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CYBERSPACE IS A STAGE:

Romeus & Julietas, a Multiplatform Adaptation

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***Romeus & Julietas*, a Multiplatform Adaptation**

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All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.

William Shakespeare, *As you Like It*, Act 2 Scene 7

RESUMO

A presente pesquisa explora uma adaptação amadora em contexto escolar de *Romeu e Julieta* para as redes sociais desenvolvida em comunidades em risco na cidade de Bagé, Rio Grande do Sul, na região de fronteira entre Brasil e Uruguai. O objeto de estudo é a adaptação multiplataforma *Romeus & Julietas*, uma reinterpretação da história dos jovens amantes em ambiente digital. Cada ato da peça é mostrado ou contado em uma plataforma diferente (através de textos, imagens e sons) e o leitor navega a adaptação preenchendo lacunas e reconhecendo as referências aos personagens arquetípicos e, assim, tecendo a história. A hipótese dessa pesquisa é que a adaptação pode ser uma ferramenta para aproximar a obra de Shakespeare do público e que as mídias digitais podem ser usadas como instrumentos para possibilitar a criação de adaptações amadoras. O objetivo dessa pesquisa é descrever como a adaptação multiplataforma *Romeus & Julietas* é apresentada e interpretar e explicar as escolhas adaptativas focando nas questões provocadas pela própria adaptação. O objeto de estudo exigiu uma abordagem metodológica multidisciplinar, que foi ajustada conforme o propósito desse trabalho. A pesquisa iniciou através de uma perspectiva descritiva para que fossem geradas ideias e, depois disso, a abordagem formal e cultural foram integradas. Por fim, a adaptação multiplataforma *Romeus & Julietas* apresenta um comentário crítico contextualizado e aborda a história dos amantes arquetípicos criativamente.

Palavras-chave: Adaptação; Romeu e Julieta; Shakespeare; Mídias Digitais.

ABSTRACT

The present research explores a student amateur adaptation of *Romeo & Juliet* to social networks developed by at risk communities in *Bagé*, a city in the border region of Brazil and Uruguay. The object of study is the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*, which is a reinterpretation of the young lovers' story in a digital environment. Each act of the play is shown or told in a different platform (through texts, images and sounds) and the reader needs to navigate through the adaptation filling in the gaps, recognizing references to the archetypical characters, and connecting the dots between the parts of the story. This dissertation raises the hypothesis that adaptation might be a tool to make Shakespeare's work more accessible to people and that digital media can be used as an instrument to make an amateur adaptation happen. The objective of this dissertation is to describe how the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* is presented and to interpret and explain the adaptational choices by focusing on issues raised and provoked by the adaptation itself. The object of study required multi-disciplinary methodological approaches, which were adapted to the purpose of this research. The research started from a descriptive perspective in order to generate ideas and integrate formal and cultural approaches. In conclusion, the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* provides a contextualized critical commentary and accesses the star-crossed lovers' archetype creatively.

Keywords: Adaptation; Romeo and Juliet; Shakespeare; Digital Media.

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INTRODUCTION

I have always been interested in the way adaptations of literary works functioned in other media and how some literary works 'traveled' and adapted through culture and time. In 2010 I learned about an adaptation of a literary work to a digital environment, the social network Twitter. *Such Tweet Sorrow* was an adaptation of Romeo and Juliet performed in Twitter and other social networks produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and Mudlark. The premise was that if the young star-crossed lovers lived nowadays, they would definitely use social media to communicate. *Such Tweet Sorrow* was not a major hit worldwide, but the innovations they presented were unprecedented. I followed the performance online and decided to write my doctoral dissertation project on the topic. Surprisingly, in 2012, *Such Tweet Sorrow* vanished from the web. The only thing left were some print screens I had taken some months before. I could not write a dissertation without an object of study. At this point I was already working as an assistant professor at *Universidade Federal do Pampa* in Bagé, Rio Grande do Sul, and coordinated an extension project in at risk communities that surround the university.

Bagé is a city on the border of Brazil and Uruguay with a unique culture and personality. It has been for some time a decadent region that once lived the abundance of *charque* culture. Nowadays there are no major factories or industries to provide jobs to the population. Most people work in shops or services in the city center and most young people leave town whenever they can to look for better job opportunities. Although the city is one of the largest in the region, the rural areas prevail over urban areas, and the strong *gaucho* culture mingles with hip-hop culture, especially in the peripheral areas beyond the city center. The dialect some people speak in the region is a mixture of Portuguese and Spanish and their habits resembles those of Uruguayans and Argentinians. The frontier region of Brazil and Uruguay presents a different kind of Brazil.

When I recognized this environment and realized that being a professor at a federal university could provide me with several teaching and learning opportunities that expanded the boundaries of the traditional classroom, I decided to experiment and try to create my own object of study. I had already in mind Romeo and Juliet because of *Such

Tweet Sorrow. Then one day an undergraduate student mentioned that the neighborhoods that surround the university went through a sort of brawl over territory some years ago. It reminded me right away about the Montagues and Capulets' clash.

I started to investigate and recognized the motif to develop the project *Romeus & Julietas* in 2013, which is the object of this dissertation. The initial hypothesis for the project was how a group of students on the border of Brazil and Uruguay would adapt *Romeo and Juliet*, to be more exact, how they would read, interpret and rewrite Shakespeare's work; and, inspired by *Such Tweet Sorrow*, how this group of people would use digital media to adapt the Bard's work in the 21st century. The result was *Romeus & Julietas,* a digital multiplatform adaptation.

