

Apprehending *Dom Casmurro* through Criticism Posed to Novel and Television Micro-Series / *A captura de Dom Casmurro por uma crítica disposta entre o romance e a microssérie*

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to identify modalities of dialogue between the television series *Capitu* by Luis Fernando Carvalho and the novel *Dom Casmurro* by Machado de Assis. It is based on the theory of narratology, mainly on Gerard Genette's contributions. In order to consolidate the study on the nature of narratives, we propose that the texts be read based on the available scrutiny of the two pieces. Moreover, we intend to apprehend the meanings of image and time related to the television show, the process of adaptation, and the modern artistic movements that are found in the process of transmutation of the narrative from a support based on verbal code to a support based on audio-visual-verbal code.

KEYWORDS: *Dom Casmurro*; *Capitu*; Adaptation; Television show; Machado de Assis; Luis Fernando Carvalho

RESUMO

Esta reflexão tem o intuito de identificar as formas de diálogos entre a microssérie Capitu, de Luís Fernando Carvalho e o romance Dom Casmurro, de Machado de Assis, e está fundamentada na teoria da narratologia - sobretudo a partir das contribuições de Gérard Genette. Para substanciar nosso estudo acerca da natureza das narrativas, fazemos uma abordagem dos textos com base na fortuna crítica das duas obras, além de buscarmos apreender os sentidos da imagem e do tempo sobre a teleficção, sobre o processo de adaptação e sobre os movimentos artísticos da modernidade, que encontram reflexo no percurso da transmutação da narrativa de um suporte radicado no código verbal para um suporte radicado num código verbal-visual-sonoro.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Dom Casmurro*; *Capitu*; Adaptação; Teleficção; Machado de Assis; Luiz Fernando Carvalho

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French theoretician Marcel Martin (2003, p.25) tells us that cinema has a ubiquitous nature, once it thoroughly condensates time and recreates the *duration*, allowing it to flow in our personal conscience. What we see on screen is, therefore, a “reproduction” of reality in which apparent realism is boosted by the director’s artistic view.¹ “Image finds itself affected by a coefficient of sensorial information that is emotive and comes from its own conditions in which it transcribes reality” (MARTIN, 2003, p.25; our translation).²

The novel *Dom Casmurro*,^{3 4} by Machado de Assis, and its adaptation for television by Luiz Fernando Carvalho, *Capitu*, provide us with a detailed reading of the narration, once it presents us a story within another story.⁵ This way, elements such as time, space, narrator and narration not only relate to one another, but also relate, in a more complex manner, to the same elements on other stages, which are part of the same story, generating an in-depth web of readings. In Gustavo Bernardo’s (2010, p.123) perception, narration completely dissolves the timeline as it creates dialogues using the same characters and bonds in the same space characters who lived distinct times. This line is totally fragmented in *Capitu*. In order to consider the terms proposed by Todorov (1980, p.22),⁶ *Dom Casmurro* and *Capitu* are narratives filled with *linking* and *embedding* structures, with juxtapositions and insertion of various facts within the narrative. If we consider a “timeline” or the logics of space, these concepts may be broken when transforming parallel or contemporary actions that could not converge to same space/time (BETTON, 1987, p.79). What we see in *Capitu* is, in a first moment, a character who talks to a narrator and reminisces about her life. In this process, there is

¹ Later, we will discuss the *personal equation of the maker*. At that point, we will elaborate on the debate about features of authorship in a cinematographic work.

² Text in the original in Portuguese: “A imagem se encontra sempre afetada de um coeficiente sensorial e emotivo que nasce das próprias condições com que ela transcreve a realidade.”

³ MACHADO DE ASSIS, J. *Dom Casmurro*. Translated by John Gledson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

⁴ The year of publication of *Dom Casmurro* is 1899 in Portuguese; however, in this article, we use the English version published in 1997.

⁵ As we will show, a great part of the criticism that we pose to the story in *Dom Casmurro* applies to the television series *Capitu*. That occurs because in terms of plot and action, there is an absolute convergence between the narratives. This convergence is clear in director Luiz Fernando Carvalho’s affirmation that the name “Capitu,” as opposed to what could be assumed, came “in a click, without any rational process.” And this does not necessarily mean a change in the narrative structure, such as the ones in the movies *Capitu*, by Paulo César Saraceni or *Dom*, by Moacyr Góes.

