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ARTICLES

The Multiple Faces of Dialogue in *A Certain Captain Rodrigo*, by Érico Veríssimo / *As múltiplas faces do diálogo em* Um certo capitão Rodrigo, *de Érico Veríssimo*

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ABSTRACT
This essay aims to ascertain how dialogism manifests in a literary work. For that purpose, we will focus specifically on some excerpts taken from the chapter A Certain Captain Rodrigo of the novel *Time and the Wind*, by Érico Veríssimo. We intend to examine, in the materiality of the text, which utterative-discursive procedures were used in the dialogical staging of truth and thought present in the Menippean satire and how the authoritarian discourse is desecrated and subjected to laughter by the categories of the carnivalesque worldview.
KEYWORDS: A Certain Captain Rodrigo; Dialogism; Carnivalesque worldview

RESUMO
Este ensaio tem como escopo averiguar como o dialogismo se presentifica no texto literário, especificamente em excertos do capítulo Um certo capitão Rodrigo, da obra O tempo e o vento, *de Érico Verissimo. Tenciona-se examinar, na materialidade do texto, que procedimentos enunciativo-discursivos foram mobilizados na encenação dialógica da verdade e do pensamento, configurados tal como uma sátira menipeia, e de que forma as categorias da percepção carnavalesca de mundo dessacralizam e submetem ao riso o discurso do poder.*
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Um certo capitão Rodrigo; Dialogismo; Percepção carnavalesca de mundo

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Introduction

> To be means to communicate dialogically. When dialogue ends, everything ends.
> *Mikhail Bakhtin*[1]

> A classic is a book which has never exhausted all it has to say.
> *Italo Calvino*[2]

The literary work is the aesthetic object full of meanings, once it seeks to see "man in society and the individual in his humanity" (CHAVES, 1992, p.21).[3] Its content unveils representations of historical values and worldviews that reflect and refract the ideology of a given period. Syntactically and semantically woven, the work of an author reveals ideologies, characterizes individuals, human activities, situations in a given cultural, historical and social moments, in short, signs revealing positions arising from the individuals depicted in that work. When writing, the author-creator assesses what words he will use to masterfully express his ideas and aesthetically shape them. The choice of the word implies a process of semiotization as it unfolds in the incorporation, expansion, alteration, replicas, and confrontations. The dialogues set up in the works allow us to glimpse the way of overcoming the stalemates of existence, the struggle between points of view, and value judgments between the interlocutors (or the character itself). Thus, dialogues in the novel are the artistic representation of ideas and reenact the very essence of language: dialogism, the theoretical basis of discourse.

In order to understand the epistemological perspectives of dialogism, one has to consider the conception of language developed by Bakhtin together with Voloshinov, Medvedev, and other thinkers (what is today known as the Bakhtin Circle). The book *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (VOLOŠINOV, 1986)[4] discusses the ideological nature of the linguistic sign, the dynamism of its meanings, otherness, sign as an arena of class struggle, the analysis of the different types of discourse, which are the fundamentals of dialogism. Every dialogue enacts the struggle between social values in

[1] BAKHTIN, M. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Edited and translated by Caryl Emerson; introduction by Wayne C. Booth. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.
[2] CALVINO, I. *Why Read the Classics?* Edited and translated by Martin McLaughlin. London: Penguin, 2000.
[3] From the original in Portuguese: "o homem na sociedade e o indivíduo na sua humanidade."
[4] VOLOŠINOV, V. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Translated by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986.

constant opposition, for they represent discordant ideological voices and worldviews. Thus, literary language brings within itself the social and cultural discourses, organized in different times and spaces. Due to its unfinished essence, it further reflects the evolution of reality itself. The novel's uniqueness lies in the fact that it is able to highlight the front and reverse sides of the discourse, and that the dialogues represent the overcoming of the stalemates of existence.

Understanding that language is the raw material of a literary work, and that the novel is the representation of the voice in the figure "of men who speak, discuss ideas and seek to position themselves in the world" (MACHADO, 2005, p.153),[5] this paper aims at investigating how discourse is present in the dialogues between the characters Juvenal, Padre Lara, Ricardo Amaral, and Captain Rodrigo on three occasions. These dialogues appear in the chapter A certain Captain Rodrigo, which constitutes the third episode of the first volume of the novel *Time and the Wind*,[6] written by Érico Veríssimo from Rio Grande do Sul, and published in 1949. The purpose herein is to analyze: a) what utterative-discursive strategies were mobilized to reflect and refract the forces both centripetal (those that resist the future, another conjuncture, or way of life) and centrifugal (those that compel the movement, that desire change), which construct the speakers' understanding of the world and its universe of values; b) how the carnivalesque world views infused with dethroning humor, provocation and clash of ideas are uttered; c) to which extent the Socratic dialogue and the Menippean satire in the excerpt can be updated. Thus, the concepts of dialogism, monologism, centripetal and centrifugal forces, carnivalized literature (among others) will underpin this essay, whose guiding thread will be the dialogical perspective of language and its implications.

Given that the fabric of Bakhtin's concept is complex and extensive, it is not possible to account for all its intertwining; therefore, we will attempt to elucidate only the aspects necessary to achieve the purposes of this article. The intention here is not to tie up either the author or the book, thereby depriving them of their unique features. Rather, this paper intends to reveal the many possibilities of reading offered by a classic literary work, renewing it and applying the scholar's considerations about literature.

[5] From the original in Portuguese: "dos homens que falam, discutem ideias e procuram posicionar-se no mundo."
[6] VERÍSSIMO, Érico. *Time and the Wind*. Translated by L. L. Barrett. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951.

1 Carnivalization: One of the Facets of Dialogism

Ridendo castigat mores[7]

Carnivalization is one of the forms of dialogism and is configured as a strategy of corrosion of the centripetal forces imposed on society, since it can relativize the dominant discourse. In Chapter Four of *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*,[8] titled Characteristics of Genre and Plot Composition in Dostoevsky's Works and in *Rabelais and his World*,[9] Bakhtin gives special attention to Medieval and Renaissance celebrations that occurred at certain times of the year, associated with sacred festivals. The carnivalesque spectacle represented freedom, excessiveness, the reversal of roles, a life turned inside out, establishing a "*free and familiar contact among people*" (1984, p.123; emphasis in original).[10] Since they belonged to a public and universal celebration, the carnivalesque actions were held mostly in places such as public squares and the streets.

During the event, life strayed from its usual course, and, for that reason, even vocabulary changed. A new form of communication was adopted, based on gesture and the abolishment of formalities and etiquette. The carnivalesque language had an ambiguous aspect: humiliating and liberating, full of praise and insult.

