup>1183</sup> This spreading soul (or a soul spreading like mould) is an amalgamation of the human and the animal in the process of becoming *figures*, reading *upon* each other, because ‘ler é nunca chegar ao fim de um livro respeitando-lhe a sequência coercitiva das frases’.<sup>1184</sup> As a consequence, a sentence which ‘lida destacadamente, aproximada de outra que talvez já lhe correspondesse em silêncio, é uma *alma crescendo*’.<sup>1185</sup> Just as the child is a soul growing towards her dog, so the sentences, the figures, and the fragments of this text, should be read as *growing souls* conjugated like verbs out of the *common light*. This is the light that ‘ilumina marido e mulher, pais e filhos, sentados à mesa’,<sup>1186</sup> a light which generates ‘a lei do hábito de servir’, true happiness, power structures, discipline and order, yet, at the same time, perpetuating the shadows, pushing those expelled by history to the margins. Dog and owner are now involved in an act of rebellion against kingdoms created by men (categories intended to separate them), but also against this *common light*. José Augusto Mourão suggests that ‘o cão não é uma “coisa” que se tem’.<sup>1187</sup> A dog is an equal because, unlike the realist encounters amongst beings sustained by possession, power and ownership, the *fulgorian* encounters are a space of dispossession, puissance, and *odd love*.

Llansol thus stages the rebellion out of the *common light*, searching for another place at the family table, a place that stimulates and simultaneously causes fear.<sup>1188</sup> The *common light* is, in the end, what the Llansolian paradigm seeks to avoid, a light that enables the beings to see each other, thus preventing them from recognizing each other as *companion species*; a light that erases the *dark night* as the space in which *fulgor* takes place; a light that is not illuminated by *fulgor*, defining in its place the colours and the silhouettes of a text, and preventing us from reading *upon* it.

If Flush is, like the majority of pets, as Jacqui Griffiths suggests, integrated into the family institution and controlled by its rules (a microcosm of society), in

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<sup>1183</sup> AC, p. 45.

<sup>1184</sup> AC, p. 45.

<sup>1185</sup> AC, p. 45.

<sup>1186</sup> AC, p. 44.

<sup>1187</sup> Mourão, *O Fulgor é Móvel*, p. 165.

<sup>1188</sup> AC, p. 44.

other words, subordinated to the *common light*, Jade is allowed to ‘sair do reino do Poder e entrar no reino da liberdade’ (of the soul, I should add).<sup>1189</sup> In this sense, Flush is (still) not entirely free, since his identity is dominated by what society defines as canine in opposition to the human. Hence, ‘in relation to the white, male, adult subject of enunciation [Flush] faces what amounts, anthropomorphically speaking, to subjective castration’.<sup>1190</sup> Whilst Jade can read, Flush cannot. Probably, a common lamp lights up the *common light*, while outside, in the shadows of the margins, shines the *libidinous moonlight* to illuminate the *dark night of the soul*.<sup>1191</sup> It is precisely under this *libidinous* light that ‘quando leio um texto, **escrevo** sobre ele; mas quando **leio sobre** um texto, **escrevo com** ele’.<sup>1192</sup> Reading *upon*, writing *with*: Llansol *read upon* Woolf becomes a mutation of a body-in-the-process-of-writing, a *scribin’body* under the *libidinous moonlight* of the *odd love* amongst the beings. Henceforth both sexes were biblically expelled from the garden of Eden, and only the *sex of reading* will be allowed to enter the gates of the *edenic space*, the Llansolian text.

**‘Para o romance canónico, a natureza é um neutro. [...] Para o texto que escrevo é o terceiro sexo.’**<sup>1193</sup>

We have seen how animals are relevant to both Woolf’s life and literary creations, yet the significance of nature in some of her novels goes beyond what Llansol would describe as typical of a ‘romance canónico’ – a realist text, following the paradigm of narrativity – thus approximating Woolf’s writing to a Llansolian textuality. It could be stated that in Woolf, and particularly, in *The Waves*,<sup>1194</sup> nature is also the *third sex*. *The Waves* is divided into two parallel sections: an italicized one, witnessing the movement of the waves, the sun and the birds in tandem with the passage of time; and a roman type one, describing the life of six characters, from childhood to adulthood. For the readers of the ‘canonical novel’ (in Llansol’s sense), the roman type passages provide the actual narrative, the succession of facts, in which characters interact to form a plot. However, what interests me here in the

<sup>1189</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, ‘A Fraternidade do Ímpar’, p. 22.

<sup>1190</sup> Jacqui Griffiths, ‘Almost Human: Indeterminate Children and Dogs in *Flush* and *The Sound and The Fury*, *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 32 (2002), 163-176 (p. 169).

<sup>1191</sup> *À propos* of reading out of the *common light*, Maria Etelvina Santos asks: ‘Não será esta leitura feita à luz do ‘luar libidinal?’’. Santos, ‘A Fraternidade do Ímpar’, p. 25.

<sup>1192</sup> *Ibid*, p. 22 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>1193</sup> *OVDP*, p. 215.

<sup>1194</sup> Virginia Woolf, *The Waves* (Ware: Wordsworth, 2000).

reading of Llansol *upon* Woolf, are the italicized sections, as these are usually read as marginal or parallel to the 'main' text, but also because this is precisely where Woolf's writing encounters the Llansolian project. No wonder, then, that Woolf once wrote that *The Waves* was created by 'writing to a rhythm and not to a plot'<sup>1195</sup> in order to compose a 'playpoem',<sup>1196</sup> or in Llansol's words, a 'drama-poesia'. Indeed, besides the impressions of Louis, Bernard, Neville (male), Jinny, Rhoda and Susan (female), the sensorial italicized passages reveal nature's splendour in giving warmth, energy and *fulgor* to the *living*, objects, and animals.

In the first segment, before the 'dramatic soliloquies' of the six figures,<sup>1197</sup> and before the sun had risen, there is a darkness spreading out over the elements. Woolf writes that the sky cleared as if 'the arm of a woman [...] had raised a lamp and flat bars of white, green and yellow spread across the sky like blades of a fan'.<sup>1198</sup> The woman raised the arm higher and higher, 'until a broad flame became visible', and from that moment on 'the light struck upon the trees in the garden, making one leaf transparent and then another'.<sup>1199</sup> This is reminiscent of Genesis, but in this case, nature is not created by God, but by a woman, a writer, with a pencil in one hand and a lamp in the other. She sheds a light over this text, illuminating it no longer according to the *common light*, but now under the *libidinous moonlight* of the sun. Furthermore, that same 'lamp' appears to spread its influence over the inside of the house as well – 'it sharpened the edges of chairs and tables and stitched white tablecloths with fine gold wires'.<sup>1200</sup> Soon, the objects, like pure *living*, leave the shadows of immutability revealing their flesh and blood, bones and veins, and 'the grain of the wood, the fibres of the matting became more and more finely engraved'.<sup>1201</sup> We therefore witness nature becoming the *third sex*, giving *birth* to the atomic possibilities of life, to these *living*, 'as if they had been sunk under water' for a long time.<sup>1202</sup>

This text, now illuminated by the woman-writer, has erased the existence of darkness. From now on, 'everything was without shadow'.<sup>1203</sup> Here, darkness is not

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<sup>1195</sup> Woolf cited in Deborah Parsons, 'Introduction', in Woolf, *The Waves*, pp. v-xvii (p. v).

<sup>1196</sup> Woolf cited in Parsons, p. vi.

<sup>1197</sup> Woolf cited in Parsons, p. vii.

<sup>1198</sup> *The Waves*, p. 3.

<sup>1199</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>1200</sup> *Ibid*, p. 15.

<sup>1201</sup> *Ibid*, p. 61.

<sup>1202</sup> *Ibid*, p. 61.