⁶ TODOROV, T. The Categories of Literary Narrative. *Papers on Language and Literature*, v. 16, n.1, pp.3-36, 1980.

an “almost extinct” *oral narrator* (BENJAMIN, 1992, p.33), who allows us to know about his personal experience. He tells an individual about his life, and henceforward, there is “another” story, with several characters, which is precisely the memory of the narrator. This is called a story within a story, a “work within a work” (GENETTE, 1983, p.230).⁷

In *Narrative discourse: an essay in method*, Genette (1983)⁸ refers to questions of order in the opening chapter, claiming that narrative is a sequence that is two times temporal. In it, there naturally are a time of the signifier and a time of the signified or the time of the story (diegesis) and the time of the narrative (discourse). “There is the time of the thing told and the time of the narrative” (GENETTE, 1983, p.33).⁹ On television, the “problems” of extension-fragmentation-expansion constitute a specific case, once it is serialized, and there are an enormous number of pauses for airing commercials, which multiply the number of suspensions and resumptions and demand a difficult strategy of timing among the elements of cohesion in the novel and in the adapted series. The timing of discourses would be the main factor of dissimilarity between the works. The typical extension of the popular Brazilian television series would naturally oppose to extensive novels (BALOGH, 2004, pp.152, 183, 185, 193; SOBRAL, 2008, p.7). *Dom Casmurro* is not an extensive novel if we consider that there is a vast number of novels twice, or three times as long. The *television micro-series genre* is also not long if we compare it to regular television series, such as *Os maias* (CARVALHO, 2001), which was aired in 44 episodes lasting more than ten weeks. According to Balogh (2004) and Sobral (2008), the inference that can be made is that the extension of a short television series would fit the transposition of short novels.

Bela Balázs, cited by Martin (2003), claims that cinema introduces a *triple* notion of time:

The time of *projection* (the duration of the film), the time of *action* (the diegetic duration of the story told) and the time of *perception* (the impression felt by the spectator) are eminently arbitrary and subjective, just as their potential negative consequence, that is, the notion of tediousness, a feeling resulting from the impression of an

⁷ GENETTE, G. *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*. Translated by Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983.

⁸ For reference, see footnote 7.

⁹ For reference, see footnote 7.

unbearable duration. However, in light of this reference system, fleeting and evanescent, though at the same time tyrannical, which is the time, man has an instrument capable of dominating it: indeed, the camera may accelerate or delay, invert or restrain the movement, and consequently, the time (BALAZS *apud* MARTIN, 2003, pp.213-214; our translation).¹⁰

That means to think that any narrative – in spite of omitting it – flows during a particular amount of time, and this time is transmitted to the reader by means of another amount of time and this amount of time still goes through a subjective treatment in the consciousness of the spectator/reader. In other words, there are times that invade the present. The analyst is in charge of confronting an order of disposition of the events or temporary segments into the narrative discourse with the same principle of succession of these events or temporary segments in the story.

Nevertheless, the “intuitively felt impression of duration” by a spectator cannot depend exclusively on the individual’s state of mind. Martin still discusses his proposition about duration and concludes that:

It is vital to stress, however, that the dramatic tone of an action is less a question of *quantity* (number of events) than of *quality* (density and intensity of the facts represented), which explains why very long movies have become more frequent in the last decades (for instance, the ones by Agelopoulos and Wenders). Movies like these do not give the spectator the impression that they demand a great deal of patience or attention because they exercise a power of fascination over the viewer, sublimating the time of perception in the intuition of duration (2003, p.237; our translation).¹¹

This point is what we aim to clarify here, aware that the “*temporal distance* between the story and narrating instance involves no *modal distance* between the story

¹⁰ Text in the original in Portuguese: “O tempo da *projeção* (a duração do filme), o tempo da *ação* (a duração diegética da história contada) e o tempo da *percepção* (a impressão de duração intuitivamente sentida pelo espectador), eminentemente arbitrária e subjetiva, da mesma forma que sua eventual consequência negativa, a noção de tédio, sentimento resultante de uma impressão de duração insuportável. Ora, diante desse sistema de referência fugaz e evanescente, mas ao mesmo tempo tirânico, que é o tempo, o homem dispõe pela primeira vez de um instrumento capaz de dominá-lo: a câmera pode, com efeito, tanto acelerar quanto retardar, inverter ou deter o movimento e, conseqüentemente, o tempo.”

¹¹ Text in the original in Portuguese: “É indispensável frisar, porém, que a tonalidade dramática de uma ação é menos uma questão de *quantidade* (número de acontecimentos) que de *qualidade* (densidade e intensidade dos fatos representados), o que explica que filmes muito compridos, que se tornaram mais frequentes nas últimas décadas (como os de Angelopoulos e Wenders), não dão ao espectador a impressão de abusar de sua paciência ou atenção porque não deixam por um instante de exercer um verdadeiro poder de fascinação, sublimando o tempo da percepção em intuição da duração.”

and the narrative: no loss, no weakening of the mimetic illusion” (GENETTE, 1983, p.168; italics in original).¹² Henceforward, we will thoroughly analyze the concept of mode, understood, at first, as the viewpoint of the narrator.