Romeus & Julietas is a reinterpretation of the young lovers' story in a digital environment: its opening page is on the website *flavors.me*, which contains hyperlinks to other parts of the story in different platforms such as *Facebook*, *Vimeo*, *MySpace*, *Flickr* and *Blogspot*. Each act of the play is shown and/or told in a different platform (through texts, images and sounds) and the reader needs to navigate through the adaptation fulfilling the gaps, recognizing references to the archetypical characters, and linking the dots between the parts of the story.

This dissertation, which has been submitted to *Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras* from *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul* in fulfillment for the degree of Doctor, raises the hypothesis that adaptation might be a tool to make Shakespeare's work more accessible to people and that digital media can be used as an instrument to make an amateur adaptation happen. The objective of this dissertation is to describe how the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* is presented and to interpret and explain the adaptational choices by focusing on issues raised and provoked by *Romeus & Julietas* itself.

In order to contextualize this dissertation, I present the theme in Chapter 1, *Literature and Adaptation*, which discusses the concept of adaptation as an inherent aspect of artistic creation, presents Shakespeare as an adaptor of his time, argues that constant adaptations of the Bard's works across culture and time reinforce and challenge the canon and debates the status of the canon in the light of adaptation studies. In addition, in chapter 1.2, I present a brief revision of the field of adaptation studies and point out some key concepts that are useful for this dissertation.

In chapter 2, *New Media and Performance*, I present the theoretical background related to new media studies and performance. In chapter 2.1, *The Web and New Paradigms for Literature*, I discuss how innovations in technology might have affected the production and distribution of culture and, especially, literature. In chapter 2.2, *What is 'new' about New Media?*, I present fundamental characteristics of digital objects based on founding media scholars' ideas such as Janet Murray and Lev Manovich. In chapter 2.3, *Narrative in Digital Fiction*, I debate the concept of narrative in digital environments focusing on Marie-Laure Ryan's definitions. Finally, in chapter 2.4*, Performance in the New Media*, I revise the concept of performances in digital media in the past decades.

Chapter 3, *Romeos and Juliets*, is dedicated to the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*. In chapter 3.1, *Defining my Methodology,* I present the methodology used in this research (which focuses on a descriptive formal approach followed by a critical approach), the hypothesis and the seven principles created to approach this specific adaptation. In chapter 3.2, *The Production Context*, I describe the context in which the adaptation was produced and the subjects involved in this production. In chapter 3.3, *Describing Romeus & Julietas*, I describe the elements present in each part of the multiplatform adaptation, as well as the correspondent platform chosen to develop each section. After the elements of *Romeus & Julietas* are formally described, chapter 3.4, *Discussing Romeus & Julietas*, raises a critical discussion on the most relevant aspects presented in the description.

Within chapter 3.4, I revise the terms theatricality and narrativity (chapter 3.4.1) in order to discuss the simultaneous diegetic and mimetic experience in *Romeus & Julietas*, meaning that the adaptation concomitantly tells and shows the story of the star-crossed lovers. I also bring Alexander Huang's concept of cultural location (chapter 3.4.2) to explain how cross-cultural adaptations of Shakespeare's plays actually reinforce local perspectives reframing the canon and reaffirm local reading positions. Finally, I also discuss the role of participatory culture in *Romeus & Julietas* (chapter 3.4.3) since the adaptation fostered a range of social skills and cultural competencies that are essential tools to develop meaningful participation in a participatory culture.

Hopefully, this dissertation will raise discussions that are not exactly about Shakespeare, but rather about the adaptation itself. Optimistically, I expect to have contributed not only to the adaptation and literature fields of research but also to the

specific locality in which *Romeus & Julietas* was produced, by producing local meaning through Shakespeare and thus promoting awareness about local identities and ideologies.

At last, I wish scholars, teachers, professors and researchers would understand Shakespeare more as a mean than as an end in itself. In other words, I wish we would understand Shakespeare as a constellation of texts, a truly transmedia cultural text. As the scholar Gary Taylor (1989, p. 411) states, "We find in Shakespeare only what we bring to him or what others have left behind; he gives us back our own values."

1 LITERATURE AND ADAPTATION

1.1 SHAKESPEARE AND ADAPTATION

Since the beginning of the 20th century, there has been a special concern about the ability or even the necessity of being "original". A certain anxiety has been growing towards issues of plagiarism and imitation. Futurism, Cubism, Dada, Pop Art blossomed in the 20th century as an answer to this attempt of controlling the essential element of art: appropriation. Jonathan Lethem affirms in his article, *The Ecstasy of Influence: a Plagiarism (*a clear reference to Harold Bloom's 1971 controversial classic *The Anxiety of Influence*) that "[…] appropriation, mimicry, quotation, allusion, and sublimated collaboration consist of a kind of sine qua non of the creative act, cutting across all forms and genres in the realm of cultural production." (LETHEM, 2007) Alluding, appropriating, adapting, borrowing (to mention just a few terms) are intrinsic to the nature of artistic creation.

In the essay *Tradition and the Individual Talent* (1920) T.S Eliot states that "No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone". Eliot's statement is closely related to the concept of intertextuality, a term first coined by Julia Kristeva (1967), derived from her knowledge of Mikhail Bakhtin, concerning his concept of "dialogic imagination". In *Theory of the Text* (1981, p.39), Roland Barthes affirms that "any text is an intertext", suggesting that previous or surrounding texts are always present in new literary works. Later, Gérard Genette in *Palimpsests* (1982) develops the notion of transtextuality and its sub-categories, including the notion of hypertextuality: "any text is a hypertext, grafting itself onto a hypotext, an earlier text that it imitates or transforms" (GENETTE, 1997, p.12). In short, the concept of intertextuality means that no text stands alone, no text is unique or original but rather uses the foundations of a literary past as surface for the creation of new material thus promoting an ever-expanding textual web. In other words, texts "feed off each other and create new texts" (SANDERS, 2006, p. 14), forming an infinite textual tissue.