<sup>1203</sup> *Ibid*, p. 61.

the *dark night of the soul*, where night generates creativity, but rather as actual blindness, the impossibility of seeing, the deceiving light of the realist text: 'Está escuro, diz Elvira, / acenda o texto, respondo-lhe.'<sup>1204</sup> The text is, therefore, enlightened by the possibility of seeing (rather than being seen), for it becomes a *living* in both Woolf and Llansol's works. The text *sees* 'uma relação amorosa, libidinal, não só desregrada mas, provavelmente / perdida, entre os sexos humanos o sexo da natureza', Llansol explains.<sup>1205</sup> This textual relationship among the three sexes male/female/nature is still very much imbalanced due to the 'ódio profundo que a natureza nutre [...] pelo humano',<sup>1206</sup> a feeling resulting from the arrogance of men who rejected the existence of the sex of nature, pacifying it in order to be controlled – in a way, as *he* historically did to women, since 'either the woman is passive; or she doesn't exist', as Hélène Cixous points out.<sup>1207</sup> The text is now illuminated by a (sexual) desire to be read, though, it should be added, it still lies under a fragile light, dominated by a 'lei dos hábitos de servir',<sup>1208</sup> under which power and possession still perform their historical tasks of dominance. Indeed, as in *The Waves*, 'a luz começa por incidir sobre a tarefa repetitiva e silenciosa de peneirar', and then 'ilumina uma mesa longa e aparentemente estreita'.<sup>1209</sup> Around this table, humans are still sleeping 'tranquilamente a comer o amor',<sup>1210</sup> in communion, under a *common light* that is not capable of filtering the text. This is a grand and solemn light, like the 'hoary Lighthouse, distant, austere, in the midst' whose beam one night 'entered the rooms for a moment, sent its sudden stare over bed and wall in the darkness of winter, looked with equanimity at the thistle and the swallow, the rat and the straw'.<sup>1211</sup> In Woolf, as in Llansol, Lígia Silva reminds us, 'o encontro à volta da mesa traduz o acto de escrever como acto de gratuidade, excesso, partilha e comunhão com os seres e as coisas, mas sem os destruir nem os absorver em esquemas de mesmidade'.<sup>1212</sup>

<sup>1204</sup> *OVDP*, p. 274.

<sup>1205</sup> *OVDP*, pp. 186-187. (emphasis in the original)

<sup>1206</sup> *OVDP*, p. 187.

<sup>1207</sup> Hélène Cixous, 'Sorties', in *New French Feminisms, an Anthology*, ed. by Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1981), pp. 90-98 (p. 92).

<sup>1208</sup> *AC*, p. 45.

<sup>1209</sup> *OVDP*, p. 274.

<sup>1210</sup> *AC*, p. 44.

<sup>1211</sup> Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (London: Penguin [1927] no date), p. 16 and p. 157.

<sup>1212</sup> Lígia Silva, "'The flawless verge' – Identidades e Linguagem em *The Waves* e *O Jogo da Liberdade da Alma*", *Cadernos de Literatura Comparada Margarida Losa*, 14/15.2 (2006), 153-169, (p. 157).



For Deborah Parsons, these *italicized* sections – which, from now onwards, one could call *scenes of fulgor* – ‘evoke the immutability of Nature and the elements, and provide a temporal continuity against which the “perishable hours” of the different lives can be mapped and paralleled’.<sup>1213</sup> There is, Parson suggests, a likeness between nature’s condition and the lives of the characters, yet I must disagree with the critic, since what occurs in these scenes is not a reflection of the immutability of nature. On the contrary, nature shows that *it is* changeable, it metamorphoses itself by spreading mutation – like an infectious *becoming* – over the rest of the *living*. Nature shines on the text but also on the plot, it is the music, the rhythm, the drums of the poetic language that shapes the lives of those characters. Their fragmented self is, therefore, a *reflection* of nature’s influence and its constant desire to mutate. Nature is fluctuating like the movement of the waves or the birds, who first sing ‘erratically and spasmodically’, then, together ‘in chorus’, and finally, becoming violent and predatory: ‘One of them, beautifully darting [...] spiked the soft, monstrous body of the defenceless worm, pecked again and yet again, and left it to fester.’<sup>1214</sup> Kate Flint suggests that the birds seem to develop ‘an almost erotic, penetrative satisfaction from their habits of sustenance in a reversal of the fecundity and harmony of the garden of Eden’.<sup>1215</sup> Once again, it is relevant to bear in mind that the *edenic space* has nothing in common with the garden of Eden – it is created out of the new, out of the chaos of civilization, out of the *common light*. Consequently, here, the birds no longer appear in the bucolic setting imagined by the Romantics as an idyllic unison between the individual and nature. Instead, they are free to be read and understood because they are now *textual* livings. They perform an active role in the *odd* relationship, no longer dual – male/female: ‘O que importa é que somos três, e que a introdução do ímpar veio quebrar o confronto dual em que estamos, neste momento, envolvidos.’<sup>1216</sup>

As Chlœ Taylor points out, the *fulgorian* scenes of *The Waves* reflect the female characters of the novel: Susan, with dirty fingernails, is connected to the soil, while Rhoda is linked to the sea, and Jinny considered in relation to the air and the

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<sup>1213</sup> Parsons, p. viii.

<sup>1214</sup> Woolf, *The Waves*, p. 41.

<sup>1215</sup> Flint, p. xxxv.

<sup>1216</sup> *OVDP*, p. 216.

birds.<sup>1217</sup> Nevertheless, Taylor suggests that the birdsong is a metaphor for speech throughout the novel, ‘and as possessors of birdsong/speech, living in the airy realm already associated with language, [the birds] are frequently presented as masculine creatures’.<sup>1218</sup> This dichotomy is extremely relevant since the novel still approximates women with nature (a kinship ecofeminists disprove) and men with language (and therefore power),<sup>1219</sup> an opposition interestingly critiqued by Hélène Cixous as ‘couples’ or dualities enforced by (phal)logocentrism: ‘*Where is she? Activity/Passivity, Sun/Moon, Culture/Nature, Day/Night, Father/Mother, Head/Heart, Intelligible/Sensitive, Logos/Pathos.*’<sup>1220</sup> This is precisely what the Llansollian text refutes by proposing *odd love* as a three-way relationship, thus diluting the power of one sex over the other, eliminating the differences created by logocentrism, and suggesting a migration to a Cixousian ‘LOCUS/LOGOS, paisagem onde não há poder sobre os corpos, como longínquamente [*sic*], nos deve lembrar a experiência de Deus’.<sup>1221</sup> The biblical garden of Eden should have liberated the bodies from their gendered constraints. Instead it enforced the differences between genders – male *versus* (or *over*) female – and amongst kingdoms, thereby generating a ‘relationship of authority, of privilege, of force’, of the Father, and of ‘violence’ and ‘repression’ of the ‘master’ over the ‘slave’.<sup>1222</sup>

Even so, Deborah Parsons states that the soliloquies at the beginning of *The Waves* are set in ‘the same mystically described, Edenic garden’.<sup>1223</sup> This could not be farther from the truth; if there is an *edenic* element in *The Waves*, it lies in the possibility opened by Woolf of taking these selfless characters towards a state unworldly and distant, detached from this garden yet *simultaneously* rooted to the soil, to the elements, to the *living*; a space to which they clearly do not belong. Moreover, she attempts to do so through mutation and *becoming*. Louis says: ‘My roots go down to the depths of the world, through earth dry with brick, and damp earth, through veins of lead and silver. I am all fibre.’<sup>1224</sup> Similarly, Bernard states:

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<sup>1217</sup> Chlöe Taylor, ‘Kristevan Themes in Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves*’, *Journal of Modern Literature*, 29.3 (Spring 2006), 57-77 (p. 67).

<sup>1218</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>1219</sup> I believe Woolf is conscious of that duality, and she creates it in order to underline how these oppositions will, in the end, become irrelevant due to the fact that, even if men exercise language, and women share a kinship with nature, these six figures are all selfless beings.

<sup>1220</sup> Cixous, ‘Sorties’, p. 90. (emphasis in the original)

<sup>1221</sup> *LI*, p. 121.

<sup>1222</sup> Cixous, ‘Sorties’, p. 91.

<sup>1223</sup> Parsons, p. viii.

<sup>1224</sup> Woolf, *The Waves*, p. 5.