In order to provide examples, we will refer to Bentinho’s¹³ and Capitu’s story, which is told by narrator Dom Casmurro and happens in approximately 30 years. In the movie *Capitu* by Paulo César Saraceni (1968), the story unfolds in about an hour and forty minutes, while in the book, the story is narrated in about 170 pages.

The reduced time of discourse in Saraceni’s film (1 hour and 40 minutes) in relation to the television micro-series *Capitu*, by Veríssimo (4 hours), is explained by the fact that the presence and voice of narrator Dom Casmurro had to be suppressed in the film. This, to me, seems to be the reason why Saraceni’s filmic narration has not been so successful, besides not being positively mentioned as a good adaptation of Machado de Assis’s work. The film is also said to have problems in screenwriting, direction of actors, scenography, etc. Perhaps these are reasons why great literary works have not been as welcomed in film by viewers as they have been welcomed in books by readers, and that is a historical issue. This does not mean that there are no exceptions to the rule; some exceptions to consider would be *Death in Venice*, written by Thomas Mann and adapted by Luchino Visconti, and *Great Expectations*, written by Charles Dickens and adapted by Alfonso Cuarón. Besides all this, Robert Stam (2005)¹⁴ reminds us that *Dom Casmurro* is a *self-conscious* novel. In other words, it is a novel which is permanently criticizing itself in literary terms and dialogizing with the process of creative writing, which makes Machado de Assis, according to Gustavo Bernardo (2010, p.122), our outstanding metafictional author. The referred “self-consciousness” does not exist in *Capitu*, by Saraceni, and in *Dom*, by Moacyr Goés, and it would hardly ever function with the annihilation of the character-narrator in these works. However, it is thoroughly articulated in *Capitu*, by Luiz Fernando Carvalho, which maintains and incorporates reflexive tools that revolve around the creation of literary works and

¹² For reference, see footnote 7.

¹³ It is important to clarify that, throughout this study, I chose to name “Bentinho” the main character in the story when referring to his childhood and teenage years, as he was known among family members. “Bento” will refer to the character in his adulthood, which is how Capitu and his friends used to call him. “Dom Casmurro” will be used to talk about the character in his elder years, for when he was an elderly man, he was given that nickname.

¹⁴ STAM, R. *Literature Through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation*. Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

television works. Statements such as “I recognize my exaggeration... but it is good to be emphatic once in a while...” or “No, this is not a good comparison...” as well as camera movements that reveal the illumination gear on set or takes with subjective camera angles using the perspective of Dom Casmurro, giving the image a watery texture, could be singled out in the narration in case there was not an interest in exposing the process of creating a narrative.

Samira Chalhub (1998, p.71) understands that the act of narrating favors reflection upon itself by any means it is carried out. The author defends that in the same way there may be a metaliterature, there may also be a meta-story, meta-music, or a meta-cinema. What we need to observe is what reading self-reference makes of its text. Machado de Assis and Luiz Fernando Carvalho stop the reader from forgetting who they are: readers and spectators and not *voyeurs* of somebody else’s life (BERNARDO, 2010, p.124).

In the movie *Capitu*, director Paulo César Saraceni and screenwriters Paulo Emílio Salles Gomes and Lygia Fagundes Telles lack the sharpness that Silviano Santiago shows greatly (1978, p.40), when they affirm that the severe tone of the book is in the character of the narrator Dom Casmurro. Such proposition is betrayed when the attention of the reader (and I may say of the spectator) turns primarily to the question of *Capitu*’s betrayal or remission. At this point it is important to stress that, for the director of the micro-series Luiz Fernando Carvalho, there is a didactic and semantic cognitive element to the title *Capitu*, as it carries the function of celebrating the character without pre-conceived notions or judgments, making the focus of the narrative fall on the act of narrating itself.

Using Betton’s (1987, p.78) method of classification, we may say that there is, in both narratives, which are the *corpus* of this article, a *rupture* – a constant one – to the *chronological order*, as we can see in fragments of past actions inserted in the present. What I called time of discourse is also keenly nominated by Genette “pseudo-time,” due to its character of relativity, suspension and/or subjection to external factors to the story/diegesis (GENETTE, 1983, p.34).¹⁵ However, the pseudo-time cannot be wasted in an analysis that only considers the narration because, as we will see, its nature is

¹⁵ For reference, see footnote 7.

indispensable when we analyze categories, such as duration, speed, acceleration, and the frequency of the story (diegesis).