For Bakhtin, carnival represents an interim time when everything is destroyed and renewed simultaneously. Thus, it outlines dualistic images: birth and death, blessing and curse, high and low, foolishness and wisdom. Everything is exposed to a carnivalistic laughter, "directed toward something higher - toward a shift of authorities and truths, a shift of world orders" (1984, p.127).[11] It is laughter manifested with different intonations, be it hearty, satirical, ironic, restrained, etc. While a serious tone is authoritarian, leading to intimidation and fear, laughter "overcomes fear, for it knows no inhibitions, no limitations. Its idiom is never used by violence and authority" (1984, p.90).[12] Popular

[7] Cf. *Ridendo dicere verum*. *In*: HORACE. *Satires, Texte Étable*. Translated by Fançois Villeneuve. Paris: Les Belles Letres, s.d.
[8] For reference, see footnote 1.
[9] BAKHTIN, M. *Rabelais and his World*. Translated by Helene Iswolsy. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984.
[10] For reference, see footnote 1.
[11] For reference, see footnote 1.
[12] For reference, see footnote 9.

laughter is victorious, not only over the fear of sacredness and domination imposed by a serious tone, but also over the mundane and divine powers that oppress and distress.

All the elements of the sacred texts become the target of laughter, constituting a dethronement of what is high, dogmatic, and serious. Extravagance, a category of carnivalesque worldview, is a kind of illusory communion of freedom, abundance, and dissolution of all hierarchies: all that is high is demoted. It is noteworthy that the idea of demotion is not linked to the negative, but to the concept of a topographic lowering where what was once above goes down below. Thus, everything that is abstract, such as pre-established rules and laws, belongs to what is above, while everything that is tangible, such as transgressions and laughter, belongs to what is below.

By uniting gestures and actions, images and words in a special relationship with reality, a form of language that is eventually transposed into literature as a new way of understanding the world is established in genres opposed to those considered serious. It is in the field of serious-smiling that lies the starting point for the promotion of varieties of the carnivalesque line - among them, the Menippean satire and the Socratic dialogue. According to the specialist, the provocation and the clash of ideas are rooted in Socrates' dialogues, developed in the Hellenic period by Plato and other philosophers. The essence of this genre is "the Socratic discovery of the dialogic nature of thought, of truth itself" (BAKHTIN, 1984, p.132),[13] in opposition to the official monologism imposed by the traditional discourse. The Socratic dialogue is responsible for bringing into life ideas that arise from provocation, questioning and, in turn, reflection. The philosopher is the facilitator, the one who directs the other to truth and desubjectivation.

Maieutics occurs through the anacrisis, a provocation of the word by the word itself, and the syncrisis, a confrontation of two different points of view. Both turn thought into dialogue and, once externalized, become replicas. As they descend from the serious genres, the strong rhetorical element remains, albeit painted with the colors of the carnivalesque worldview, which remove from their nuances the "one-sided rhetorical seriousness, its rationality, its singular meaning, its dogmatism" (1984, p.107).[14] When grounded in carnivalized genres, the resources of syncrisis and anacrisis lose their rhetorical-abstract nature, because in Carnival there is no environment for discussion of

[13] For reference, see footnote 1.
[14] For reference, see footnote 1.

philosophical or abstract questions. Thus, Menippean satire, according to Bakhtin, cannot be considered "pure product of the decomposition of the Socratic dialogue, since its roots reach *directly* back into carnivalized folklore" (1984, p.112; emphasis in original).[15] The satirical aspect gives a lighter, more laughable tone to the original genre.

After studying the Menippean satires, Bakhtin lists some particularities according to the way they developed in Antiquity. Highlighted below are those that will guide this study:

- new treatment given to reality: heroes cease to be legendary characters, being put into a familiar environment;
- presence of the comic element: through satire the focus is placed on a certain character, a certain situation, which in turn ridicules it;
- use of free fantasy: heroes go to heaven, hell, unknown places and are seen in extraordinary situations, a resource that aims at experimenting the truth, highlighting ideas and themes;
- man is presented in his essence and entirety, free from social conventions;
- three-planned construction: displacement from Earth to Olympus and from the latter to the nether world; at the threshold or entrance of heaven and/or the nether world;
- violation of the rules and of that which is generally accepted: scenes depicting scandals, eccentric behaviors, improper statements. These include speech violations and mixed styles;
- focus on the present: open discussion with different positions.

Therefore, the serious-smiling has strong links with carnivalization, a phenomenon whose contesting, subversive and laughable essences are articulated in order to mobilize the centripetal and centrifugal forces present in life.

[15] For reference, see footnote 5.

2 Dialogism in the Literary Work: An Unequivocal Encounter

> The work and the world represented in it enter the real world and enrich it,
> and the real world enters the work and its world.
> *Mikhail Bakhtin*[16]

Based on the concepts of dialogism outlined from the philosophical theory proposed by the Bakhtin Circle presented so far, we will examine which utterative-discursive mechanisms are involved in the structuring of the Verissian text. We have chosen excerpts up to subchapter seventeen, as they can be fruitful for analysis.

Among the selected passages are: Captain Rodrigo's entry into the village of Santa Fé; a conversation between Rodrigo and Juvenal Terra in a general store; a dialogue between Rodrigo and Ricardo Amaral, in which the former asks permission to stay; and a conversation between Captain Rodrigo and Padre Lara, the local parish priest. In the latter, Padre Lara tries to convince Rodrigo that he must leave the village, since Colonel Ricardo Amaral, the local oligarch, did not want the Captain to stay in Santa Fé. Rodrigo, a man with a strong personality, says he will not do as he is told because he intends to marry Bibiana Terra. This decision increases the tension, as the girl had been promised to the son of colonel Bento Amaral. This conversation takes a religious turn, as Rodrigo compares Ricardo Amaral to a God/god.[17] It should be noted that, in order to maintain temporality and narrative logic, the investigation will follow the sequence of events as they are shown in the chapter: the arrival of the captain, the meeting with Juvenal, the dialogue with Padre Lara, the conversation with the colonel.

Concerning the narrative/textual syntax, it is possible to see the mirror of reality: in a single and unrepeatable event, the creator-author puts five subjects in a single time - 1828, after the Farroupilha Revolution - and in a single space - Santa Fé, still as a village, implying its inhabitants' provincialism. Until that moment there were few residents, subordinate to Ricardo Amaral's clan. Exposed is the discretionary, oppressive, and dominant character of this colonel, a granted title – characteristic of the regency period – that gave him recruitment powers for the benefit of the government and elites. There was

[16] BAKHTIN, M. Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a Historical Poetics. *In*: BAKHTIN, M. *The Dialogic Imagination*: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin. Edited by Michael Holquist; translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981. pp.84-258

[17] In the text, the word is in lower case, emphasizing the colonel's omnipotence.

no organized resistance or even open opposition to the Amaral family. Such figurativizations endorse Voloshinov's (1986)[18] assumptions referring to the fact that there will always be an oppressive leader and an excluded mass subservient to economic power and political prestige, and that there will always be a discourse marked by the power struggle. Captain Rodrigo is going to become the binding pole of this contestation, a staunch defender of liberal ideals and an acid critic of the current order, discussed in the following section.