‘Let us now crawl, [...] under the canopy of the currant leaves, and tell stories. Let us inhabit the underworld.’<sup>1225</sup> In a novel sung by the flow of the waves it is quite contradictory that these characters want to be nails in the grass – not in the Llansolian sense, as hazards ready to spoil the fun of walking barefoot – becoming, *with* the grass, companion species. The fragmentation of the self is reflected in the monologues of six characters in search of an author (or an authorial voice), the alternation between the *scenes of fulgor* and the narrative plot, and especially in the language used by Woolf: ‘Linguistic flux and instability often coincide with moments when characters work to define themselves in language.’<sup>1226</sup> Woolf explained that with *The Waves* she was attempting to reproduce ‘a mind thinking’, in which the characters ‘might be islands of light – islands in the stream that I am trying to convey; life itself going on’.<sup>1227</sup> The language in *The Waves* allows the characters to (strive to) escape their mundane existence, trying to become Llansolian *figures*, knots, nodes, neither male nor female, avoiding their historical human entrapment, in the light of Haraway’s figuration. Moreover, the polyphonic character of the novel makes it extremely close to the Llansolian choral text mapping the *interior space* (Gil) of the *figures*, who could now be seen as ‘proliferations, or “connective cogs of an assemblage” which correspond to a position of desire, not desire for power, but desire for language and the flowing of writing’.<sup>1228</sup> In sum, the desire for a *sex of reading*.

‘ \_\_\_\_\_ *creio que a leitura // é o acto sexual por excelência.*’<sup>1229</sup>

The *sex of reading* is one of Llansol’s most creative concepts and the one that projects the text into its own future. The implications of this ‘sex’ (which differs from gender and from the third sex of nature) cease being linked to the text itself, now opening towards the responsibility of a reader, or better, a *lectant* before it. The image of two naked men playing the piano at the beginning of *O Jogo da Liberdade da Alma* exemplifies how Llansol exposes the mechanism of the *sex of reading*. We can only see one of these two naked men, the other is behind the first as if he was

<sup>1225</sup> *Ibid*, p. 11.

<sup>1226</sup> Julie Vandivere, ‘Waves and Fragments: Linguistic Construction as Subject Formation in Virginia Woolf’, *Twentieth Century Literature*, 42.2 (Summer, 1996), 221-233 (p. 222).

<sup>1227</sup> Virginia Woolf, *A Writer’s Diary*, ed. by Leonard Woolf (New York: Harcourt, 1953), p. 140.

<sup>1228</sup> Lígia Silva, ‘Virginia Woolf and Gabriela Llansol – “Sweeping the Thick Leaves of Habit”’, in *Virginia Woolf: Three Centenary Celebrations*, ed. by Luísa Flora and Maria Cândida Zamith (Porto: Universidade do Porto, 2007), pp. 155-164 (p. 158). Silva is citing Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, p. 65.

<sup>1229</sup> *IQC*, p. 105.

just his figure or double – ‘compreendi a proveniência das quatro mãos’, Llansol explains, ‘um companheiro lhe deixara as suas, e desaparecera’.<sup>1230</sup> Four hands playing the piano become two hands which are actually playing it plus the two more that vanished – this image is an obvious double of *reading* (playing the piano) and *writing* (the two vanished hands of the writer) mapped in musical terms. In this passage, Llansol juxtaposes music with text, and music becomes pure textuality. These men play or ‘lêem sonoridades’ while the narrator reads texts which ‘subitamente tornam-se silenciosos’.<sup>1231</sup> These two texts (music and book) breathe a sonority that can only be fully understood when music emanates from the piano. ‘É para o meu sexo que ele toca. O texto faz um silêncio total, adquiere-o, ou seja, a escrita que a música celebra não tem mancha de ruído – não é livro, apenas o fluir de um escrito que se funde com as imagens arrebatadas de outrora.’<sup>1232</sup> Text becomes one with music and this fusion occurs in the exact moment in which the Llansolian text *textualizes* music, that is to say, when it is read out loud by a *lectant*, and therefore becomes effective. Consequently, it only exists through the performing of its existence. The touching (‘tocar a uma porta, tocar em alguém, tocar um instrumento’)<sup>1233</sup> enables the sound, and when there is sound there is meaning, music, and harmony: in sum, there is text. This touching can only occur when the being is dispossessed (note that these men are naked). Bare bodies (dispossessed of mundane clothing) are fragile and exposed to the unexpected, the chaos of time, the absence of space, and the unpredictability of storms. Yet, at the same time, they are freed from linguistic or historic constraints. The naked body is the only body that can possess the *sex of reading*, the sex of playing the piano with words.

Although the concept of the *sex of reading* might seem puzzling at first, it is simple to deconstruct, taking into consideration what has been stated about the Llansolian text so far. First, since the subject of the naked body is resolved – from the obvious correlation between ‘naked’ and ‘sex’ –, the *sex of reading* pushes the understanding of its meaning towards the issues of ‘reading’ and of the ‘text’. We have seen how the existence of an *odd love* dissolves the condition of sex in the sense of a pairing. The third element can be nature, as a third sex, or might even emerge through the existence of the hermaphrodite, the *one* who contains the *two*

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<sup>1230</sup> *JLA*, p. 22.

<sup>1231</sup> *JLA*, p. 8.

<sup>1232</sup> *JLA*, p. 8.

<sup>1233</sup> *JLA*, p. 28.

within. This third element is, then, the disturbing piece of the Llansolian puzzle, for if reading is the supreme sexual act, it involves a *reader* with a *text* which s/he reads, but also the *writer* who wrote it. As such, the *sex of reading* does not propose a gender of reading (even if, most of the time, we witness a *woman* as the main *textuant*, as we will see). Rather, it is the actual *intercourse* of a writer, a text and its reader: 'Que a intimidade seja texto \_\_\_\_\_ de outro modo, que lerá o sexo?'<sup>1234</sup>

This question of intimacy is crucial to understanding Llansol since it will determine several relationships in her books: Teresa and Joshua in *Ardente Texto Joshua*, Jade and the child, Vergílio and Gabriela, or the wolf and the woman, in *Parasceve*. The intimate relationship between these pairs can only be performed by the existence of a third element, the text – *this* text that *we* are reading – thus endowing *us* with the responsibility of accounting for its existence. *We* are the third sex. As João Barrento eloquently explains, the sex (intercourse)

amplia-se à dimensão do sexo de ler, à possibilidade do encontro, mas um encontro sempre irresolvido, sempre inesperado, sempre do diverso: isto é, a diferença não se apaga, mas é vista à luz da semelhança (do mútuo) do sexo do Ser – que anula as diferenças do sexo biológico.<sup>1235</sup>

In the Llansolian text, there is no longer a biological sex or a gender, but the actual intercourse of beings. The proximity between the woman and the wolf in *Parasceve* suggests how, to Llansol, the *sex of reading* always involves an encounter. Like in *O Jogo*, at the beginning of *Parasceve* we witness two scenes: the scene of the woman with a Plane tree (connected to the chlorophyll, the compost of the soil, the tree and the leaves that make the text), and another woman who becomes a *textuant* of the previous one. A *textuant* is a *lectant* in the process of reading, s/he becomes *textuant* with the writer, and they become *one* through the *sex of reading* text. As the leaves and the soil metamorphose into a compost (text), so must the woman and the writer 'cair por terra, acastanhar-se, dissolver-se em matéria de árvore'.<sup>1236</sup> If in *O Jogo*, music was the metamorphosis of writing, here that mutation is provoked by chlorophyll, the green pigment of plants which absorbs light allowing the photosynthesis to take place (the releasing of oxygen into the atmosphere). Plants (and humans) cannot live without oxygen; pianos cannot live without sound, in this

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<sup>1234</sup> *JLA*, p. 79.

<sup>1235</sup> João Barrento, 'O livro torna o sexo invisível?', in *Na Dobra do Mundo*, p. 123.