When it comes to the micro-series *Capitu*, we ought to be attentive to the existence of a sequence that is three times temporal. The one of the diegetic time, which constitutes around 30 years of Bentinho and Capitu's passion, love, marriage, and their separation; the experience of the seminary and college, the time that flows in the direction of another diegetic time, but on another level,¹⁶ that is, the one concerning Dom Casmurro's life, a somber time of solitude, isolation and sobriety, of gloomy memories; and finally, the time that concerns about 4 hours allowed for the narration to take place.

Todorov argues that there is a "deformation" and affirms that "[t]he problem of the presentation of time in the narrative arises because of the dissimilarity between the temporality of the story and that of the discourse" (1980, p.20).¹⁷ For that reason it is natural to assert that the narrative of Dom Casmurro – in the book and in the micro-series – is basically anachronistic; that is, it is marked by a disagreement between the order of narration and the order of the story. That is clear once, as we have posed, we know the love story of Bentinho and Capitu through the narration as told by the narrator.

The evident anachronism, though, dissipates gradually, as the story is told, until it reaches zero degree, i.e., "a condition of perfect temporal correspondence between narrative and story" (GENETTE, 1983, p.36).¹⁸ In other words, all the vicissitudes happen so that one day (today for the narrator) the narrator tells all that happened. These conclusions are only worth within the economy of the text, considering that there is a diegesis (the story of Bento and Capitu) and, outside of it, a pseudo-reality (the life of Dom Casmurro). From a different angle, when we consider the complete work, of Machado de Assis or Luiz Fernando Carvalho, all of it as a diegetic universe (as it truly

¹⁶ Genette (1983) claims that there is a temporal and spacial distance that separates the action told from the act of narration. To him, "any event a narrative recounts is at a diegetic level immediately higher than the level at which the narrating act producing this narrative is placed" (p.228) [For reference, see footnote 7]. The levels, as we understand them, are three: 1 – Extradiegetic: Machado de Assis in relation to his readers; 2 – Diegetic or Intradiegetic: Dom Casmurro, in relation to his character-narrators; 3 – Metadiegetic: Bentinho, in relation to character narrators or readers. The discussion is taken to a higher level in the debate about *voice* in this article.

¹⁷ For reference, see footnote 6.

¹⁸ For reference, see footnote 7.

is), there is a (pseudo) synchronous diegetic order – Dom Casmurro’s time of discourse (“now”) in relation to the present day.

The *starting point* of the story is, inevitably, the same *place* where the character-narrator or the reader meet: the present. All the rest is, consequently, a vast retrospective segment with decades of *reach* towards the past; or, making use of narratological terms, it is the time of the narrative upon which a great internal analeptic anachronism (or homo-diegetic) is built, whose temporal scope is comprised in the same line of action as the first narrative, so as to rebuild the totality of narrative events, presenting an “obvious risk of redundancy or of collision” (GENETTE, 1983, p.50).¹⁹ It makes an ulterior evocation of an event prior to the point in the story in which the present of the narrator is found (GENETTE, 1983).²⁰

Martin (2003) ventures in the field of questions of order and brings important considerations about narrative (in cinema) of past events:

[...] the *past* converts effectively into a present – and the *elsewhere* in *here* – of conscience. The sequence of events is no longer directly temporal; instead, it becomes *casual*, which means to say that the assembly is based on the transition to the past through the enunciation of causes to the present facts: the succession of events according to logical causality is therefore respected. However, the strict chronology is disrupted and restored by a viewpoint [...]. [The resource] creates a temporality that is *autonomous, inner, malleable, dense and dramatized*, which offers the action an addition of unity of tone. Besides, it allows, most naturally, the introduction of the subjective account in the first person, a first door to the psychological domains of great richness and prestige (p.235, our translation).²¹

In other terms, we shall paradoxically say that the action begins “*in ultimas res*,” going back to the beginning until it finally reaches the end once again. That happens in *Dom Casmurro* and in *Capitu*; the narrator of the book expresses the self-consciousness of the narrative in relation to this proposition of (dis)organization in terms of time:

¹⁹ For reference, see footnote 7.

²⁰ For reference, see footnote 7.

²¹ Text in the original in Portuguese: “[...] o *passado* converte-se efetivamente num presente – e o *alhures* num *aqui* – da consciência. A sequência dos acontecimentos deixa de ser diretamente temporal para tornar-se *causal*, o que vale dizer que a montagem se baseia na transição ao passado pelo enunciado das causas dos fatos presentes: a sucessão dos acontecimentos segundo sua causalidade lógica é assim respeitada, mas a cronologia estrita é rompida e reestruturada em função de um ponto de vista [...]. [O recurso] cria uma temporalidade *autônoma, interior, maleável, densa e dramatizada*, que oferece à ação um acréscimo de unidade de tom e permite, com a maior naturalidade, a introdução do relato subjetivo em primeira pessoa, porta de entrada para domínios psicológicos de grande riqueza e prestígio.”