2. 1 Discursive Strategies

At the beginning of the text, Rodrigo Cambará enters the village of Santa Fé, "coming from no one knew where" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.158) ,[19] which alludes to the circulation of discourses originating from different environments and values, as proposed by the Circle. The patent *captain* indicates a person who had probably been in combat and who had survived many dangers. In addition, the figure of the warrior suggests the virtuous, adventurous and fierce model of an epic hero. The narrator depicts the character with an enigmatic aura derived from the uncertainty of his origin: "He must have been somewhere in his middle thirties" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.158).[20] Time is a past tense removed from the moment of the enunciation. "One day he arrived on horseback" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.158)[21] and becomes present and concrete: "October afternoon of 1828" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.158).[22] The *chronos* is figurativized "in the sun of that October afternoon," directing the narrative to a euphorizing status. As the character is described, it is possible to project, from his garments, the contradictory image that he will raise among the inhabitants: he wears a military dolman and, concomitantly, *bombachas*; he carries a sword and a guitar. Such features refer to the *gaucho* ethos of bravery, savagery, and the character's willful spirit, the "handsome *masculine* head haughtily erect" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.158; emphasis added).[23] At the same time, he reveals a friendly and gregarious behavior that is unraveled throughout the chapter: "[...] he went

[18] For reference, see footnote 4.
[19] For reference, see footnote 6.
[20] For reference, see footnote 6.
[21] For reference, see footnote 6.
[22] For reference, see footnote 6.
[23] For reference, see footnote 6.

in with spurs dragging [...] and then shouted, *like an old acquaintance*" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.158; emphasis added);[24] "[...] Rodrigo *extended his hand*, saying: - *Squeeze those bones*" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.159; emphasis added);[25] "We nearly fell afoul of each other, eh, *friend* Juvenal?" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.212; emphasis added).[26]

In terms of content, the narrator makes it clear that Rodrigo will nourish such antithetical feelings when he describes "*that falcon glare of his that* both *irritated and fascinated people*" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.209, *emphasis added*).[27] To make the character even more mysterious, the narrator links the hero's glare to that of a falcon, a combination that suggests a man who is shrewd, vigorous and eager for freedom, as well as seductive. These stylistic-discursive features build Rodrigo's unfinished image. The character is a wanderer, a foreigner who enters the quiet village and gets off his horse precisely in front of Nicolau's store. The hero, therefore, leaves an undifferentiated space – the road – and enters a different space: "in front of the chinaberry tree" and "Nicolau's store" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.158).[28]

In this environment, Rodrigo begins a dialogue in a jovial tone: "'D afternoon and here's my quip: little 'uns with the flat of my knife I whip, the big 'uns I face with the tip!" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.209).[29] Juvenal Terra, one of the store's regulars, interprets Rodrigo's tone as a provocation and confronts the hero, reaffirming the stereotype of the brave *gaucho* who will not take insults lying down. By giving voice to speakers embedded in the discourse, the narrator creates an effect of sense of truth, so the hearer has the illusion of listening to the other, reproducing a conversation within that cultural context:

> [...] But from one corner of the room rose up a young dark fellow who pulled his knife, glared at Rodrigo, and exclaimed: – All right, do it! (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.158).[30]
>
> The other men drew back as though to leave the arena clear.
> [...] Around here there's a lot of he-men too.
> [...] – You mean there're bully boys around here. And of course their hackles will rise at sight of me.... (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.160).[31]

[24] For reference, see footnote 6.
[25] For reference, see footnote 6.
[26] For reference, see footnote 6.
[27] For reference, see footnote 6.
[28] For reference, see footnote 6.
[29] For reference, see footnote 6.
[30] For reference, see footnote 6.
[31] For reference, see footnote 6.

Although presented by the narrator with a bold and defiant air, Rodrigo, in this situation, is sensible, explaining that he was fearless and could fight if he wanted to: "'I'm fed up with fights. I don't want to pull a weapon for at least a month.' He turned back to the dark man and in a serious, conciliatory tone said, 'Put away your knife, friend'" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.159).[32] When replying, the alleged opponent drops his guard and agrees to have a friendly talk. As a simulacrum of real life, the dialogues held between the two men show Juvenal's axiological position towards Rodrigo, in an evaluative attitude:

> Now Juvenal was smoothing the cornhusk with his knife blade, phlegmatically. *His eyes still rested on the stranger, summing him up*. He thought the costume was funny: gaucho bombachas, such full loose trousers, and the soldier's tunic, so tight and close-fitting. *He was somewhat puzzled by the red kerchief. The guitar slung at the shoulder also added to his distrust. He had never felt drawn to a man who lived wandering like a tramp* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.161, emphasis added).[33]

> Juvenal struck a light to his cigarette, took a couple of puffs *and sat watching the stranger. He was already beginning to find his face attractive. Only his way of staring was not very agreeable, as you might say: in those eyes there were great recklessness, great arrogance, and so an air of superiority* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.161, emphasis added).[34]

During the conversation, it is known that this hero, different from the epic model, is humanized and imperfect, since he presents himself as a wanderer, a person uncommitted to life, a loafer. Later in the narrative, Rodrigo is said to like gambling, women, and drink. The reader can also get to know a bit of the character's hazy biography: he had been in many wars and, as a wanderer, had never taken root anywhere, but Santa Fé had appealed to him, and he could stay in the village forever. Since Rodrigo's origins are not mentioned, nothing is known about how the environment in which he lived influenced him or the education he was given. Thus, the character's each and every action is in the present: "I *like* a man to go straight to the point" [...]. "Cambará male never *dies* in bed" [...]. "If they give me orders, I *fight*" [...] I *am* too old to change" [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, pp.184-189; emphasis added).[35] Having considered the stranger a

[32] For reference, see footnote 6.
[33] For reference, see footnote 6.
[34] For reference, see footnote 6.
[35] For reference, see footnote 6.

daring person, Juvenal replies by saying that Santa Fé was no place for people like Rodrigo: "And the rest of your life may be thirty years, three months or three days [...]. Because you got a reckless look" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.160).[36] The possibility of non-permanence in the village gives rise to conflict and later dialogues.