<sup>1236</sup> *P*, p. 24.

symbiotic relationship, a writer cannot live without a reader, and a reader without a text. This circularity of writing-text-reading-text-writing in Llansol shows interesting parallels with the cycles of nature: spring-summer-autumn-winter, rain-river-evaporation-rain, or light-photosynthesis-oxygen-life. Everything circulates in integrated co-dependence, a circle of reliance without which each element cannot survive. As Maria Etelvina Santos explains, 'é nessa capacidade de afectar e de ser afectado que as espécies se diferenciam', and evolve, and relate to each other.<sup>1237</sup>

Virginia Woolf believed that a woman must have a room of one's own in order to be able to write. In Llansol, that room is often seen as the embryonic space of the house inhabited by the figures; however, in *Parasceve*, that room is a warehouse filled with leftovers, books, objects belonging to other lives, past existences. The woman 'sonha com o desejo imediato de encontrar um lobo que more no quarto de arrumos',<sup>1238</sup> and the wolf will become her philosophical companion, *becoming with* her. In emptying the storage room, the woman becomes slowly dispossessed of her memories and her autobiography: 'Agora, não tenho autor fora de mim.'<sup>1239</sup> Llansol calls this cleaning of the room a *vow of pruning* ('voto de decepção'), in the sense of cutting back the branches of a tree. This pruning sustains the core of the Llansolian text in relation to memory, since by emptying the storage room, Llansol is stating that 'se o pensamento vacila e convive com o lixo, não dá luz'.<sup>1240</sup> In this way, we must dispose of our pasts, leaving the residues and 'o lixo da sua biografia' behind,<sup>1241</sup> staging and witnessing the death of our own biography. When a branch is cut off a tree it will not die; rather, there is a renewal of life, a new branch will sprout again, next year, with more vitality, energy and *fulgor*. This is precisely what happens in the Llansolian text – a sentence, word, or thought is cut off and interrupted in order to generate meaning, a new being, or a *scene of fulgor*.

Llansol does not want to remind us, as Woolf suggests, 'that there are many inner and secret chambers that we cannot enter'.<sup>1242</sup> On the contrary, the Llansolian rooms can only exist when we enter them, even if sometimes a woman might

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<sup>1237</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, *Como Uma Pedra-Pássaro Que Voa*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>1238</sup> *P*, p. 30.

<sup>1239</sup> *P*, p. 39.

<sup>1240</sup> *P*, p. 40.

<sup>1241</sup> *P*, p. 40.

<sup>1242</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'Three Guineas', in *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas* (London: Vintage, 2001), pp. 99-242 (p. 120).

experience the feeling that ‘o espaço do quarto é restrito’.<sup>1243</sup> When the room becomes suffocating, the *textuant* explains, the woman is thereby experiencing ‘a típica *transição de biografia*’<sup>1244</sup> (from an author to the *outhor*?), from a body to a figure, from a woman to a wolf, or a werewolf. The woman’s desire is to ‘cair apaixonadamente na sua boca’, be literally *wolfed* down by the animal.<sup>1245</sup> The wolf is written on the woman’s skin and body, they metamorphose into each other thus:

E lançou-se à boca da mulher, pousando as patas sobre os seus ombros. Infelizmente, com o choque, a mulher desequilibra-se e cai. Das suas mãos soltam-se a luz e o lápis sonhante [...]. A mulher, ao sentir a boca quente do lobo, transfere-se para a alegria. Deseja verdadeiramente morrer de rompimento. Há mesmo prazer, um prazer que o lobo estupefacto sente. [...] Algo se ergue na mulher [...]. É um levantado que parece sair do corpo da mulher. O lobo deseja-o em movimento, vivo, e penetra *isso*.<sup>1246</sup>

The woman becomes wolf and from that alliance ‘nasceu a geração sem-nome’, the generation of anonymous figures, hybrids, monsters, androgynous beings ‘não só capaz de metabolismo’, like the plants, ‘mas igualmente de metamorfose’.<sup>1247</sup> By *pruning* (‘decepar’) her memory the woman can now move away from her own body and transfer herself into happiness, into *fulgor*. These two beings now merge in a new life becoming a *living*. A living – the werewolf, the womanwolf, LlansolWolf – is not ‘bio nem matéria. Não é carne, nem espírito. [...] Não é unidade, nem múltiplo’.<sup>1248</sup> These new anonymous beings are the future of the Llansolian text, since it now starts moving away from the historical figures (Musil, Pessoa, or Bach) towards the hybrid. Wolves, Deleuze and Guattari state, ‘are intensities, speeds, temperatures, nondecomposable variable distances’, or as they would posit it, *multiplicities*.<sup>1249</sup>

Virginia Woolf is not a *figure* in Llansol’s texts. Llansol read *A Room of One’s Own*, as *Falcão* attests and by reading it she was able to create, for the first time, the merging of a woman and a wolf – evidently, a play on words with Virginia Woolf’s name.<sup>1250</sup> If her text is now open to the unnamed generation, the anonymous rather than the historical figure, I propose that the Woolf-turned-wolf is allowed into

<sup>1243</sup> *P*, p. 44.

<sup>1244</sup> *P*, p. 45. (emphasis in the original)

<sup>1245</sup> *P*, p. 55.

<sup>1246</sup> *P*, p. 56.

<sup>1247</sup> *P*, p. 56.

<sup>1248</sup> *P*, p. 61.

<sup>1249</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 35.

<sup>1250</sup> Llansol explains she was reading Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* on her way back to Belgium, and ‘através da neve e, sem saber porquê, além dela, senti-me também um lobo.’ *FP*, p. 48

this text like any other being would be, since not only is the hybrid a *living* in the full sense, but also it loses its name through the *pruning* of memory ('decepação'). As such, Woolf is no longer the woman writer we know of, but she could certainly be the womanwolf of *Parasceve*: 'Decepar a memória. Decepar a imagem. [...] Aceitar um nome que não seja condenação.'<sup>1251</sup> By accepting that name which is not previously condemned, womanwolf will *become* a multiplicity, in Deleuze and Guattari's words:

The proper name (*nom propre*) does not designate an individual: it is on the contrary when the individual opens up to the multiplicities pervading him or her, at the outcome of the most severe operation of depersonalization, that he or she acquires his or her proper name. The proper name is the subject of a pure multiplicity.<sup>1252</sup>

Consequently, the *sex of reading* – the three-way intercourse between a writer, a reader and a text – permits the appearance of the hybrid exactly because s/he is now unnamed. Indeed, in *Parasceve* or in *O Jogo* it is a woman who writes, but as Woolf puts it, she writes 'as a woman who has forgotten that she is a woman, so that her pages were full of that curious sexual quality which comes only when sex is unconscious of itself'.<sup>1253</sup> The *sex of reading* de-genders both the reader and the writer to the extent that the reading itself becomes the sexual act, *par excellence*, rather than an actual contact between two humans. The question of the human is now secondary when compared to *figures* such as womanwolves. The *sex of reading* lies not in the text, but in the gaze exchanged by the elements of this sexual act. As Maria Etelvina Santos states,

quando se escreve com um sexo de ler, a escrita continua a natureza criadora, prolonga-a no seu imperecível; nesse processo, o legente também cresce no seu sexo de ler e prolonga a escrita em algo a que poderemos chamar uma leitura libidinal – a energia da leitura quando esta se encontra em estado de transformar (como a energia ao transformar-se em libido).<sup>1254</sup>

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<sup>1251</sup> P, p. 71.

<sup>1252</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 42.

<sup>1253</sup> Virginia Woolf, 'A Room of One's Own', in *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas*, pp. 1-98 (p. 80).

<sup>1254</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, *Como Uma Pedra-Pássaro Que Voa*, p. 242.



CONCLUSION – ‘HÁ, PELA ÚLTIMA VEZ O DIGO, TRÊS COISAS QUE METEM MEDO. A TERCEIRA É UM *CORP’A’SCREVER*.’<sup>1255</sup>

At the end of *The Waves*, the polyphonic fragmentation of the text ceases, thereby giving voice to Bernard as the guardian of this text. Yet, instead of assuming Bernard’s point of view, the text fragments his identity, stating how he is no longer one person: ‘I am many people; I do not altogether know who I am – Jinny, Susan, Neville, Rhoda or Louis: or how to distinguish my life from theirs.’<sup>1256</sup> Interestingly, this statement could be said to stress Woolf’s endeavour to bequeath *The Waves* with a modernist self-less centre. However, a few pages later, Bernard concludes his previous thought: ‘For this is not one life; nor do I always know if I am man or woman.’<sup>1257</sup> The androgynous self of Bernard is now transformed, through a libidinous mutation, from a man into a *scribin’body*.