[...] I would like to propose, as an experiment, that all plays should begin with their endings. Othello would kill himself and Desdemona in the first act, the three following ones would be given over to the slow and decreasing progress of jealousy, and the last would be left with the initial scenes of the threat from the Turks, the explanations of Othello and Desdemona, and the good advice of the subtle Iago: "Put the money in thy purse." In this way, the spectator, on the one hand, would find in the theater the regular puzzle that the newspapers give him, for the final acts would explain the dénouement of the first (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.134).²²

The micro-series, in the wake of the novel, is structured upon an internal and conclusive flashback, which is the one that comes to fill the gaps of the first narrative. The reader or spectator needs to discover the events that have taken place until the narrator Dom Casmurro becomes the individual he has become, performing the actions he performs. Genette gives an in depth account of this procedure:

[...] *completing* analepses, or "returns," comprises the retrospective sections that fill in, after the event, an earlier gap in the narrative (the narrative is thus organized by temporary omissions and more or less belated reparations, according to a narrative logic that is partially independent of the passing of time). These earlier gaps can be ellipses pure and simple, that is, breaks in the temporal continuity (1983, p.51; italics in original).²³

Considering the last quote, we understand that the plot begins in time and through narrator speech, which incessantly returns to the alluded times in his narration. *Dom Casmurro* and *Capitu* have a constant alternating structure in between times, that is, what the narrator utters is permanently "interrupted" by *returns*.

We may be able to affirm that the terms, or in clearer words, the junction of ideas of *omission* and *compensation* are key to the understanding of the narrative. Every discourse *Dom Casmurro* articulates consists of making provisory omissions of information or events and is aimed at convincing the reader to acquit or support him in the actions, evil feelings and drastic decisions that he makes in relation to Ezequiel, Escobar and overall, in relation to Capitu. In actuality, the narrative structure does not

²² For reference, see footnote 3.

²³ For reference, see footnote 7.

form a case of *stream of consciousness*, as the omissions and compensations are strategically placed.

On the occasion of the death of his friend, he did not express grief. He wished his son would catch leprosy, even offered him poisoned coffee, and when he learned about his death, he was nonchalant. He sent Capitu to Europe and left her there without keeping in touch and purposely not answering her letters. In his narration, he reaches the point of “forgetting” to notify the reader about her death, using in this case the resource of paralipsis, for he ignores this extremely interesting piece of information: “His mother – I don’t think I’ve said that she was dead and buried” (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.239).²⁴ He omits, then compensates, which justifies his recurrent use of expressions such as “...I don’t think I’ve said,” “... have I said that...?”, “If I have not said it already...” (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997),²⁵ in search of a way to tell and distract attention, in a sneaky way, an act that reveals how indescribably brutal he was to his wife.

Dom Casmurro does not reveal all of this instantly. He does not begin by explaining why he lives on his own, why people are not around him at present. Instead, he uses the resource of a provisory elision of the details, coming to disclose them further and gradually, as a strategy to capture the interlocutor, as John Gledson (1984)²⁶ stresses very well when affirming that the fragmentary tone is part of a rhetoric plan to mislead. Silviano Santiago (1978, p.40), in a similar way, argues that Dom Casmurro, with his oratory, wants to come out a winner at any cost.

Oddly, in the second narrative (the story of the love of Bentinho and Capitu), the category that prevails, when it comes to order, is prolepsis – a figure of speech which opposes to analepsis – which consists of forestalling, in a subtle way and with brief references, the events that will unfold, preparing the spirit of the reader (GENETTE, 1983).²⁷

Dom Casmurro constantly forestalls (prolepsis) what will happen in the narration in order to recover those pieces at a proper time. He provokes a redundancy between the times of the narrative as it can be perceived in various passages. There is a

²⁴ For reference, see footnote 3.

²⁵ For reference, see footnote 3.

²⁶ GLEDSON, J. *The Deceptive Realism of Machado de Assis: A Dissenting Interpretation of Dom Casmurro*. Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1984.