One example of remarkable intertextual relations is Shakespeare's works. For instance, most modern tales of "forbidden love" are seen as having been based on *Romeo and Juliet*. However, in Ovid's Metamorphoses a tale of "star-crossed" lovers is already told and it is part of Roman mythology.

Pyramus and Thisbe tells the story of two young lovers in the city of Babylon, who are forbidden by their parents to get married, because of their parents rivalry. They live next to each other, in connected houses, and through the cracks of the walls they whisper their love. John William Waterhouse portrays this scene very well in his *Thisbe* (1909). The couple arranges to meet under a mulberry tree, but Thisbe arrives first and comes face to face with a lioness mouth bloody from a recent kill. Thisbe gets scared and flees, leaving her veil behind. When Pyramus arrives and finds Thisbe's veil mutilated by the lioness, he is horrified because he thinks Thisbe had been killed by a beast. He kills himself with his sword and his blood stains the mulberry leaves and fruits. When Thisbe comes back, she finds Pyramus' dead body under the mulberry tree. She mourns and stabs herself with the same sword that had killed her love. The Gods listen to Thisbe's lament and change the color of the mulberry fruit to honor the forbidden love.

Another previous intertextual relation of *Romeo and Juliet* is present in the *Ephesian Tale*, from the 3rd century, by Xenophon, in which Anthia is plugged by a drug into apparent death and is forced to be married to a goatherd, who, however, respects her chastity. Interestingly enough, one of the earliest references to the names *Montague* and *Capulet* is from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, who mentions the Montecchi (*Montagues*) and the Cappelletti (*Capulets*) in canto six of *Purgatorio*.

The names of the lovers, Romeus and Giulietta, may have originated from Luigi da Porto's novel *Historia novellamente ritrovata di due Nobili Amanti* from 1530, which was first based on Masuccio Salernitano's story of Mariotto and Gianozza called *Il Novelino* from 1476. Salernitano's version of the story presents the secret marriage, the help of the friar, the conflict where a prominent citizen is killed, Mariotto's exile, Gianozza's forced marriage, the potion plot (in Da Porto's version Romeo takes poison and Giulietta stabs herself with his dagger), and the crucial message that goes astray. Da Porto's gave it much of its modern form, including the names of the lovers, the rival families of Montecchi and Capuleti, and the location in Verona. He also introduces characters corresponding to Shakespeare's Mercutio, Tybalt, and Paris.

In 1554, Matteo Bandello included the story of Romeo and Giulietta in his *Novelle*, which was later translated into French in 1559 by Pierre Boaistuau and entitled *Histoires Tragiques* (*Histoire de Deux Amans*). However, the most likely source for Shakespeare's inspiration for writing *Romeo and Juliet* might come from the narrative poem *Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562) by Arthur Brooke. According to the Brazilian translator and scholar Barbara Heliodora, the English poem, first published in 1562, reached great popularity and it had two other editions, one in 1582 and another in 1587. Heliodora states that Brooke's long poem presented the whole plot for the Shakespearian tragedy and vast information about Italy, Verona and its social habits. (HELIODORA, 2011) On the other hand, there was a trend among writers and playwrights to publish works based on Italian tales. Therefore, Shakespeare might also have been familiar with William Painter's 1567 collection of Italian tales entitled *Palace of Pleasure*, in which a version in prose of *The goodly History of the true and constant love of Rhomeo and Julietta* is presented.

However, other researches reveal that a Spanish play entitled *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea* , which was later called *La Celestina*, written by Fernando Rojas in 1499 (possibly even earlier) might also have been one of the sources for *Romeo and Juliet*. The Spanish play is a comedy that presents a different perspective about romantic love. Calisto, the hero in *La Celestina*, falls in love with the young and noble Melibea, who had already been promised to marry another man. In order to get closer to his beloved, Calisto climbs the walls of Melibea's garden but, unfortunately, he loses his balance and falls, smashing his skull on the ground. Melibea proclaims that she will follow her love to death, but her outburst is motivated more out of madness than self-sacrifice. In the article *Myth and Tragic Action in La Celestina and Romeo and Juliet*, Marilyn Stewart (1984, p. 430) affirms that the deaths of Calisto and Melibea are more ridicule than sublime. The play was translated to Italian in 1506, to German in 1520, to French in 1527, and to English in 1536 by Johan Rastell, around 67 years before Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet*. (LISBOA, 1960, p. 18-30)

Does Shakespeare lack originality since he borrows ideas from other writers and playwrights? T.S. Eliot wrote in *The Sacred Wood* (1920) that "Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least something different." Shakespeare's status as a canon does not come from the originality of his stories (one may also argue that there is no such thing

as originality) but rather *how* the stories are told. Shakespeare's greatness lies in his ability to transform, rewrite, rearrange, re-vision, rework, refashion and re-evaluate, expanding the network of textual relations. Undoubtedly, "Shakespeare was himself an active adaptor and imitator, an appropriator of myth, fairy tale and folklore as well as of the works of specific writers as varied as Ovid, Plutarch and Holinshed." (SANDERS. 2006, p. 46)

Obviously, the Renaissance era understood appropriation and imitation in different terms. Intellectual property and copyright laws would only start being discussed in 1557, eighteen years after the invention of the printing press, when the English Crown would grant privileges and monopolies to printers of books. The first copyright statute would only be written in 1710. In fact, the society in which Shakespeare was inscribed had a far more open approach to literary borrowing and the concept of authorship.