The androgynous Bernard is not the first hybrid in Woolf – Orlando, of course, is the supreme example. Nonetheless, it is striking how Woolf makes the woman-in-the-process-of-writing (*scribin’body*) an androgynous self too, because his/her mind is ‘resonant and porous; [...] it transmits emotion without impediment; [...] it is naturally creative, incandescent and undivided’.<sup>1258</sup> The issue of the androgynous in *A Room of One’s Own* raised criticism amongst feminists, such as Elaine Showalter, who saw androgyny as a strategy used by Woolf to ‘evade confrontation with her own painful femaleness and enabled her to choke and repress her anger and ambition’.<sup>1259</sup> Yet, in my opinion, by affirming the androgynous, Woolf was already criticizing the binaries of male/female, thus proposing a *third sex*, an alternative, *odd love* that would allow, if not the dissolution of, at least a confrontation with, patriarchy. Similarly, to *Llansol*, the androgynous is the only solution to a ‘mediocridade da autobiografia’.<sup>1260</sup> In *Llansol*, there is not, in the end, an autobiographical text because a *scribin’body* is a mutant transformed by the *sex of reading*, like a werewolf under the moonlight. The mutant has no gender, no history; it is always at the beginning, incapable of defining its gender. *Llansol* herself, now a *scribin’body*, states, in her diary (biography?), ‘há em mim uma mulher que tem

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<sup>1255</sup> *LC*, p. 10.

<sup>1256</sup> Woolf, *The Waves*, p. 156.

<sup>1257</sup> *Ibid*, p. 158.

<sup>1258</sup> Woolf, ‘A Room of One’s Own’, p. 85.

<sup>1259</sup> Elaine Showalter cited by Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 2.

<sup>1260</sup> *OVDP*, p. 18.

sexo, e outra que não tem'.<sup>1261</sup> The *scribin'body* as androgynous and mutant shares many similarities with the necessity for 'writing the body' exposed by Cixous, since 'by writing herself, woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her'.<sup>1262</sup> For Toril Moi, Cixous criticized the binaries of male/female, culture/nature, like Llansol, due to 'her strong belief in the inherently bisexual nature of all human beings'.<sup>1263</sup>

In conclusion, I would like to return to some points that have been developed throughout this chapter. Even if it could be stated that in Llansol 'o feminino é, pois, um *paradigma*',<sup>1264</sup> it is precisely because she 'speaks in different tongues' and because there is a constant shift of voices in both her fiction and diaries that 'the reader can never be sure who the subjective "I", "me", or "we" of the text is'<sup>1265</sup> – be it female, male, mineral, animal or plant. By inviting authors like Musil, Kafka or Pessoa (ironically, mostly male writers) to take part in her project, the question of whether her diaries are biographical or simulated becomes relative, owing to the fact that 'um diário pode ser completamente ficcional, isto é, escrito com o intuito de simular um diário'.<sup>1266</sup> The similarities between Llansol's writing and these male writers' texts (or narrative strategies) annuls the effect of feminist/female/women's writing in her work, I believe, through the enunciation of a superimposition of voices and the energy of *fulgor*: 'À medida que o texto adquire uma certa potência, deixa de ser característico de homem ou de mulher.'<sup>1267</sup> This does not mean that Llansol is detached from a context of women's writing (Portuguese or global) and I do not wish to reject female/feminist readings of her text. Rather, I wish to underline that even if there is a coincidence of themes or narrative strategies in women's writing (according to Allegro de Magalhães, these are a *sensualethics* of the body, the house and the space of domesticity, fragmentation of time or of the narrative order), in Llansol 'o sexo é algo de comum a todo o Vivo, que tem sexo, mas não género

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<sup>1261</sup> *F*, p. 32.

<sup>1262</sup> Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', in *New French Feminisms, an Anthology*, ed. by Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1981), pp. 245-264 (p. 250).

<sup>1263</sup> Moi, p. 107.

<sup>1264</sup> Lúcia Helena, 'A Figuração do Feminino em Maria Gabriela Llansol', in *Cleonice, Clara em sua Geração*, ed. by Gilda Santos, Jorge Fernandes da Silveira, and Teresa Cristina Cerdeira da Silva (Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ, 1995), pp. 382-388 (p. 384) (emphasis in the original).

<sup>1265</sup> Williams, 'Speaking in Tongues', p. 236.

<sup>1266</sup> Paulo de Medeiros is interestingly referring to *O Livro do Desassossego*, by Bernardo Soares, one of Pessoa's heteronyms. See Medeiros, 'Diários de Guerra', in *Metamorfoses do Eu*, pp. 95-118 (p. 98).

<sup>1267</sup> *FP*, p. 140.

(gender)'.<sup>1268</sup> The *sex of reading* is the actual intercourse of a gaze *reading upon* a text, and not the (fe)male sex reading a text. To Llansol this distinction is clearly established since *Os Pregos na Erva*, à propos of which she replied in an interview to a question about women's writing: 'Não sou sociólogo. A separação ou dicotomia homem-mulher não me interessa. [...] Não distingo entre escritores e escritoras, fixo-me no livro.' A few questions later, when asked about genres in literature, she replied: 'Género já é uma limitação. Todo o género [me interessa] desde que seja literatura.'<sup>1269</sup>

Undeniably, in Llansol's text women are the vortex of the *edenic space*, from Ana de Peñalosa to Hadewijch, Teresa d'Ávila, Infausta, Isabôl, or the beguines. As Barrento points out, here,

quem parte para conhecer o mundo e o medo não é o homem (o herói do conto popular, da epopeia e do romance), é a mulher, desdobrada em várias figuras de beguina. Ela é princípio activo e transformador, singularizada por uma 'pulsão de escrita' (que não a esgota) e por uma capacidade de ver que a colocaram fora do jardim francês da geometria dos sexos.<sup>1270</sup>

History told by a woman is historically 'inside out', and on the reverse side of a text, as in a piece of embroidery, there are unfinished hems and loose threads. The woman bears the historically infamous tasks of embroidering, sewing, hemming the threads of time, indeed, but her proximity to those tasks, in Llansol, is not due to a demand for femininity. Instead, these tasks appear in the Llansolian text owing to the fact that sewing becomes a metaphor for writing, while, at the same time, writing becomes a metamorphosis of the body: the *scribin'body*. As such, one should be afraid of this text because 'só os que passam por lá sabem o que isso é'.<sup>1271</sup> The responsibility lies now in the hands of the *lectant*, whose gaze *excites*, and *incites* the *sex of reading*. The *lectant* must not be afraid of the mutant with a *scribin'body*, but allow the libidinous mutation of the soul to take place. Fear paralyzes, and the mutant is a movement of future. The *scribin'body* is a 'collective assemblage of enunciation',<sup>1272</sup> in which the sex, the genre and the genders converge, and thus

vai-se formando uma espécie de monstro, um ser composto feito de vários sexos, / o que temos, / aquele com que nascemos, / aquele que o texto nos dá

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<sup>1268</sup> Barrento, 'O livro torna o sexo invisível?', p. 121.

<sup>1269</sup> Maria Augusta Seixas, *Interview with Maria Gabriela Llansol*, in *Jornal de Letras e Artes*, 23 December 1964, pp. 14-15 (p. 15).

<sup>1270</sup> Barrento, 'Herbário de Faces', p. 187.

<sup>1271</sup> *LC*, p. 10.

<sup>1272</sup> Concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

e que é o mais profundo, / aquele que experimentámos no amor, / o sexo dos que amamos, / o das plantas que nos dão beleza, / o dos animais que nos dão sensibilidade / e, em certos casos, o sexo da paisagem, por exemplo, o seu plátano. // Mas há um sexo que desconhecemos, o que vem do futuro, chame-lhe vontade de mudança.<sup>1273</sup>

Only the *sex of reading* will be able to read *upon* this figure ignoring its monstrous condition, or rather, accepting it without *preconceptions*. The harmony of these sexes – the one we are born with (our gender), and those of plants, nature and animals – will be accomplished when we realise that we are what our sexes reveal. Yet, we are no longer predetermined (by men, history or biology): we are what we (want to) do with our sexes when we *read*.

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<sup>1273</sup> *OVDP*, pp. 263-264.