In a small village, the news about the arrival of an outsider quickly reaches the ears of Colonel Ricardo Amaral, who immediately sends a subordinate with the mission to get rid of the unwanted visitor, which highlights the colonel's social, political and economic supremacy. Even the low clergy, represented by priests of small parishes who depended on Amaral's power for their own subsistence, submit themselves to the oligarch's orders and counter-orders. This inferior condition is particularly exemplified when the Colonel gives Padre Lara the task of telling the Captain that not only was he not welcome to Santa Fé, but that he should leave the village as soon as possible. This order projects the authoritarian image of Ricardo Amaral on the inhabitants of Santa Fé. In this sense, the Colonel leads the vicar *to do something*, that is, his command represents man's action on man: "The priest was working for the Big Chief Rain-maker of the earth. Naturally it had been old Amaral who had had the church constructed, who had bought the images, who gave the priest a house to live in" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.186).[37] At the store, Padre Lara asks the Captain to go the place where the parish priest was so they could talk.

> – Good evening, Captain! – said the priest, smiling.
> – Good evening! – said Rodrigo, ceasing to play.
> – Can you spare me a moment for a word?
> – Of course.
> Rodrigo laid the guitar on the counter and stood up.
> – Outside here, if it's not inconvenient.
> They both went out to the square (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.183).[38]

The priest asks Rodrigo to have a conversation in an open and relatively neutral place, in the square in front of the fig tree. Nicolau's store and the square become an arena due to the struggle between the voices that permeate and will permeate the dialogues waged in those spaces. The passing of time is also noticed, since the conversation takes

[36] For reference, see footnote 6.
[37] For reference, see footnote 6.
[38] For reference, see footnote 6.

place some days after the Captain's arrival and at night. In the dialogues, the present is the reference, as the speakers are talking when the action is represented (now). There are two individuals explicitly involved in the conversation and a third one, the Colonel, is indirectly referenced. Of note is the appearance of everyday principles in the time of enunciation, for, in the universe of the characters, submission represents a consolidated value recognized as an unyielding condition, i.e., "that's the way it is." The parish priest tries to manipulate Rodrigo through intimidation when he speaks on behalf of the "Lord of Santa Fé." The priest's image inspires confidence as he postulates the Church's discourse. Meanwhile, the Colonel's authority is regarded as divine, entitled by God, and the vicar, by acting as a man of God, confirms the fact:

> – You have to submit to the authorities.
> – And who is the authority here?
> – Colonel Ricardo Amaral II (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.185).[39]
>
> – Saddle your horse and leave tomorrow (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.186).[40]
>
> – He it is that settles all disputes: a species of justice of the piece (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.187).[41]
>
> The vicar then entered upon a long history of the Amaral family, its tradition, its habits, its manias, and its prestige with the government of the province (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.187).[42]
>
> – From all I've seen, that Amaral is a god (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.188).[43]

When a third person speaks, what he/she says is established through direct speech, expressing the discursive memory of a given social formation and the multiple perspectives on reality. The "stay"/"leave" paradigms provide the opportunity to scrutinize the speakers' behavior. For both the priest and the Colonel, freedom is something uncomfortable and unnerving, being a synonym of disobedience, confusion, disorder. Domination is something euphoric, peaceful and comfortable for the person dominating the other. Non-subjection to this structure is seen as insolence, disrespect to

[39] For reference, see footnote 6.
[40] For reference, see footnote 6.
[41] For reference, see footnote 6.
[42] For reference, see footnote 6.
[43] For reference, see footnote 6.

the instituted rules. Thus, in order to validate their perception, the dominating voices try to euphorize their behaviors - by turning them into something ordinary when using the first person plural - and disphorize Rodrigo's. It can also be seen that, for the priest to impose this authoritarian, exclusionary discourse, his language assumes an advisory tone at the same time that he disqualifies his opponent's place of origin ("ownerless, lawless field"). Then the priest changes his speech, reversing the poles of the conflict (Santa Fé versus Rodrigo). In this new relationship between subject and space, the latter is said to be inappropriate to the former. As such, the speech oscillates, at times disphorizing and euphorizing the space, at times the subject. As seen below, the last two quotes follow the path of disphorization.

> – If you come to a town like *ours*, you cannot proceed as if you were still in an ownerless, lawless field [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.185; emphasis added).[44]
>
> – Because Santa Fé is no place for a man of your temperament (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.186).[45]
>
> [...] you are a man who has come from many wars, likes gambling, women, and drink [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.186).[46]
>
> – And it is no dishonor to obey that authority, when the orders *given us* are just, proper, and for the *general good* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.185; emphasis added).[47]

As the narrator described Rodrigo Cambará at the beginning of the chapter, we can notice that the hero is a character with openly passionate and intense actions, and his philosophical conception lies in challenging authority and refusing subjection. In this sense, acceptance of the status quo is dysphoric and tense, while refusal is euphoric. Domination for Rodrigo is dysphoric and freedom is euphoric.

> – I never take offense at a polite request. I get warmed up when they try to order me around. If they ask me politely, I do it. If they give me orders, I fight (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.184).[48]

[44] For reference, see footnote 6.
[45] For reference, see footnote 6.
[46] For reference, see footnote 6.
[47] For reference, see footnote 6.
[48] For reference, see footnote 6.

> – You have hot blood, Captain (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.187).[49]
>
> – What I aim to do I've already told half the town. I'm going to stay (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.188).[50]
>
> – Then the man does not want to hear about me... (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.188).[51]
>
> – [...] I want to stay here... I may even buy a little land and start raising my own cattle. Perhaps I might even get married (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.197).[52]

The dialogues show the manifestation of the front and reverse sides of discourse, ideologies, social values, struggling truths. They also demonstrate that each speaker creates a standpoint guided by his own. It is possible to see the struggle between these forces, structured under the following tensions: permanence *versus* departure, obedience *versus* challenge; freedom *versus* domination. When different values are confronted, dialogism becomes present, constructed through the serious-smiling genres of carnivalized literature, among which are the rhetorical resources of the Menippean satire. In order to structure the dialogue, the parish priest uses the rhetoric of exclusion, sometimes explaining that Rodrigo is not welcome, sometimes emphasizing that Santa Fé is not a good place for him. The Captain, in turn, uses laughter and a joking tone to deconstruct the official discourse. Those are expressive resources of carnivalization, a constitutive feature of Menippean satire, as will be seen in the next segment.

2.2 Revisiting Bakhtin's Carnivalization in Verissian Literature

Carnivalization is present not only in the excerpt under analysis, but also in many other moments of the narrative, as seen in the nighttime dialogue between Padre Lara and Captain Rodrigo Cambará, which takes place in a square in the heart of the village, on All Soul's Day. Around the public square there are a small church, Bibiana's house, the Colonel's big stone house, and a large fig tree. The square thus corresponds explicitly to the carnivalesque environment, a place of free familiarity among men that creates the

[49] For reference, see footnote 6.
[50] For reference, see footnote 6.
[51] For reference, see footnote 6.
[52] For reference, see footnote 6.

opportunity to break hierarchies. Since space is known to establish behaviors, the way one speaks in that space is carnivalized. Therefore, in such an appropriate place for the breaking of instituted patterns and norms, language breaks free of labels and opens itself to obscene vocabulary. The priest works as a topographic representative of what is elevated, socially and spiritually serious: the good, the right, the divine. Rodrigo, in turn, will be the topographic representative of what is low, comical: irreverence, vulgarity, lust, pleasure. All Soul's Day refers to sobriety, recollection, mourning, but the hero, with a guitar in his hands, sang *modinhas*. It is in this counterpoint that lies the bivocality of carnivalized literature.