²⁷ For Reference, see footnote 7.

series of allusions (or forestalling) to the future, in relation to the moment – the now – of the narrative, generally not in a direct manner, but by means of charades, if not through irony. These intuitive references are already visible in the first chapter, at the moment when he explains the origins of his nickname, given by a well-known individual in the train. Dom Casmurro makes reference to the author of his nickname in the following passage: “And with a little effort, since the title is his, he can think the whole work is. There are books that only owe that to their authors: some not even that much” (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.4).²⁸ In the following chapter, Dom Casmurro describes the house in Engenho Novo, which he ordered be built with the same architecture of the house where he used to live in Matacavalos. In the middle of each wall of the main room, he ordered that they placed the medallions of César, Augusto, Nero and Massinissa in spite of ignoring the reason of such symbols (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.5).²⁹ At the end of the narrative, Dom Casmurro screams out those names.

The reader, still unaware of the argumentative strategies of Dom Casmurro, may go through the story without realizing the importance of these seemingly useless comments (like many others), ignoring the fact that they can, on a deeper level of reading, be metaphors of greater and more important significance. In the first case, in the story, the doubt about the *authorship* may refer to Ezequiel’s paternity. We may, then, easily establish a metaphoric association between the symbols of authorship/creation or authorship/paternity; this would be an example of a prolepsis in disguise. It is worthy to reflect on the fact that great part of the forestations, even in disguise, are indications, insinuations.

In the next forestation/prolepsis, the figures of speech characterize all the medallions of Roman imperial authorities whose stories connect greatly to the theme of betrayal. The first time they are mentioned, Dom Casmurro shows his house as guarded by them, and in the second time he mentions them, he shows Capitu dazzled by the story of the men portrayed.

At this point, the prolepsis is a tool for the reader, together with the narrator, to engage in the process of blaming Capitu. There is no consideration such as an adventitious and free *draft*, as we may see for instance in detective novels, in which

²⁸ For Reference, see footnote 3.

²⁹ For Reference, see footnote 3.

there is a clear necessity to establish deceit in order to disorient the reader (GENETTE, 1983).³⁰

Our analysis proposes a comparison of the literary and filmic texts in light of narratology theory, and a look into the central question of divergence between narrator and reader/spectator. Genette (1983, p.86), in discussing the theme of order, starts to shape a conception of a category justifying the (“sub”) categories of *isochrony* and *anisochnrony*,³¹ which would be enough to incorporate the relationship between diegetic succession and narrative succession: the perfect temporal coincidence between them is isochrony, and the temporal incompatibility, *anisochnrony*.

Genette calls the time of the story and the time the reader takes to read the story (or the distance in the path he embarks upon), to receive the story as a whole, or, the time of discourse, *speed*:

By “speed” we mean the relationship between a temporal dimension and a spatial dimension (so many meters per second, so many seconds per meter): the speed of a narrative will be defined by the relationship between a duration (that of the story, measured in seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, and years) and a length (that of the text, measured in lines and in pages). The isochronous narrative, our hypothetical reference zero, would thus be here a narrative with unchanging speed, without accelerations or slowdowns, where the relationship duration-of-story/length-of-narrative would remain always steady. [...] a narrative can do without anachronies, but not without *anisochnronies*, or, if one prefers (as one probably does), *effects of rhythm* (1983, pp.87-88; italics in original).³²

The author clarifies that a narrative is isochronous only hypothetically. Isochnrony would only exist relatively speaking, in order to elucidate the true nature of the narrative speed, which is the *anisochnrony*. Marcel Martin also refers to the importance of rhythm within the narrative, when it comes to cinema:

³⁰ For Reference, see footnote 7.

³¹ According to Genette (1983, pp.86-88), anisochnrony is the alteration of duration in the story told, a process which is the opposite of isochrony. The anisochnrony consists of the change in rhythm or the speed of narrative (“effects of rhythm,” in Genette’s words), which balances the relation between time of story, measured in seconds, minutes, hours, etc., and the extension of the text, measured in lines and pages. This process occurs when the narrator prolongs the time of story further, with descriptions somewhat supplementary, or when the opposite happens and this time is reduced, summarizing, in a few lines, facts that took place in a longer space in time. The processes that unleash anisochnronies are the pause, the ellipsis and the summary (as narrative resources) on one hand, and digressions on another, as a way to suspend the progression of time in the story, dilating the time of discourse.

³² For reference, see footnote 7.

The rhythmic combinations resulting from the choice and the order of images will provoke in the spectator a complementary emotion, besides the one determined by the subject matter of the movie... It is the rhythm of the cinematographic work that determines the order and the proportion, elements which define a work of art [...]. The rhythm, however, is a question of metrical and plastic distribution: a movie in which short camera takes or foreground takes are predominant will have a particular rhythm [...] (2003, pp.144-145, our translation).³³

We shall observe how the effects of rhythm in *Dom Casmurro* show *Capitu* in its adaptation. In the audio-visual text, we can imagine there is an acceleration in the speed of discourse. That may happen in some films/short series/micro-series that adapt novels and make a number of elisions. The time of discourse in the book may be, often times, superior to that of the films, short series or micro-series. When it comes to the texts of our analysis, we suppose there is a faster pace in the micro-series than in the book. After all, in the series it was necessary to elide several passages and even some chapters of the book – without compensating them with the creation of other passages or chapters – to constitute the narrative we know.