## Conclusion

### ‘EU LEIO ASSIM ESTE LIVRO’:<sup>1274</sup> THE EDENIC SPACE AS A THEORY OF READING

‘Quando este livro ia a imprimir alguém me disse:  
Há nele um excesso que reflecte bem o tempo em que se vive.  
Isto não pode ser lido entre quatro paredes, com um tecto em cima, com luz eléctrica  
Esta leitura deve ser feita ao ar livre, no meio da rua.  
Então, desejei contá-lo ao leitor solitário.’<sup>1275</sup>  
Olga Gonçalves

‘Legente, o mundo está prometido ao Drama-Poesia.’<sup>1276</sup>  
Maria Gabriela Llansol

The original aim of this thesis was to map a cartography of literary references in the works of the Portuguese writer Maria Gabriela Llansol through a comparative reading of her *oeuvre* alongside authors that could be considered ‘fontes-faróis da sua escrita’.<sup>1277</sup> This project first began as an interrogation of the Llansolian *figures* – Rilke, Hölderlin, Nietzsche, Pessoa, or Musil – as writers who could be read in comparison with Llansol, accentuating the parallels or the *superimpositions* between these authors’ texts and Llansol’s. However, in the course of my research, two findings led me to deviate from this original goal. First, Llansol stated in, ‘O Espaço Edénico’, that her work was based on a ‘série de ensinamentos’,<sup>1278</sup> supported by three axes – Nietzsche and Hölderlin, Musil and Kafka, Virginia Woolf and Emily Dickinson. This made me consider that even if, say, Kafka or Woolf were not, in fact, Llansolian *figures*, Llansol acknowledges their influence on her work. Secondly, Llansol’s death and the public reactions to it made me rethink her position in Portuguese Studies, since she seems to be irrefutably acknowledged as ‘groundbreaking’ and, *simultaneously*, ignored by ‘canon makers’.

My constant reading of the Llansolian text taught me that, for the purpose of this thesis, I should set aside my initial goal and let the text tell me which path to follow in order to be able to understand and explain its intrinsic principles and contradictions. Consequently, my original aim to map a cartography of references in Llansol is, I believe, still present throughout this thesis. However, instead of focusing

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<sup>1274</sup> LC, p. 9.

<sup>1275</sup> Olga Gonçalves, *A Floresta em Bremerhaven*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Lisbon: Caminho, 1992), p. 1.

<sup>1276</sup> OVDP, p. 10.

<sup>1277</sup> Joaquim, ‘Algumas Coisas’, p. 157.

<sup>1278</sup> Llansol, ‘O Espaço Edénico’, p. 160.

exclusively on 'fontes-faróis' in Llansol, I chose authors that could be seen 'em contraponto, como marcos geodésicos do modo como [Llansol] entende inscrever-se no campo literário'.<sup>1279</sup>

The Llansolian text is, in every sense, a literary project that presents a *series of concepts* that defy previously established paradigms of reading and writing. The difficulties in framing this text within a *genealogy* (Portuguese or European), a *genre* (diary, narrative or metafiction), or *theoretical framework* (postmodernist or postcolonial), attest to the fact that the Llansolian concepts establish a new *philosophical* and *literary* paradigm that can, indeed, be used to analyse other authors. Rather than highlighting the proximities between the Llansolian *figures* and her own text, I chose to emphasize the variety of *concepts* proposed by Llansol in order to read authors who are not necessarily Llansolian *figures*, but who are authorities in the theoretical paradigms in which they are framed or in the style or genre they represent.

As such, this study of the *edenic space* in the works of Llansol developed the premise, enunciated by Augusto Joaquim at the beginning of this thesis, that instead of reading Llansol in comparison with José Saramago, Robert Musil, Franz Kafka and Virginia Woolf, it would be more fruitful to read these authors *in the light of* Llansol. In doing so, I hope to have applied Joaquim's 'certa reversibilidade dos pontos de vista' and thus question the access to the canon.<sup>1280</sup>

This selection of authors provides a variety of perspectives and aesthetics, thus supporting the idea that (1) these authors can, indeed, be read *in the light of* Llansol, accentuating the proximity between Llansol and writers who are not necessarily her 'fontes-faróis', thus rejecting the almost solipsistic nature of many academic readings of her text. (2) The fact that these authors are associated with different paradigms – Portuguese literature or postmodernism (Saramago); modernism (Musil, Kafka and Woolf); and women's literature (Woolf) – underlines the genuine difficulties of placing Llansol within *one* framework. (3) And finally, by generating concepts and, in my view, offering both a philosophical and literary paradigm in itself, the Llansolian text questions the arbitrary reading of literature *in the light of* given theory A or B, thus contesting and ultimately defying clear-cut methods of scholarly reading in general.

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<sup>1279</sup> Joaquim, 'Algumas Coisas', p. 157.

<sup>1280</sup> *Ibid*, p. 195.

In order to address the diversity of these authors' texts, each chapter of this thesis was structured according to a Llansolian concept, each focusing on a different approach to language or writing. The mapping of a cartography remained central to my exposition; this thesis departs from Portugal (Saramago) towards the core of Europe (Austria and the Czech Republic, Musil and Kafka's countries, respectively), until it reaches neither the Camonian *Island of Love*, of *Os Lusíadas*, nor the Saramaguian *Jangada de Pedra*, nor even the British Islands *per se*, but an island which is an *edenic space* of rebellion, a room of one's own designed by Virginia Woolf. In what follows I will briefly recapitulate the primary ideas of each chapter.

### **From the rebel to fulgor, the figure of a scribin'body**

In the Introduction, I presented the difficulties of framing the Llansolian text within a *genealogy* of Portuguese literature, a specific literary genre, or, more generically, in different theoretical frameworks. I presented an overview of the Llansolian text through the enunciation and the explanation of the concepts; Llansol's position in relation to the novel, realism and *narrativity* (replacing these with *textuality*); and the importance of the legacy of the battle of Frankenhausem as the condition 'suffered' by the European man today (the Portuguese included). I have shown how the Llansolian text, through a process of *superimpositions*, a *pruning* of memory and a re-writing of history, is an attempt to give voice to the poor men forgotten by history, a narrative usually written by the powerful. I have also argued that the *edenic space*, as the proposed *locus* of the Llansolian project, is a space underlined by an *idea of humanism* which is not totally related to the human as we know it, but a paradigm of the *living*, a space in which there are no hierarchies, and in which humans, animals and plants can harmoniously co-habit. According to Llansol, one must rebel against set paradigms, *impostures*, and this is why the *figure* of her humanism is the *poor man*, the embodiment of the *rebel* in a *community*, dispossessed of his/her mundane qualities, *deterritorialized* of his/her language and nation – a *nomad*, literally, walking towards the *edenic space*.

In **Chapter One**, I demonstrated that the Llansolian *poor men*, share surprising coincidences with Saramago's characters. I highlighted the similarities between Llansol's project and Saramago's particular narrative strategies – a re-writing of history, a questioning of the idea of Europe, a re-appropriation of historical and literary myths or figures, and a proposal of original ways of writing in

Portuguese independent of traditional forms of *narrativity*, thereby questioning language through the process of writing. By relating the Portuguese Nobel Prize winner to an almost unknown author like Llansol, I argued for a re-framing of Llansol in the context of Portuguese literature, showing that parallels can indeed be drawn between Llansol and her Portuguese peers.

At the end of Chapter One, the *poor men* are on the island of Ana de Peñalosa, off the Portuguese coast. Yet, this island, because imaginary, can also be an *edenic space* in the middle of the European continent. In **Chapter Two**, the *nomad* is Fernando Pessoa who goes to Austria to visit the composer Bach. This chapter reads Llansol's *Lisboaleipzig* volumes alongside the novel *The Man Without Qualities* by the Austrian writer Robert Musil, coincidentally a real *figure* in her text. The question of *nomadism* is understood here through the reading of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of *minor literature*, related to a process of *detrterritorialization*. In many ways, we witness the actual, real-life, *detrterritorialization* of Llansol from Portugal to Belgium, where she lived in exile; and of Musil from Vienna to Geneva, where he lived, in exile, after Hitler's annexation of Austria. However, we also witness literary *detrterritorializations*, notably, Pessoa's movement from Lisbon to Leipzig reflected in the unfolding of the *interior space* of his heteronyms; but also, a progressive *detrterritorialization* of language by both Musil and Llansol. As such, Musil's novel, written at the beginning of the twentieth century, contained the seed of Llansol's *scenes of fulgor*. Through a constant reworking of language, Musil's aim, with literature, was to create *figures* that could attain the *other condition*, a state extremely close to a 'utopia', and open to the possibilities of *fulgor*.