The religious man begins the conversation by enjoying the time: "Fine night! – exclaimed the priest" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.239; emphasis added).[53] The priest creates a pleasant image of himself, beginning with the tone of his voice, in a passive and benevolent attitude towards his interlocutor: "The priest's voice grew velvety – Very well. Very well. Let's not quarrel" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.187).[54] Rodrigo, in turn, assesses the priest:

> *Rodrigo looked sidelong at the other [...] There was,* however, *a quality so attractive in his [*the vicar's*] grave, slow voice that it was possible for a person to like him,* so long as he didn't look at the ugly, wrinkled face *[...]* But there in the moonlight the vicar's face as it were softened, lost its ugliness, and *all the best in it revealed itself in the enveloping softness of the voice* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.183; emphasis added).

Then, in a manipulative attempt to convince the Captain to change his set of values, the priest asks a question about someone who is present (you) and someone who is absent (him). The question's utterative condition anticipates, from a grammatical structure, its interlocutor's reply. In order to prevent the discourse from being denied and to inspire confidence, the priest uses a passage from the Bible to begin the debate: "Do you remember that story from the Holy Scriptures about the fig tree that gave forth no fruit?" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.183).[55] The hero replies that he was unaware of religious matters: "I'm not much up on those affairs of religion, Padre" (VERISSIMO, 1951,

[53] For reference, see footnote 6.
[54] For reference, see footnote 6.
[55] For reference, see footnote 6.

p.183).[56] Endorsed by the authority of the biblical text, the vicar refers to the metaphor of the fruitless fig tree by alluding to the idea that men who do not engage in good deeds will be cursed and punished, as was the case with the tree mentioned in his talk. This image is a preamble to the coming clash between himself and Rodrigo Cambará, and, at the same time, an attempt to intimidate Cambará before he gives a reply.

Unlike Socrates, who led his interlocutor to desubjectivation, the priest tries to make Rodrigo accept the official monologism imposed by tradition. In fact, Padre Lara projects images of discipline and obedience, by using circumlocutions, with the purpose of leading the hero to adhere to a monologic discourse. As an utterative strategy, it elucidates the cultural background through arguments accepted by tradition to prove the fact that in all social spheres there is a hierarchy to be respected:

> – As a soldier you know that in a battalion there has to be discipline, the soldier must obey his superior.
> – Just as each home has a head, each city also has an authority.
> – Ever since the world has been a world, there have been some to command and some to obey, a master and a lord. The younger obeys the elder...
> – The son obeys the father, the wife obeys the husband. If things were not so, the world would be in disorder... (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.185).[57]

In an attempt to prevent his ideas from being refused, Padre Lara lures Rodrigo Cambará into acknowledging his own ignorance by noticing that his life revolves only around that province and therefore that he lacks broader knowledge. Thus, by following the logics of a reproduced system, Rodrigo is expected by the priest to understand that he is uninformed and will remain so if he does not submit to the local authority.

> – Captain! You should read Universal History. You should read about the other continents, especially about Europe. Don't think that the world is just the Province of São Pedro. [...]
> – The world is very vast. The supreme authority of a nation is the King. He holds all the temporal power. But the spiritual power is held by the Pope, representative of God on earth (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.185).[58]

[56] For reference, see footnote 6.
[57] For reference, see footnote 6.
[58] For reference, see footnote 6.

Throughout the excerpts, the voices take turns confronting each other: sometimes the priest structures arguments grounded in tradition and poses questions, causing Rodrigo to think through anacrisis; sometimes it is Rodrigo who acts similarly, consolidating syncrisis, in different approaches to the same object. Replying in a laconic and scathing fashion, the hero puts reality to the test and under a new perspective:

> – There are men like the fig tree of the Scriptures. They have nothing to give [...].
> – *True. There are***...** (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.184, emphasis added).[59]

> – To be quite sincere with you, Captain, what I wanted was to get you to stop singing and playing the guitar.
> – *Is it a sin to sing and play the guitar?* [...]
> – You are a soldier, are you not?
> – *Andy ou are a priest...* [...]
> – Ever since the world has been a world, there have been some to command and some to obey [...]
> – *That depends*... (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.185, emphasis added).[60]

> – [...]The son obeys the father, the wife obeys the husband. If things were not so, the world would be in disorder...
> – *But whoever told you the world is not in disorder?*
> – Don't think that the world is just the Province of São Pedro.
> – *For me it has been...* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.185, emphasis added).[61]

> – [...] But I know you are a man who has come from many wars, likes gambling, women, and drink.
> – *And who doesn't?* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.186, emphasis added).[62]

By questioning the priest's comments through a new philosophical and religious proposal, biunivocal forces are directed "toward a shift of authorities and truths, a shift of world orders" (1984, p.127),[63] which are elements of carnivalization in the Menippean satire variant. Carnivalization, therefore, is both ideological and dialogical, and these constitutive features are figurativized in terms of content and expression: the priest is fragile, asthmatic, older, deprived of beauty, and dresses in black. Rodrigo is vigorous, healthy, young, handsome, and wears flashy clothes. The speakers' character is also shown in opposition: one is dissolute, passionate, and a vagabond; the other is refined,

[59] For reference, see footnote 6.
[60] For reference, see footnote 6.
[61] For reference, see footnote 6.
[62] For reference, see footnote 6.
[63] For reference, see footnote 6.

balanced, and peaceful; one seeks carnal values; the other seeks spiritual values; one approves of centrifugal forces, the other defends centripetal forces, that is, maintaining the *status quo*. From the moment such ambivalences are recognized, laughter as a dethroning power appears, for laughter is the aesthetic resource that enables the confrontation of official or hegemonic knowledge, shining a light on the idea that man is an imperfect being.