Shakespeare's status as a canonic writer may also come from the great number of adaptations his works have been going through along the centuries. Julie Sanders affirm that "Adaptation becomes a veritable marker of canonical status, citation infers authority." (2006, p.9) On the one hand, adaptation perpetuates the canon, because it demands on the part of the reader, or spectator, knowledge of the references to the earlier work(s). On the other hand, it contributes to its constant reformulation and expansion, by re-visioning the work with fresh eyes, and, sometimes, subverting the source text. Shakespeare's availability to subsequent generations promoted the redefinition of his works in contemporary terms.

Each generation adapts Shakespeare's works as they wish, projecting their own anxieties and desires onto them. For instance, the Broadway adaptation *West Side Story* relocates the story of Romeo and Juliet in the 1950s New York, highlighting the issue of racial prejudice against Puerto Ricans through the Jets versus Sharks rivalry. In a recent adaptation of *Hamlet* to the cinema, directed by Michael Almereyda and released in 2000, the prince of Denmark is transported to contemporary New York. In this version, Hamlet is the heir of his father's empire, the Denmark Corporation. Other examples are the adaptations of his works to teenage audiences, such as *O* (2001), a version of *Othello*, which takes place in a boarding school and has as its background the almost exclusively white basketball team except for Othello; and *10 Things I hate about you* (1999), a version

of *The Taming of the Shrew*, which is set in a traditional American high school and approaches the bullying among teenagers.

Therefore, the availability of Shakespearean works for rewriting "means that they are texts constantly in flux, constantly metamorphosing in the process of adaptation and retelling." (SANDERS, 2006, p.62) As a result, Shakespearean archetypes are reinforced by frequently reappearing in diverse cultural contexts, enduring across cultural and historical boundaries. Thus, characters such as Romeo and Juliet are "[…] continuously evoked, altered and reworked, across cultures, and across generations" (SANDERS, 2006, p.64), and, for this reason, they can be considered archetypes of forbidden love.

Thus, Shakespeare's archetypal stories would fulfill immensely our natural need for storytelling. Human beings not only need stories but this might also be exactly what distinguishes us from other animals. In *Narrative*, J. Hillis Miller (1990, p. 68) cites Peter Brooks and analyses our fiction-making ability. According to Miller, "The word 'fiction' comes from the Latin *fingere*, 'to make' and 'to make up'. A fiction, as Brooks says, is made up in the double sense of being both fabricated and feigned. This make-believe is a fundamental human activity." Besides needing stories as vital source, we, human beings, also need the "same" story over and over again in order to make sense of our experience in the world, as if we needed a reinforcement of that sense making. "We want repetition in the form of many stories that are recognizably variations on the same formula." (MILLER, 1990, p. 70)

Undeniably, repeatability is intrinsic to several narrative forms, such as detective stories, fairy tales, Greek tragedies and nursery rhymes. Moreover, the plot[1], which is a crucial narrative element, seems to be transferrable from one story to another, even with different characters or a different setting. "Plot is detachable, translatable" (1990, p. 71), Miller affirms. If Miller is right about our hunger for repetition and the inherent translatability of plots, maybe there lies the secret for the intrinsic nature of artistic creation – the endless circles of influences that form an infinite textual web translating the spirit of times.

Octavio Paz once said "The artist is the universal translator". In other words, Paz meant that the artist translates the environment around him/her – the social-historical context, in short, the *zeitgeist*, the spirit of the time – to different forms of expression and

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[1] *Plot* is a term employed in many different contexts, and the different uses of the word in English resonate in its multiple meanings. Therefore, the definition of *plot* varies depending on the field of study.

media. A painting, a sculpture, a photograph, a film are translations of a certain period. They tell a story. Hence, it is possible to conclude that adaption, or translation, is intrinsic to human beings. "As soon as there is language, there is interpretation, that is translation." (KEARNEY, xvii) Therefore, language itself is also an adaptation of our own thoughts, faulty sometimes, as any other translation.

Cinema, as the most prominent form of expression of the 20th century, played an important role inn translating the *zeitgeist* of an era by showing stories, instead of telling. In the first decades of the 20th century, as a new art form, cinema ended up being judged by the models of the older arts. According to Mast (1982, p.279), "inevitably a new art must be compared to and judged by the standards of the existing arts." Critics were acquainted with values of previous art forms, and took some time to understand cinema as an individual form of art with its own code and set of values. In the 1960s, cinema started to be recognized as a legitimate form of art by the privileged classes. (MAST, 1982, p. 279-280) And by now, it is possible to say that the cinematographic adaptation of literary texts is already popularized.

According to a 1992 research, 85% of all Oscar-winning films are adaptations of literary texts, as well as 95% of TV series and 70% of films made for TV that win the Emmy Awards. (HUTCHEON, 2006, p.4) The probable explanation for this phenomenon is the financial appeal adaptations present, the well-known "tried and tested". Furthermore, nowadays, the entertainment industry works together. When a film is released, a marketing wave comes along. The book is usually reprinted featuring the actors of the film adaptation on the cover. At the same time the interactive game, the documentary, the extras, and the extended version are launched; that is to say, a huge number of possibilities that the industry recognizes and uses in its own favor.