The concept of *minor literature* developed by Deleuze and Guattari was primarily applied to the works of Franz Kafka, and the notion of *detrterritorialization* involved in a confrontation of a major language like the German, through a writing in peripheral languages, like the Czech. Yet, this *detrterritorialization* also involved, through writing, a process of *becoming*, the mechanism of *detrterritorialization* from a human body into a *figure*, from *metaphors* to *metamorphoses*. **Chapter Three** thus focuses on Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* as an essential text to understand the appearance of the *figure* in Llansol. Indeed, Kafka was not a Llansolian *figure*, but she places him in the axis of knowledge previously enunciated. Like Musil, Kafka wanted to attain *superimpositions*, a *becoming* of the text which represents a movement away from metaphors and towards metamorphosis. By drawing on *The*



*Metamorphosis* to illuminate the *figure*, the *monster*, and the *hermaphrodite* in Llansol, this chapter develops the necessity of *nomadism*, again, as a movement of escape from a human or mundane condition of existence. Finally, Chapter Three also underlines how the Llansolian *edenic space* is a space of *hospitality* which ‘tem nome de mulher’, as Silvina Rodrigues Lopes points out.<sup>1281</sup> The beguines, Ana de Peñalosa, Isabel de Portugal and Infausta are the hosts, and ‘cada mulher é mulher numa referência obstinada à Mulher. Ana de Peñalosa tem o dom de ser a fonte de onde brotam outras mulheres, tem o dom da ubiquidade. Hadewjich é a própria encarnação do amor como dom de metamorfose’.<sup>1282</sup>

Consequently, the last chapter of the thesis, **Chapter Four**, is sustained by that idea of *hospitality* as a condition shared by women (writers). This chapter explains that the *figures* are *living* (humans, animals or plants) invited to the Llansolian text, and granted the *poetic gift* of *hospitality*. The *edenic space* is a space in which hierarchies between different realms no longer exist. Even if situated on an island or in the core of Europe, the *edenic space* could be the space of a *house* or a *room of one’s own* (Woolf) in which a woman accepts her condition as both female and writer, in order to inscribe the *living*. This chapter thus reads Llansol and Virginia Woolf in parallel, employing concepts like the *theory of pruning*, the *odd love*, the *scribin’body* and the *sex of reading* as essential to read Woolf, today, *in the light of Llansol*. Woolf was not one of Llansol’s *figures* – although she is also presented in the axis – but her style, strategies and reflections on writing (and on women’s condition) are essential to understanding the *sex of reading* in Llansol.

Finally, I would like to conclude this thesis with a reflection on the *sex of reading*, which ultimately highlights the *scribin’body* as a concept that annuls the emergence of gender in the Llansolian text, opening its meaning to the relevant role of the *lectant* in this work.

#### **THE LECTANT AND FUTURE READINGS OF THE LLANSOLIAN TEXT**

Maria Etelvina Santos’s recent book *Como Uma Pedra-Pássaro Que voa – Llansol e o Improvável da Leitura* (2008) is an excellent analysis of the role of the *lectant* in Llansol, departing from A. Borges’s preface to *O Livro das Comunidades*. Santos

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<sup>1281</sup> Lopes, *Teoria da Des-posseção*, p. 111.

<sup>1282</sup> *Ibid*, p. 111.

questions the fact that the text was signed by A. Borges, instead of Llansol herself, whose opening line is: ‘Eu leio assim este livro.’<sup>1283</sup> She wonders:

Quem é A. Borges, esse primeiro leitor? Será que o texto llansoliano se apresenta, apresentando o seu leitor? Será A. Borges o leitor ‘ideal’ desse texto? Será possível lê-lo de outro modo? Será A. Borges um leitor ‘modelo’? Será o leitor a primeira ‘figura’ do texto llansoliano?<sup>1284</sup>

Santos’s questions are crucial to my conclusion. If the *lectant* is the *first figure* of the Llansolian text; if *O Livro das Comunidades* is (questionably) regarded as the beginning of the Llansolian paradigm of *textuality*; if this preface is also *the* prologue to the whole Llansolian *oeuvre*; and if this prologue is an explanation of the *way in which* (‘*assim*’) A. Borges reads this book – then, the Llansolian text is, indeed, a theory of reading.

The *lectant* A. Borges, the *first figure*, reads this text *thus* and establishes the guidelines on how *not* to read it. One should be afraid of this book, A. Borges states, because it is a book of mutations, it rebels against the *status quo*, and it changes previously established concepts.<sup>1285</sup> A. Borges also defines a *lectant*, and how reading *thus* implies a different way of reading. As Llansol explains, ‘se o leitor deve à narrativa, o legente, ao texto, nada deve’,<sup>1286</sup>; in other words, where the reader is complacent with *narrativity*, the *lectant* generates *textuality*. Llansol states that the *reader* ‘adora que lhe expliquem tintim por tintim o que está farto de saber. Muita moral, muita catástrofe, voltas e mais voltas do mundo do comezinho, com toda a gama dos afectos. Quer saber tudo. Conte, mais uma vez’.<sup>1287</sup> In contrast, the *lectant* is the ‘companheiro desconhecido’ of the Llansolian text,<sup>1288</sup> someone who reads with the *sex of reading*, like a *scribin’body*. This *figure*, in unison with the *living*, does not ask ‘quem sou?’, because, according to Llansol, this is a slave’s question, someone dependent on power structures and who cannot distinguish *fulgor* from *imposture*. Instead, the *lectant* asks ‘quem me chama [...], pergunta de um homem livre’.<sup>1289</sup> The *lectant* does not follow instructions or protocols of reading – s/he is not Umberto

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<sup>1283</sup> *LC*, p. 9.

<sup>1284</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, *Como uma Pedra-Pássaro que Voa*, p. 144.

<sup>1285</sup> *LC*, p. 9.

<sup>1286</sup> *ATJ*, pp. 98.

<sup>1287</sup> *SH*, p. 16

<sup>1288</sup> *SH*, p. 35.

<sup>1289</sup> *FP*, p. 130.

Eco's 'model' reader,<sup>1290</sup> and s/he rebels against *preset* horizons of expectations, defined by Hans Robert Jauss.<sup>1291</sup> The *lectant* is, instead, a reader who, through *superimposition*, generates a new text.

Perhaps, this is why Llansol states that her texts provoke a 'pacto de inconforto'.<sup>1292</sup> Indeed, the Llansolian text is *difficult*, yet the *inconformity* felt by its *lectant* will push it towards a meaning. The *lectant* will not reach its *ultimate* signification, but rather establish, through reading, different beginnings – the Llansolian text *mutates* every time we read it, because its referent is no longer the real life of the author or the reader, it is *somewhere* where *fulgor* is allowed. 'À beira desse mundo local, há muitos outros. Tantos quanto as descrições coerentes e consistentes. Todos perfeitamente, e, desde sempre, simultâneos.'<sup>1293</sup> The *lectant* reads slowly; s/he enquires and explores, allowing metamorphosis to occur; s/he is curious about what s/he does not understand, or, as Santos suggests, s/he 'enuncia, repete, volta atrás, para acentuar; designa certos conceitos, destaca e reformula-os, suscita outros a partir de novas ideias'.<sup>1294</sup> Ultimately, the *lectant* does the same as Llansol while writing this text: 'Se o leitor se puser no meu lugar, verá algo parecido. É provável. Seremos textuantes de um tipo de observação implicada.'<sup>1295</sup>

It is, therefore, paradigmatic that the last book of the Llansolian *oeuvre* is entitled *Os Cantores de Leitura*, published a few months before the author's death. From *O Jogo da Liberdade da Alma*, the Llansolian text was already developing what, in *Parasceve*, Llansol called the 'geração sem-nome',<sup>1296</sup> a *community* of anonymous *living*, no longer attached to the historic figures of the first trilogies, or the *Lisboaleipzig* volumes. These *figures* are now removed from an idea of the human, and move towards the enunciation of the *sex of reading* and the *living*, through the metamorphosis of the *scribin'body*. If *O Jogo* was about the loss of memory, and *Parasceve* continued that amnesia through the *pruning*, the Llansolian text finally established that 'não ter memória [...] é absorver o presente numa constante iniciação, / encontrar-se num estado de nudez'.<sup>1297</sup> The state of

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<sup>1290</sup> Umberto Eco enunciated the concept of 'model reader' in *Six Walks in The Fictional Woods* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

<sup>1291</sup> See Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*.

<sup>1292</sup> *L1*, p. 12.

<sup>1293</sup> *P*, p. 146.

<sup>1294</sup> Maria Etelvina Santos, *Como uma Pedra-Pássaro Que Voa*, p. 190.