> – You are not a religious man?
> – No. Religion I've never needed.
> – There are persons who *remember* the Virgin only *when it thunders.*
> – When it thunders I remember my poncho.
> – There are men who *go through* life belittling the Church, but *at the hour of death they have* a priest called to confess themselves.
> Rodrigo gave a laugh.
> – Call a priest in the hour of death? I figure I won't have time for that [...].
> – Have you ever *thought* of what *may happen to you* after death?
> – No.
> –*Have* you no fear of going to Hell?
> Rodrigo crossed his legs, leaned back, and supported his shoulders against the chapel door.
> – Padre, I've heard that in Heaven there's neither gambling nor drinking nor racing nor dancing nor women. If that's the way it is, I prefer to go to Hell. Besides that, the folks everybody says are going to Heaven for being so good and sinless are the most boring people I've ever encountered in all my life. I've known a lot of rascals who were likeable, a lot of sinners who were good company. If they go to Hell, there's where I want to go.
> – You are taking serious things *lightly*. But you do *believe* there is a Heaven and there is a Hell, don't you?
> – To speak frankly, I never think of those things [...].
> – But do you never *think* of God?
> – Once in a while.
> – Do you not *recognize* that He *made* the world and all the people there are in it?
> – If God made the world and the people, He's already dropped us, repenting His job [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, pp.188-189; emphasis added).[64]

Note that the priest's speech is built through a binary opposition of the sacred and the profane, the above and the below, the wise and the fool, heaven and hell, with the purpose of bringing to the human and concrete level what is divine and abstract. Faced with this opposition of values, however, the hero shows no attachment to conventional

[64] For reference, see footnote 6.

notions and violates the established norms with his blunt criticism. The dethronement of norms, conventions, as set out in these excerpts of Verissimo's novel, is affiliated with the status of Menippean satire. A representation of non-obedience to any hierarchy or authority, it is a stance demeaning powerful people by the very presence of obscenity, the mundane, pleasure, and everything that equals the individuals. Not only does the hero's joking tone degrade that which is sublime, authoritarian and stern, but it also magnifies what is bawdy by the use of a mundane vocabulary: "[…] in Heaven there's neither gambling nor drinking nor racing nor dancing nor women. […] I've known a lot of rascals who were likeable [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.189).[65]

The fragment is characterized by veridiction. Truth, for the priest, lies in the fact that one must have faith in God, because people always turn to Him in the last moments. The priest challenges Rodrigo and, through reasoning, tries to persuade him that there is God, Heaven, Hell, shifting the conversation from the earthly domain to the divine sphere. In order to be more convincing, the priest establishes an opposition between an *I* that believes and *others* who do not believe or do so only in a desperate situation. In this clash he establishes an interplay between present and future tenses (emphasized in the excerpt) to overmodalize[66] his belief and persuade his interlocutor of his truth.

However, for Rodrigo, these values postulated by the Church offer nothing, and he considers them nonsense. He then defies divine authority and tries to reverse the manipulation play by refusing that institution's values with unsuitable statements. The destructive laughter is fomented when the vicar, expecting a response consistent with the question's intended scope, finds the hero deconstructing the serious tone by unexpectedly altering the poles. This leaves the priest disturbed: "You are taking *serious* things *lightly*" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.189; emphasis added).[67] By disphorizing the values proposed to him by Padre Lara, Rodrigo brings forth a comical catharsis[68] whose purpose is to explain

[65] For reference, see footnote 6.
[66] Overmodalization is a complex sort of utterance because it unites the cognitive and the affective; that is, it unites knowledge to allow competence (being-able-to-cause-to-know). Father Lara intends to teach Rodrigo by showing him several realities so that he starts believing them.
[67] For reference, see footnote 6.
[68] The term "catharsis," created by Aristotle, appears in his *Poetics* (1449-27) when the Stagirite mentions that it has the function of purifying the feelings of pity and terror aroused in the tragedy. In line with this thought, many scholars - Richard Janko (1984), Kenneth Reckford (1987), Ivo Bender (1996), among others - have studied the Aristotelian catharsis and understood that this idea could be extended to comedy as long as the pillars (pity and terror) that give rise to the purging of the viewer's emotions in the tragedy are replaced by other structures when used in comedy. Following Richard Janko's (1984) studies on this genre, Ivo Bender (1996) defends the presence of a comic catharsis. For this playwright and researcher, the

the hypocrisy of society and to evaluate it with critical distance, hence validating Bakhtin's opinion that "[i]t is necessary to destroy and rebuild the entire false picture of the world, to sunder the false hierarchical links between objects and ideas" (1981, p.169).[69] In a new form of apprehending the truth, Rodrigo sees Hell as a pleasant place, with fun and interesting people; Heaven, in turn, is dull, occupied by boring individuals.

In another passage, a new feature of the Menippean satire emerges when the narrative enters the domain of sexuality, in carnivalesque descents associated with the earth and the body. The relationship between high and low, in their topographic corporal aspect, is established by the head (eyes, mouth) and genitals, respectively. According to Bakhtin, the mouth is the gateway to the bodily hells. It is where food is consumed, a source of lust and perdition: "The latter [the mouth] corresponds in grotesque topography to the belly, the uterus. Thus, side by side with the erotic image of the *trou* ('hole'), the entrance to the underworld is represented: the gaping mouth of Satan, the 'jaws of hell'" (BAKHTIN, 1984, p.329).[70] In the text, we can notice that two of the seven capital sins alternate and intertwine, namely gluttony and lust. In every moment Rodrigo desires Bibiana, he is hungry, in a topographic combination of the high and the low, in a representation of everything that is associated with life, such as copulation and eating:

> A new silence grew. Rodrigo was seeing in his mind the image of Bibiana: the full *mouth*, the oblique *eyes*. She was like a *fruit*; she made a man want to bite that *mouth*, those *cheeks*, those breasts. In that moment his desire for Bibiana confused itself with a sensation of *hunger* and Rodrigo began to think alternately *of the girl* and *a roast of beef* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.241; emphasis added).[71]
>
> Rodrigo *thought* of Bibiana's body. Naked upon a bed, her breasts *white curds*, her plump legs, her red *lips* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.190; emphasis added).[72]
>
> But before the world ends, thought Rodrigo, I have to sleep with Bibiana Terra. And again he felt *hungry* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.190; emphasis added).[73]

spectator of comedy also purges his passions "by releasing previously susceptible tensions that, when dissolved, give way to laughter" (BENDER, 1996, p.52). From the original in Portuguese: "pelo alívio de tensões previamente suscitadas que, esvaziando-se, dão lugar ao riso."

[69] For reference, see footnote 16.

[70] For reference, see footnote 9.

[71] For reference, see footnote 6.

[72] For reference, see footnote 6.

[73] For reference, see footnote 6.