Although an adaptation is a repetition, repetition is not analogous to copy. The popularity of literary adaptation in the film industry can manifest several intentions, be directed to different target publics and be presented in different media. This transcodification can involve a change in medium, an alteration in genre, or a shift in context. "Whatever the motive, from the adapter's perspective, adaptation is an act of appropriation or salvaging, and this is always a double process of interpreting and then creating something new." (HUTCHEON, 2006, p.20) In other words, the novelty is not in the material itself, but in what will be *done* with it.

The new frontier when it comes to adaptations is the immersive World Wide Web. Certainly, web 3.0 and its social networks have been expanding new ways of interaction and communication and providing new forms of expression. How will the Bard be adapted in the New Media age? The blog *BardBox*, created by Luke McKernan, a media historian who is the lead curator of news and moving images at the British Library, has taken the step of looking at the thousands of Shakespeare-related videos posted on sites like YouTube and Vimeo. He has made his own personal selection of derivative videos that are interesting original and creative work. From experimental videos to school adaptations and video game appropriations, he has compiled a delightful amount of user-generated content based on Shakespeare's works. Besides setting up a standard template for describing the videos, he has also inserted descriptions of the videos that are amusingly enlightening and show a deep concern for the way new media is developing adaptation and appropriation currently.

The site ran from May 2008 to September 2012 and as it is no longer being added to, it remains online as an archive.[2] The site consists of an amazing figure of ten thousand videos available on the web related to Shakespeare's works. It includes animations, parodies, recitations, auditions, promos for theatre production, amateur records of stage productions, student work, school productions, mashups, etc. According to McKernan's website, "the emergence of video hosting sites, along with the spread of broadband and the availability of cheap equipment, has led to an explosion in Shakespeare video production and distribution online."

Among the Top Ten Videos there are adaptations such as Hamlet's soliloquy acted by American 6th graders; an 11-minute amateur parody of Forrest Gump telling instead the life of William Shakespeare; a cut-out animation of cats performing part of Hamlet where Hamlet meets Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; a mocking experimental work of editing creatively mashing up Olivier's Hamlet, Wallace Shawn, Kurosawa, Apocalypse Now and The Kinks; and a rendition of Posthumus's speech from Cymbeline while the actor is bicycling through London. Indeed, user-generated content websites, social networking and interactive sharing have promoted an unprecedented revolution in the way we experience the world.

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[2] In 2016, probably because of the celebrations on the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, the site was relaunched with a new address (bardbox.net) and started being added again.

1.2 ADAPTATION STUDIES

The investigation field of Adaptation Studies has become increasingly popular since the 1960s and it is commonly acknowledged to have originated from literature on screen criticism. However, although many scholars regard George Bluestone's *Novels into Film* (1957) as the founding text of adaptation studies, there were significant earlier works that might have provided the basis for adaptation studies. According to Patrick Catrysse's recent book *Descriptive Adaptation Studies* (2014), "film adaptations of literary texts are as old as cinema, and film adaptation studies began in the early 1900s." (CATRYSSE, 2014, p. 21) Catrysse mentions that considerations and observations about adaptations might have started with the Kino Debatte in Germany in the 1910s, and later in the 1920s in France with the Film d'Art movement, and with the Russian Formalists reflection on literature, cinema and other arts. The author also mentions Lester Asheim doctoral thesis *From Book to Film* published in 1951 (CATRYSSE, 2014, p. 21-22).

For some time the field's main concern was mainly regarding the degrees of faithfulness to the source text (source-text oriented approach). However, issues such as the relationship to a variety of media adaptation formats besides film; multilevel relationship; transcultural transformation and the dialogic process; and the question of how to use adaptation creatively and effectively in the classroom have been recently and increasingly discussed by adaptation scholars such as Jørgen Bruhn, Kamilla Elliott, Lars Elleström, Thomas Leitch, Dennis Cutchins and Lawrence Raw, among others. Most importantly, since the 1990s, the field has acknowledged a target-oriented approach (adaptation as end product), thus, allowing adaptation to be perceived as an autonomous cultural product, i.e., looking at *adaptation as adaptation* (HUTCHEON, 2006).

Although Adaptation Studies has turned into a prolific field of research in the past 20 years – manifested in articles, conferences, studies and journals devoted to the field – it has been a regular practice to denounce its lack of meta-theoretical thinking, the lack of citation of previous works and a continuously reinvention of existing terms, analytical strategies and theoretical concepts. Kamilla Elliot's recent work *Theorizing adaptations/adapting theories* (ELLIOT, 2013, p. 14) points out that "Such lapses in

citation prevented [scholars] from building upon prior scholarship that had already answered their calls". In her text, Elliot presents a table illustrating a list of repeated claims made in adaptation studies, many without citing works they repeat. For instance, in 1912 Melville had already declared the impossibility of complete fidelity in literature to film adaptation. Every scholar that has addressed the topic affirms the same (e.g. Bluestone, 1957; Stam, 2000; Elliott, 2003; MacCabe, 2011), but without citing Melville. In 1949, Asheim had advocated a 'How? What? Why?' approach to theorizing adaptations. Hutcheon has repeated the same model in 2006 without citing Asheim. In 1982, Ellis calls for attention to production and consumption in adaptation studies. In her 2006 work, Hutcheon does the same and so does Geraghty in 2007. (ELLIOT, 2013, p. 26-28) Elliot adds that "adaptation studies is an especially divided field whose polarizations have perhaps precluded new theories from developing." (ELLIOT, 2013, p. 23) More precisely, according to Elliot, adaptation studies is, in fact, an emerging field of study, but it mostly provides repetitions of claims, which shows absolutely no critical self-reflection, thus failing to accumulate knowledge in the field.