The inevitable question is whether the acceleration of speed has effects of meaning that fall on each one of the texts. It is customary for the spectator of films that are adaptations of novels to complain, claiming that the film ignored, suppressed or did not emphasize passages that were important in the book. It is the condition of cinema that generally has less discursive time than the literary text. The sensation of loss in omitted passages in the micro-series *Capitu*, nevertheless, is rare or non-existent in relation to the book. Two factors may have contributed to that. Firstly (for the spectator who watched it on television), the micro-series is divided into five episodes and airs in five days, “imposing” the spectator to pause several times. Similarly, in the reading of book, a period of suspension may give the spectator the same sensation of closure that the literary work allows the reader to experience. Secondly, the approximate total time of a micro-series is of four hours, twice as much as most contemporary movies. This

³³ Text in the original in Portuguese: “As combinações rítmicas resultantes da escolha e da ordem das imagens irão provocar no espectador uma emoção complementar daquela determinada pelo assunto do filme... É do ritmo que a obra cinematográfica obtém a ordem e a proporção, sem o que não teria as características de uma obra de arte [...]. O ritmo, portanto, é uma questão de distribuição métrica e plástica: um filme em que predominem os planos curtos ou os primeiros planos terá um ritmo bastante característico [...]”

concession of time that the micro-series has certainly made it possible for ellipses to occur, though in a reduced amount of times, if compared to what the spectator is used to seeing. Besides that, *Dom Casmurro* is not a long novel; thus, it does not demand many extra hours of reading in comparison to the four hours of duration of *Capitu*.

According to Genette, the question of speed influences other aspects of the narrative greatly:

[...] the internal evolution of the narrative in proportion as it advances toward its end, an evolution that we can summarily describe by saying that we observe on the one hand a gradual slowing down of the narrative, through the growing importance of very long scenes covering a very short time of story; and on the other hand, in a sense compensating for this slowing down, a more and more massive presence of ellipses. We can easily synthesize these two aspects with the following phrase: the *increasing discontinuity* of the narrative (1983, pp.92-93; italics in original).³⁴

Genette (1983, p.93)³⁵ exemplifies his theory of *increasing discontinuity* by comparing the book *In Search of Lost Time*, by Marcel Proust,³⁶ to a symphony by Bethoven: one that progressively becomes syncopated, with enormous scenes broken by extensive gaps, with a rhythm that turns into a more and more abrupt one, contrasting with the easy fluidity of the first parts, as if the memory of the narrator became, at the same time, “more selective and more enormously enlarging” (GENETTE, 1983, p.93).³⁷

The *increasing discontinuity* in *Dom Casmurro* and *Capitu* is not only evidenced, it is also a subject of comments made by the narrator and author of the story, Dom Casmurro. Let us remember the famous chapter XCVII – Leaving:

This should have been the middle of the book, but my inexperience has let my pen run away with me, and I have come almost to the end of the paper, with the best of the story still to tell. There’s no way for it now but to take it in great strides, chapter after chapter, with few corrections, not much reflection, everything in resumé. This chapter already covers months, others will cover years, and so we will get to the end (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.172).³⁸

³⁴ For reference, see footnote 7.

³⁵ For reference, see footnote 7.

³⁶ PROUST, M. *In Search of Lost Time*. Translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. Centaur Editions, 2013.

³⁷ For reference, see footnote 7.

³⁸ For reference, see footnote 3.

In the next chapters, the narrative truly elapses with a considerable number of ellipsis, as one can notice in the words of narrator Dom Casmurro, in great strides, with pages that cover years, such as the next chapter, XCVIII – Five years, which brings a declaration in the first paragraph: “I passed my eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, twenty first birthdays; at twenty-two I was a Bachelor of Law” (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.173).³⁹

The narrator compares life to an opera number, but the possible associations with musical theory extend to the narrative, since the paces can compare to *speeds of execution* (GENETTE, 1983, p.94)⁴⁰ in the narration, such as *andante*, *allegro*, *presto*, *pausa*, etc. in music.