Rodrigo looks at Bibiana's house and his gaze goes from the closest to the farthest: "[...] reflected Rodrigo, *stealing a glance at Bibiana's house*. […] Rodrigo *eyed* Pedro's house. He *saw* the windows close" (VERISSIMO, 1951, pp.186-187; emphasis added).[74] The conversation annoys Rodrigo, who becomes increasingly blasé, as if what the priest told him did not deserve much attention, so the enunciation varies from the bored tone of words to the enthusiasm of daydreams:

> Father Lara was talking, talking... And then he tugged at the sleeve of the captain's tunic and asked:
> – Is it or is it not? Is it or is it not?
> – It must be, Padre, it must be [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.186).[75]

As the priest speaks, Rodrigo tries to predict the assessment approach in an inner dialogue: "Now I wonder what he's getting at? reflected Rodrigo [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.185).[76] Concurrently, with the priest's verbiage, Rodrigo's lust for Bibiana continues in an incongruous merging of the sacred and the profane. If up to that moment Rodrigo seemed to be a libertine, now the narrator reveals that he in fact *is* one, substantiating the image of a satyr who will do everything to seduce the girl, even marry her, which would imprison his adventurous spirit: "He had always considered marriage, too, to be a disaster, a prison, a kind of death" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.186).[77] It is also noted that sexual performance is associated with bravery: "No male Cambará has ever got to beyond fifty" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.245).[78] Using free indirect speech, the hero does not repudiate the lewd thoughts of Bibiana, and is bothered by the priest's speech, which leads to a new treatment to reality:

> He couldn't waste a night like that in the company of a priest [...] The padre recommenced his sermon, but Rodrigo was not paying much attention [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.186).[79]
>
> The vicar then entered upon a long history of the Amaral Family [...]. He imagined Bibiana undressing, taking off her blouse, her skirt... That bit of ankle he had glimpsed when the girl climbed into the wagon in front of the cemetery was now amplified: it was a well turned leg, a

[74] For reference, see footnote 6.
[75] For reference, see footnote 6.
[76] For reference, see footnote 6.
[77] For reference, see footnote 6.
[78] For reference, see footnote 6.
[79] For reference, see footnote 6.

> plump knee, a thigh... Shortly, aroused, Rodrigo was holding the naked Bibiana in his arms, her breasts swaying, White and tremulous as new curds just out of the milk pan. And in his thoughts he laid her on the bed and they were both curled up together kissing when Padre Lara pressed his arm [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.187).[80]

The consequence of two speeches confronting each other is the presence of discursive clarity and obscurity, one facing the other. In the midst of the signs suggesting life, death is introduced. In Rodrigo's speech, the lexical recurrences denote an emphasis of the semantic content related to black, dark, night, aging, death, waning:

> Father Lara was walking slowly. He had an enormous head, disproportionate to the *rachitic, gangling body* [...]. Only now did he notice that the old man had an *asthmatic* way of breathing (VERISSIMO, 1951, pp.183-184; emphasis added).[81]

> For him padre was *black and ominous as a vulture*. Where there was padre there was *disaster or death: burial, extreme-unction or marriage* [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.242; emphasis added).[82]

> Take a flower and see what a marvelous, delicate... – the priest fell silent, panting. […] – Have you ever thought of that miraculous thing that is *birth, growing, living*...
> – *And growing old, and dying, and rotting* – completed Rodrigo, thinking that Bibiana one day would also *grow old* (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.190; emphasis added).[83]

Having such different values, both characters converge on the fact that they are simple and sincere in their remarks. As the priest's speech is organized based on the knowledge of tradition, however, he is not successful in his manipulation, as Rodrigo's speech both reaffirms his worldview and frustrates the vicar's expectation of convincing him. In the outcome of this polyphonic dialogue, the two men's opinions remain unaltered:

> – What am I to do about it? I was born this way and I'm too old to change.

[80] For reference, see footnote 6.
[81] For reference, see footnote 6.
[82] For reference, see footnote 6.
[83] For reference, see footnote 6.

> [...] – Very well. Very well. Let's not quarrel. You need not change. Stay as you are, if that is your pleasure [...]" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.187).[84]

The parish priest becomes fond of Rodrigo because he is frank, honest and loyal to his principles – even if they are not accepted by society –, which arouses in the parish priest love, friendship, admiration: "The padre was about to retort, but stopped himself. There was a short silence and at last the vicar confessed: "Want me to tell you something? I like you. You may be sure of that. I do [...]" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.191).[85] Nevertheless, the priest asks Rodrigo to have a conversation with colonel Amaral and, as it was in both their interests, the hero accepts the challenge of facing the "Lord of Santa Fé": "That terrible ogre must be asleep, he thought. And he felt the urge to confront him" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.188).[86]

The joyous regenerating principle and the carnivalesque interlude are broken when, on the day following his conversation with the vicar, Rodrigo finds himself facing the region's oligarchic government. The free and festive environment of the public square gives way to the austere and solemn heart of the big house, specifically Ricardo Amaral's living room.

Opposite the square stands, alone and majestic, the Amaral family's big stone house. The term "big stone house" denotes both size and power, with the adjective "big" expressing an augmentative and the stones giving the idea of a medieval fortress, of indestructibility. The other dwellings surrounding the house are covered with straw, showing the vulnerability and subservience of those inhabitants to the Lord of Santa Fé: "Rodrigo stared at the big stone house of the Amarals, yonder on the other side of the square" (VERISSIMO, 1951, pp.187-188).[87] The rooms in the big house, filled with dark, austere furniture, ratify the idea of domination and resistance to change. The objects arranged in the colonel's room support the authoritarian discourse based on the Manichean logic of that society:

> On the following day, just after the siesta, through the good offices of Padre Lara, Rodrigo found himself face to face with the lord of Santa

[84] For reference, see footnote 6.
[85] For reference, see footnote 6.
[86] For reference, see footnote 6.
[87] For reference, see footnote 6.

> Fé. *It was one of the rooms of the great stone house*, where the few pieces of furniture it contained were *dark and rustic*. In a corner of the room Rodrigo saw *three swords and one rifle* on the wall. Colonel Ricardo was seated behind a *table of black wood*. He did not get up when the priest performed the introduction. He did not extend his hand to his visitor, nor did he invite him to sit down [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.193; emphasis added).[88]

In such a hostile and intimidating environment, one character confronts the other, trying to grasp an individual constructed by the bivocal discourse of appearance *versus* essence. The fragment below shows the axiological component that, according to Bakhtin, is intrinsic to all discourse.