From Elliot's perspective, it is impossible, and also not desirable, to create one single theory of adaptation, but she advocates for the deconstruction of the hierarchical relationship between theories and adaptations by suggesting that 'theories need to adapt to adaptations'. According to her, "Adaptations, adaptation scholars and adaptation studies have not only failed theories; theories have also failed them. Rather than solely adapting adaptation to theories, theories also need to adapt to adaptations." (ELLIOT, 2013, p. 31-32) Likewise, in *Adaptation Revisited: Television and the Classic Novel* (2002), Cardwell points out that the field's increasing interest in close textual analysis might favor the emergence of a methodology and states that "[…] the recent renewed interest in close textual analysis suggests a potentially rewarding methodology. Most importantly, the approach taken to each adaptation ought to be suggested by the adaptation itself […]" (CARDWELL, 2002, p. 73).

In *Descriptive Adaptation Studies: Epistemological and Methodological Issues* (2014), Patrick Catrysse develops a rigorous methodology borrowed from translation studies to explain scientifically what Elliot and Cardwell express intuitively above. For Catrysse, the problem with the adaptation field of research (perhaps with the study of arts in general) is a distrust of a systematic science-based approach, which would require the development of a scientific jargon, and, consequently, the establishment of scholarly

communities of scientific meta-language users. (CATRYSSE, 2014, p. 40) The author believes that adaptation studies do not present a consistent theory, since he defines theory as a "set of terms, understood as analytical tools, and a consistent and explicit analytical method which should enable the researcher to identify the object of study, describe and explain it." (CATRYSSE, 2014, p. 44) Instead of presenting a theory, he suggests reconsidering the polysystem approach[3] (PS), or descriptive adaptation studies approach (DAS), as a research program[4], where the initial point of investigation would be the adaptation as end product (target-oriented approach). Catrysse believes that a theory might eventually emerge from the development of a research program using the DAS approach, but for now it is premature to predict principles and propositions about the phenomenon of adaptation. Although Catrysse's descriptive adaptation studies approach (DAS) will not be applied as a whole in this work, the reflection on core principles are useful for any methodological perspective and some concepts are suitable for this doctoral dissertation.

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[3] The polysystem approach (PS) theory of translation was developed by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury in the 1970s and introduced in adaptation studies in the 1990s. PS served as a conceptual and methodological framework but currently few scholars acknowledge the importance of this approach. Although many scholars use its key concepts, they do not mention it directly. (CATRYSSE, 2014, p. 13)
[4] Catrysse defines research program as a set of questions, rather than a 'theory', understood as a set of answers. (CATRYSSE, 2014, p. 44)

2   NEW MEDIA AND PERFORMANCE

2.1 THE WEB AND NEW PARADIGMS FOR LITERATURE

Babel Tower, as envisioned by Jorge Luis Borges, would have been an enormous library working as a gigantic reading machine in which its inhabitants would search endlessly for mythic stories that would explain the universe. However, this huge library, with its unlimited size and content, would end up becoming a labyrinth for those who try to access its infinite knowledge. Was Borges foreseeing the World Wide Web? Did Borges predict our contemporary reading machine, the internet?

Even before Borges mankind had already tried to create machines that would contain the knowledge produced in texts and enable readers to interact with them differently (GAZIRE, 2012, p. 36). In 1530, Giulio Camillo created the Memory Theatre, or Theatro della Sapientia, which today is considered the precursor of multimedia resources. The machine consisted of a huge wood structure in which one or two people could get inside and "interact" with a great variety of texts and images. As the content was manipulated inside, the audience, who remained outside, could visualize the images and texts in one of the six pillars. According to Camillo, the machine would provide a new way of learning and he also believed that knowledge should be shared collectively (GAZIRE, 2012, p. 38). In 1588 Agostino Ramelli created the Bookwheel, or Reading Wheel, which consisted of a machine that allowed readers to read, search and check many books at the same time. Actually the machine worked as a ferris wheel, a great wooden wheel in which the books are displayed in a flat rotating table surface. Scholars believe that Ramelli's Bookwheel is a hypertext prototype (GAZIRE, 2012, p. 38). In 1985, the architect Daniel Libeskind reconstructed the 16th century machines imagined and created by Camillo and Ramelli for the Venice Biennale in an installation entitled *Three Lessons in Architecture* in an attempt to recreate not only the object but the experience as well.

Between 1861 and 1863, John Muir designed and built the Clockwork Desk, a mechanical table in which the book was placed in the center of the wheel and as soon as the research ended, the clock mechanism of the table would replace the book by another

one. More recently, in 1945, Vanevar Bush, created the Memex (a combination of the words Memory and Index) but could never build it. The machine, a prototype of the hyperlink concept, consisted of a device in which people could store all their books and records, and its mechanism would provide quick and flexible research. The Memex concept influenced the development of the early hypertext system, which would eventually lead to the creation of the World Wide Web.

What we can conclude from the trajectory described above is that there have been numerous attempts to mechanize the text, as well as the experience of reading, throughout history. However, as Steven Johnson (2010) stated in a TED Talk[5], "breakthrough ideas never come up in a moment of great insight or stroke of inspiration. Good ideas take a long time to evolve." If one takes the case of the web, for instance, we find that it started as an individual project by Tim Berners-Lee, an information management system project designed to organize his own data and which ultimately ended up being the greatest database of humankind, a supplement for our memories. It is possible to say that the web has become a collective memory database.