One thing can be affirmed about *Dom Casmurro* and *Capitu* then: the texts merge *scenes* (dialogized pieces) and *pauses* (descriptive pieces, with a suspended action for the benefit of social and psychological characterization). On a second moment, with more emphasis from chapter XCVII – Leaving on, the narrative undergoes “tempo changes.” The excerpt “Ezequiel, when the last chapter began, had not been conceived; when it ended, he was Christian and Catholic. This one is designed to bring him up to the age of five [...]” (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.190)⁴¹ shows us that in musical kinetics, the movements of narration both in the book and in the micro-series accelerate, reaching an *allegro molto agitato*, we may say, with a growing number of *ellipsis* and with more *summary narration*, without details of actions and words (GENETTE, 1983),⁴² maybe with the intention of maintaining a permanent state of commotion on the reader, generated by a more frantic action.

When it comes to the category of *frequency*, Genette analyzes how the narrative makes use of – or does not make use of – the resource of *repetition*. This category reveals how the production and reproduction of enunciations happen in the story. For this theoretician, the narrative presents in itself two possible forms of enunciation. In the *singulative form*, what happened once is told only once, or if the fact happened a number of times (for instance, 5 times), it is only referred to that number of times (in that case, five times). The singulative mode would be defined by the equality of times

³⁹ For reference, see footnote 3.

⁴⁰ For reference, see footnote 7.

⁴¹ For reference, see footnote 3.

⁴² For reference, see footnote 7.

between the number of times an event has taken place and the number of times it is narrated. Conversely, the *iterative* mode would be defined by the irregularity in the number of times between what happened and what is told. That is, something that happened only once is told several times, or something that happened several times is told only once.

In *Dom Casmurro* and in *Capitu* a change in the type of frequency can be perceived from the singulative to the iterative narrative, as the story flows into a climax. There is no way we can ignore the insistence of the narrator to subtly stress and reinforce, by means of prolepsis (or forestations), the morally unacceptable character of *Capitu*. In *singulative* terms, each suspected act of *Capitu* is related with religious patience.

Dom Casmurro, both in the book and in the micro-series, is peremptory in stressing the importance of reminiscences: they must be put in clear minute detail, without allusions, generalizations, or modesty. Firstly, the narrator openly declares that he opts for the singulative narration (each thing told at a time, without leaving any details aside and without focusing on only one fact). About the birth of Ezequiel, in chapter CIX – An Only Son, from the micro-series, he states: “[...] you will imagine how much work it required, something unnecessary to mention. But there are readers who are so dull, they cannot understand anything if we do not describe everything and the rest.” Later, in chapter CXVIII – Sancha’s Hand, Escobar asks Bento to touch his arm in order to certify his strength, while Dom Casmurro, in reminiscing, reveals: “I felt his arms, as if they were Sancha’s. This is a painful confession to make, but I cannot suppress it; that would be to avoid the truth” (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.206).⁴³

This is what Dom Casmurro seems to do until at least the cited chapter XCVII – Leaving: singulation (each fact in its place) in an effort to allow the “dull” reader to understand and in order to present the integrity of truth.

From then on, we move from a *singulative* narrative in which various enunciations are produced, each one referring to a particular event, into an *iterative* one, in which many events are grouped into only one enunciation. That is, the acceleration of speed imposes a new rhythm to the development of the narration. Besides a semantic re-elaboration caused by this inversion in speed, we cannot miss the great aesthetic profit

⁴³ For reference, see footnote 3.

projected onto this part of the text. In the micro-series, from the chapter Leaving on, it gradually becomes common to find passages such as “My jealous fits were intense, but short [...] The truth is that I grew even fonder of Capitu, if such a thing were possible, and she still more tender, the air milder, the nights clearer, and God more God-like” [from chapter CVII – Jealous of the Sea (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, p.187)];⁴⁴ “[...] I went back to Brazil. After some months, Capitu had begun to write me letters. [...] Hers were submissive, without hatred, affectionate maybe, and towards the end full of longing; she begged me to go and see her. I made the journey a year later, but I did not go to see her, and later made the same voyage again, with the same result” [from chapter CXLI – The Solution (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 1997, pp.234-235)].⁴⁵

The selected passages exemplify the phenomenon of alternation, for the singulative mode no longer exists and the iterative shows: the summary narrative remains, though the enunciations start to be synthesized in a different way, referring to a number of things in a generalized way. We learn about the intense jealousy without an understanding of how intense it was and what caused it. We learn that the nights became clearer and ignore this fact, nevertheless, for the charms affected each night in such a way that even God would become more God-like. We learn that Capitu would write letters, but we do not know how many; the content and the details of each letter are kept from the reader. Dom Casmurro changes his looks, beginning a process of compromising the truth, saying everything without expressing the gist and – in a way – casting the dull readers into the darkness.

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⁴⁴ For reference, see footnote 3.

⁴⁵ For reference, see footnote 3.

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Received March 10, 2015

Accepted May 11, 2016