> Rodrigo, on foot some four paces from the table, stared into the eyes of the owner of the house and his instinct shouted to him that here was a he-man [...]
> [...] He [the colonel] was in shirt sleeves, wore at his belt a silver knife, and, under the table, Rodrigo could see his high black leather boots (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.193).[89]

> I know a man even by the way he is dressed. That red kerchief of yours is a sign of braggadocio [...]
> I'm never wrong about a man or a horse. You've got a way of looking and thinking that makes people's blood boil (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.194).[90]

> We have few amusements, and a man accustomed to sprees, fandangos, races, gambling, and women can't stand this life. Santa Fé is a town of hard-working people (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.197).[91]

In the excerpt, Colonel Ricardo Amaral expresses his displeasure at Rodrigo's behavior and clothes, thus expecting the stranger to leave the village. However, when Amaral notices that his visitor will not fight him, his dissatisfaction turns into hostility. Then, he starts to consider Rodrigo a disloyal and disobedient man, a man he despises for having offended him. The Colonel wants revenge and uses his position to threaten the outsider, legitimizing the proud, authoritarian and adamant individual. His paused speech and actions are harsh and imperative in order to intimidate and frighten the adversary:

[88] For reference, see footnote 6.
[89] For reference, see footnote 6.
[90] For reference, see footnote 6.
[91] For reference, see footnote 6.

> Ricardo hesitated a second, nervously caressed the hilt of his knife [...]" – I could order you arrested [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.194).[92]
>
> – In this horse corral of Santa Fé, Young fellow, there's none but tame horses. Wild ones come, but I break 'em and brand 'em with my own brand (VERISSIMO, 1951, pp.194-195).[93]
>
> – Zé took the wife of one of my hired men... – Another pause. Ricardo Amaral's eyes glittered for an instant. – The husband put lead in his body. Zé Oliveira's body looked worse than a sieve... (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.197).[94]

When the meeting begins, Rodrigo tries to make a good impression on the colonel for him to believe in the stranger's good intentions.

> He was determined not to let himself be defeated or angered. If he roused the ire of the master of Santa Fé, he would be lost. Life for him in town would be unbearable and the best he could do was saddle his horse, mount, and go sing in another parish. But if he left now, goodbye Bibiana (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.195).[95]
>
> Rodrigo could be charming when he wished. He tried to speak calmly and blandly, and in his tone now there was not the humility of a poor man who bows before a potentate but the affectionate respect of a son addressing his father (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.196).[96]

Figurativized in his clothing and attitude, Rodrigo is paradoxical: while he attacks the authoritarian and centripetal discourse of patriarchalism, at the same time his interest is to subdue Bibiana; and while he follows a code of honor, he simultaneously defends a relative moral horizontality. In Rodrigo's speech there are centripetal forces that compel him toward a movement of tolerance and non-confrontation, and there are the centrifugal forces that resist the new, which are inherent to carnivalized literature.

As the discourse is constructed, a realism is engendered, that is, every narrative has a controversial dimension; the characters measure forces: conjunction for one implies disjunction for the other. The characters' values meet and interfere with each other. The Colonel, as a character, is the material, axiological corrective to Rodrigo's pretensions.

[92] For reference, see footnote 6.
[93] For reference, see footnote 6.
[94] For reference, see footnote 6.
[95] For reference, see footnote 6.
[96] For reference, see footnote 6.

The hero is excessive, has strong speech and gestures that convey courage and boldness: "If it were not for the respect I owe a man of your age, I'd make you swallow what you just said" (VERISSIMO, 2004, p.193).[97] He acknowledges that his attempt at manipulation is futile and that his principles of freedom and justice are nullified by the colonel. "[…] For a brief instant the two men measured each other with their eyes in a ferocious silence. Neither blinked. Neither spoke for several seconds. Rodrigo then realized the situation was hopeless [...]" (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.197).[98]

Rodrigo *seems to be* obstinate and, throughout the text, the narrator unravels that he *is*. The character wants to control individuality or freedom itself and does not base his actions on enforced laws. Indeed, he deconstructs the colonel's truths and imposes his own: he wants to stay and he stays: "[...] He went off toward Nicolau's store [...] joyously ruminating his last words. *Mas fico. Mas fico. Mas fico*. [...] And stay he did. Nothing happened to him" (VERISSIMO, 1951, pp.197-198).[99]

The hero complies with the values he establishes for himself: he refuses to adhere to dualism, to the tyranny of the *caudilhos*. Rodrigo embraces his uniqueness, accounts for it, does not allow himself to be subjected, thereby earning the respect of the other inhabitants [...] "gradually won over almost all the population of Santa Fé" [...] (VERISSIMO, 1951, p.198).[100] The character's attitude certifies what Bakhtin and the Circle assumed about the existence of a reaction to the centripetal character of human semiosis exerted by the interplay of social powers.

Conclusion

The fortuitous encounter between language and literature is one of the ways to become familiar with the subject and his or her condition in society. The novel configures historical-ideological values through its creator, reader, and content. It is in the materiality of the sign that the creator strips out social relations and it is also through them that ideologies manifest themselves. In his or her narrative/textual syntax, the creator

[97] For reference, see footnote 6.
[98] For reference, see footnote 6.
[99] For reference, see footnote 6.
[100] For reference, see footnote 6.

establishes subjects and discourses in a given time/space that refer to social events, thereby causing the transit of discourses originating from different places.

In the linguistic materiality of the literary text, it is possible to unveil the way that human discourse is organized in its relation with reality, with ideology, with the different moments of life. The creator-author listens to the echoes of the idea-voices of a distant past, and transports them to the materiality of the text.

Erico Veríssimo figuratizes the patriarchal-materialist society of that distant society of Santa Fé, thematizing social relations. In the voices of Padre Lara, Captain Rodrigo and Colonel Ricardo Amaral, three conceptions of the world can be observed: the subservience of a religious person who allies himself with the owner of the village; the independent thought of an individual who does not bend before this perspective, and the despotism manifested by a man who determines who stays and who leaves the village.

The characters' speeches have dialogues and engage in controversies, being transformed and/or even subverted, opposing themselves to the official monologism imposed by the traditional speech. There is therefore a multiplicity of confronting and clashing consciousnesses manifesting different points of view, wherein an unfinished worldview is implicit.

In the dialogues enacted in the excerpts analyzed, reality was put to the test from a new perspective, through the serious-smiling genres, aiming at the revision of the imposed conceptions and exposing their falsity in the light of a new world view. This clash was permeated by a tension between tradition, the idealized world, and the new, current world. The public square assumes different truths, dethroning what is high to the ground, breaking the hierarchies. In the process of literary carnivalization, in addition to the colloquial language, there are aspects regarding laughter, hierarchical elimination among men, the demeaning of a serious tone that evinces the fact that the word is never the last; it will be appreciated in a new way in a new context.

What distinguishes the novel is the fact that it is possible to study the characters at another time, from another perspective, because both the work and the characters portrayed therein cannot be finished. As Bakhtin proposes, even when a long time passes after the writing of a piece, literary works can be constantly updated, fulfilling the redemptive function of literature: "In the process of their posthumous life they are enriched with new meanings, new significance: it is as though these works outgrow what

they were in the epoch of their creation" (1987, p.4).[101] Indeed, the Verissian work re-establishes itself as a classic, because it "has never exhausted all it has to say" (CALVINO, 2000, p.6).[102]

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