So what does literature, as field of study, has to do with it? Everything. The internet is basically a machine of reading, writing and publishing (BIEGUELMAN, 2012, p.41). Therefore, it is probably the first device that articulates so many steps of the editorial process. Hence, the discussion about the extinction of the printed books is not a reaction of conservative intellectuals and scholars. It is based on the fact that printed books are, possibly, one of the most stable cultural products in history. It remained practically immutable for the past 500 years.

> The book ruled as the favorite means of mass communication for centuries; newspapers had around 200 years to innovate; even the cinema held all the cards for 30 years before being rapidly followed by the radio, then the television, and later by the personal computer. In each innovation, the gap that kept the past at a distance became smaller, more attenuated. […] The outbreak of means of communication in the 20th century allows us, for the first time, to apprehend the relation between form and content, mean and message, engineering and art. A world ruled by a single means of communication is a world ruled by itself. We cannot

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[5] TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) is a global set of conferences owned by the private non-profit Sapling Foundation, formed to disseminate "ideas worth sharing."

Probably the book's stability is what has challenged the births, deaths and rebirths of many attempts to launch electronic books in the market since the 1990s. Although e-readers and e-books have become more popular recently and it is unquestionably cheaper to produce and publish an e-book than a printed book, still, the printed book reigns as dominant form of publishing and consuming literature (STEEN, 2012, p. 34 – 35). Also, the printed book still carries solid cultural values and a symbolism that is hard to defy.

Nevertheless, the anxiety over the end of the book era is worth some reflection. Eventually, e-readers might replace the traditional books and libraries, as we know today, might become obsolete. However, no matter what happens, it does not mean the end of literature. Literature will be influenced by technology, but it will always survive and naturally transform. Unsurprisingly, the way we read books will change because the way we store information is changing. But it does not mean that by storing literature in this new platform, it will vanish, but rather renovate.

> It is known that the concept of text has been going through major transformations since digital technologies came up. The integration of text, images of various kinds, still and in motion, and sound, music and noise, in a new hybrid language, crossbred, complex, which is called 'hypermedia', brought changes to the way we understood not only the text but also image and sound so far.[7] (SANTAELLA, 2007, p. 286)

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[6] O livro reinou como o meio de comunicação em massa preferido por vários séculos; os jornais tiveram cerca de 200 anos para inovar; até o cinema deu as cartas durante 30 anos antes de ser rapidamente sucedido pelo rádio, depois pela televisão, depois pelo computador pessoal. A cada inovação, o hiato que mantinha o passado á distância ficou menor, mais atenuado. [...] A explosão de tipos de meios de comunicação no século XX nos permite, pela primeira vez, apreender a relação entre a forma e o conteúdo, entre o meio e a mensagem, entre a engenharia e a arte. Um mundo governado exclusivamente por um único meio de comunicação é um mundo governado por si mesmo. Não se pode avaliar a influência de uma mídia quando não se tem com o que compará-la. (JOHNSON, 2001, p. 8-9) [my translation]

[7] É notório que o conceito de texto vem passando por transformações profundas desde que as tecnologias digitais entraram em uso. A integração do texto, das imagens dos mais diversos tipos, fixas e em movimento, e do som, música e ruído, em uma nova linguagem híbrida, mestiça, complexa, que é chamada "hipermídia", trouxe mudanças para o modo como entendíamos não só o texto, mas também a imagem e o som. (SANTAELLA, 2007, p. 286) [my translation]

In the 21st century, we have been observing the growth of the use of internet and the massive changes that it has promoted – new ways of interaction, communication, and expression. According to Eric McLuhan (2011)[8], every period of technological innovation is accompanied by a renaissance, which is actually a result of the internalization of a new technology. The 15th and 16th century lived a renaissance that lasted two centuries which was promoted by the advent of the printing press leading to a democratization of information and changes in the educational system. According to McLuhan (2011), since the 19th century technological innovations have continually emerged promoting the renaissance of our time, the first Global Renaissance. If previous technological innovations triggered changes and innovation in the arts, then the so called Virtual Revolution should not be different. We are now living a Global Renaissance due to the advent of web 2.0. The internet might change the way we think dramatically, but firstly it has already changed the way we perceive the world, the way we show objects, thus the way we see things.

So what exactly has changed? The revolution we are living is not only about digitalized books. On the contrary, the revolution is about convergence of media, non linearity, sharing, collaboration, connectivity 24/7 and more recently, mobility. Social networks have been growing steadily providing new possibilities in every field of study. They originated from web 2.0 platforms such as Wikipedia, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, which launched the era of collaborative networks. For instance, Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia that has become one of the most important information sources in the world, is an example of how the web empowers people by allowing the knowledge to come from the masses. Instead of just accessing knowledge, anyone can author and add information to it. "The idea is that instead of truth, knowledge and accuracy being agreed on by experts and handed down by an elite from above, information and knowledge would slowly emerge from the masses and come up from below" (VIRTUAL, 2010). Wikipedia is an example of how the web enables people to shape knowledge together. In a sense, it fulfills the leveling dreams of the web founders, which was strongly influenced by the culture of free will and self-expression of the late 1960s counterculture movement. John

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[8] Eric McLuhan's closing speech at SEICOM 2011 (XI Seminário Internacional da Comunicação at Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul).