<sup>1295</sup> *P*, p. 102.

<sup>1296</sup> *P*, p. 56.

<sup>1297</sup> *JLA*, p. 35.

dispossession of the *figures* is attained in a more subtle manner in *Amigo, Amiga – Curso de Silêncio 2004*, through the presentation of *A. Nómada*, the last great *figure* of Llansol's *oeuvre*, containing the seed of every beginning (A., the first letter) and the movement of the rebels – *nomadism*. Yet, this dispossession in *Amigo, Amiga* is even more prominent due to the fact that it entails a *course of silence*, a secret revealed through the text because it could no longer be shared in person. This *course of silence*, Llansol is certain, 'há-de encontrar um legente que saiba do que falo quando me refiro ao *ruah*, e ao espírito de encanto das operações divinas'.<sup>1298</sup> The *silence* of the title is reflected in the silence of writing, but it is also *ruah*, the breath of life that generates movement, mutation, and text.

*Os Cantores de Leitura* establishes a *community* of animals with random names – *Ciro, Oblívio, Trova, Rorante, Angelikos* – who will continue the lineage of the anonymous *figures* and establish a 'fase nova da aprendizagem da leitura'.<sup>1299</sup> Monastically living in the retreat of the 'introspecção da casa',<sup>1300</sup> these singers will appear *in-between* ('entresser') 'mosteiro e monstro', because 'o nosso cântico de leitura dará nascimento a híbridos'.<sup>1301</sup> As Pedro Eiras points out, the notion of singing is here intimately linked with the medieval practice of reading. Alberto Manguel explains that in the medieval period, in which to read a text was to hear it, 'throughout the kingdoms of Europe, travelling *joglars* would recite or sing their own verses or those composed by their master troubadours'.<sup>1302</sup> Moreover, Manguel describes that 'a public reading also depended on the reader's ability to "perform"'.<sup>1303</sup> This is extremely interesting, because the *singer* in Llansol wants *not* to learn how to read, but rather, 'através do canto, ensinar a ler'.<sup>1304</sup>

One of the epigraphs used at the beginning of this thesis – 'não há texto autobiográfico'<sup>1305</sup> – is, interestingly, affirmed in *Os Cantores de Leitura*. The premise of the absence of autobiography could therefore be read in *Os Cantores* as, finally, the enunciation of a *community* in which there is the refusal 'de um singular',

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<sup>1298</sup> *AA*, p. 244.

<sup>1299</sup> *CL*, p. 22.

<sup>1300</sup> *CL*, p. 9.

<sup>1301</sup> *CL*, p. 22.

<sup>1302</sup> Alberto Manguel, *A History of Reading* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 116.

<sup>1303</sup> *Ibid*, p. 116.

<sup>1304</sup> *CL*, p. 54.

<sup>1305</sup> *CL*, p. 11.

as Eiras puts it.<sup>1306</sup> There is no autobiographical text, because there is no singular – there are many voices singing this text, both *lectants* and *figures*: ‘Não há ninguém de quem escrever o *auto-*, ou há muitos de quem escrever o *hetero-*.’<sup>1307</sup> Llansol annuls the effect of her own presence in the text by conceding the *lectant* the possibility of continuing it: ‘Dobro-me conforme o número, género, grau, modo, tempo, e pessoa que sou vossa. E passo a leitura.’<sup>1308</sup> With this ‘offering’ Llansol passes the baton to the reader, and this image is exemplary of how the Llansolian *oeuvre* finally closes with the *lectant* as the precursor of this text. This ultimately explains the contradiction in Olga Gonçalves’s citation at the beginning of this conclusion – the Llansolian text must be read out loud, as a rebellion against the *status quo*, and yet, simultaneously, it must be offered to the ‘leitor solitário’, the *lectant* who, in the end, will provide its continuity.

Perhaps, this is why Llansol asks: ‘Encerro em mim um embrião?’<sup>1309</sup> Is the Llansolian text an opening to other texts, or is it actually finished in the last sentence of *Os Cantores de Leitura* – even as posthumous editions come to light? In *Um Falcão no Punho*, Llansol expressed the desired that ‘todo o meu trabalho fosse gestatório e que este período, quase povoado de selvas, fosse um elemento químico, uma experiência, um estudo’.<sup>1310</sup> The reading of the Llansolian *oeuvre* as an ‘estudo’, essay, or, ultimately, embryonic dissertation of concepts, allows future readings of this text beyond the life of the *figures*, and towards the enunciation of similarities and tensions with authors that could be read *in the light of* Llansol, as this thesis proposes.

In the context of Portuguese literature, there are many parallels that could be drawn from the work of Olga Gonçalves or Maria Velho da Costa and Llansol, for instance, reflections on reading and writing, beyond their references to women’s literature. Costa’s last book, *Myra*, includes a curious section about Llansol’s *Amar um Cão*, in which the main character, Myra, ‘só à noite, ao crepúsculo ainda suave, começaria a folhear, *sem entender, mas amando, Amar um Cão*’.<sup>1311</sup> Furthermore, even if usually placed alongside each other due to the ‘apocalyptic’ tone of their

<sup>1306</sup> Pedro Eiras, ‘Maria Gabriela Llansol – Os Cantores de Leitura’, *Colóquio-Letras*, 19 September 2008, n.p., available online at <<http://coloquio.gulbenkian.pt/bib/sirius.exe/news?i=31>> [accessed on 3 March 2009].

<sup>1307</sup> *Ibid*, n.p.

<sup>1308</sup> *CL*, p. 26.

<sup>1309</sup> *FP*, p. 136.

<sup>1310</sup> *FP*, p. 136.

<sup>1311</sup> Maria Velho da Costa, *Myra* (Lisbon: Assírio & Alvim, 2008), p. 142 (emphasis mine).

texts, the writings of Llansol and Rui Nunes share impressive coincidences in the process of *figuration*, or, rather, as Nunes states, *de-figuration*: ‘O que vejo nitidamente, não é o mundo, mas a sua desfiguração. [...] Afinal a cegueira é andar por uma terra que só eu conheço. [...] Os meus olhos têm uma intenção estrangeira como se alguém, que não eu, visse por eles.’<sup>1312</sup>

This ‘intenção estrangeira’ of Llansol and Nunes, in the context of European literature, could be paralleled, for instance, with the writings of Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio, ‘le nomade immobile’,<sup>1313</sup> whose novels *Désert* (1980) or *Ourania* (2006) reflect many of the transnational or postnational characteristics of the Llansolian text – voiceless masses, from the indigenous populations of Mexico, to the nomadic Tuaregs of North Africa, acknowledging the responsibility of a postcolonial Europe in the process of curtailing others’ sovereignties. As Azade Seyhan points out,

understandably, narratives that originate at border crossings cannot be bound by national borders, languages, and literary and critical traditions. Born of crisis and change, suffering alternately from amnesia and too much remembering, and precariously positioned at the interstices of different spaces, histories, and languages, they seek to name and configure cultural and literary production in their own terms and to enter novel forms of inter/transcultural dialogue.<sup>1314</sup>

These are not only the literatures of migrants or exiles, but also the literatures of those who hold an ‘intenção estrangeira’. By not belonging entirely to a territory, a nation, or a language, the writings of these authors cannot be confined to the parameters of a national literature or literary paradigms. Future readings of Llansol will certainly reflect the different nature of its *lectants*, their *khora* or their interests. Yet, future readings of this text will no longer accentuate its exceptionalism, but rather draw fertile parallels with writers (Portuguese or European) who challenge and question the state apparatus and its *impostures*, enunciating a new humanism of the *living*, and inciting rebellion as the sole condition for the survival of literature. In so doing, and in opening this text to future readings, this thesis hopes to have responded to Llansol’s desire to ‘encontrar alguém que me ame com bondade, e saiba ler. [...] / alguém que eu possa ler diferentemente depois de me ler’.<sup>1315</sup>

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<sup>1312</sup> Rui Nunes, *Que Sinos Dobram por Aqueles que Morrem como Gado?* (Lisbon: Relógio d’Água, 1995), p. 8.

<sup>1313</sup> Gérard de Cortanze, *Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio: Le nomade immobile* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002).

<sup>1314</sup> Azade Seyhan, *Writing Outside the Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 4.

<sup>1315</sup> *JLA*, p. 80.

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