Perry Barlow's 1996 influential paper *A Declaration of Independence of Cyberspace* exemplifies well the thoughts of civil libertarians of cyberspace.

> We are creating a world that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth. We are creating a world where anyone, anywhere may express his or her beliefs, no matter how singular, without fear of being coerced into silence or conformity. (BARLOW, 1996)

Therefore, the web – which comprises the links or the knots that connect information in the infrastructure, the internet – challenges notions of ownership, creativity, value, expertise and power. On the one hand, it blows open access to knowledge and challenges traditional authority because it sets information free. In short, it allows people to publish anything they like without any (apparent) regulation, possibly leading to what Andrew Keen calls the "cult of amateur"[9], namely a situation in which anyone can have an audience. On the other hand, those with more resources and information get a bigger share of the spoils. For instance, one may say that cyberspace has one search engine (Google), one market place (eBay), one bookshop (Amazon) and one social network (Facebook) which, by the way, works by collecting its users' personal data and selling to advertising companies, which means, in simple terms, that Facebook is a market research tool. (VIRTUAL, 2010) Therefore, this huge process of innovation is being rapidly developed into a system of buying and selling instead of sharing (before the web, the internet was administered by a public body and businesses were banned). These two controversial ideas of what the web should serve for leads to the discussion about piracy and copyrights. The web, certainly, makes it easier to produce and share, but this does not mean it is democratizing creativity. The availability of digitalized information is leading to massive consequences for the creative process challenging the production and distribution of art.

In the realm of literature, fanfictions, a recent subgenre in the off-stream genre of derivative literature, has raised some controversies around the topic. Fanfictions, or fanfics, are stories about characters or settings written by fans of the "original" works but

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[9] *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today's Internet is Killing our Culture* (2007) is a book by the entrepreneur and internet critic Andrew Keen.

which are not commissioned or authorized by the said work's creator, owner or publisher. Henry Jenkins understands fanfiction as critical commentary:

> Fan stories are in no simple sense just "extensions" or "continuations" or "extra episodes" of the original series. Unlike the model critical essays discussed by the various university writing centers, the insights about the work get expressed not through nonfictional argumentation but rather through the construction of new stories. Just as a literary essay uses text to respond to text, fan fiction uses fiction to respond to fiction. (JENKINS, 2006)

Therefore, a fanfiction would be a type of appropriation of the original text, albeit extremely tied to it and with clearly stated intertextual relations. One may trace the origins of fanfiction to the very central characteristic of the creative process itself and its inherent relation to the concept of intertextuality. However, what distinguishes the fanfictions we have nowadays is their availability or access. The fanfiction case is a great example of how the web has massively transformed the production and distribution of culture. It reaffirms the libertarian values that influenced the origin of the web and demonstrates the possibility of creating an audience without having to go through traditional means of publishing and distribution. In conclusion, user-generated content websites, social networking and interactive sharing have promoted an unprecedented revolution in the way we experience the world.

Currently, the web, as a space of perpetual innovation, has moved one step forward and presented us the web 3.0, which, besides promoting the collective and collaborative experience, provides the integration of multiple networks, platforms and functions in the continuum present for the "always on" generation. "There lay two inversions in the 1990s cyberspace navigation logics: the first is the interface structure and, consequently, the user's experience; the second is temporality."[10] (SANTAELLA, 2010, p. 59, my translation) In other words, web 3.0 means instant connectivity to social networks no matter the choice of access and real time data exchange, especially provided by mobility – namely, the "omnipresent present" (SANTAELLA, 2010, p. 61). The

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[10] "Apresenta-se aí duas inversões na lógica da navegação característica do ciberespaço versão anos 1990: a primeira encontra-se na estrutura de interface e, consequentemente, na experiência do usuário; a segunda, na temporalidade." (SANTAELLA, 2010, p. 59)

philosopher Zygmunt Bauman explains the condition of our contemporary society by comparing it to the state of liquidity, which is always in constant flux.

> Fluids, so to speak, neither fix space nor bind time. […] Fluids travel easily. They 'flow', 'spill', 'run out', 'splash', 'pour over', 'leak', 'flood', 'spray', 'drip', 'seep', 'ooze'; unlike solids, they are not easily stopped – they pass around some obstacles, dissolve some others and bore or soak their way through others still. […] The extraordinary mobility of fluids is what associates them with the idea of 'lightness'. […] We associate 'lightness' or 'weightless' with mobility and inconstancy: we know from practice that the lighter we travel the easier and faster we move. (BAUMAN, 2000, p. 8).

Indeed, stories travel fast and easy in the world wide web. Some interesting examples are recent works produced in Twitter[11], such as the play *Such Tweet Sorrow*. *Such Tweet Sorrow* (2010) consisted of a Royal Shakespeare Company Project in connection with Mudlark, a cross-platform production company. The project modernized Romeo and Juliet's story to contemporary England. The "star-crossed lovers" and other four main characters – Tybalt, Mercutio, the Nurse, and Laurence Friar – participated in an online performance for five weeks – from April 10th 2010 to May 12th 2010. The characters were brought to life by actors from the Royal Shakespeare Company that performed their roles by "tweeting" 24/7 in one of the most outstanding "live" performances on the internet. The actors followed a script prepared by Mudlark's writing team, Tim Wright and Betham Marlow, and were under the direction of Roxana Silbert from the Royal Shakespeare Company. According to the website at the time, "The actors will write their actual tweets themselves, using the rich backgrounds the writers have given them, along with a detailed diary that tells them where their characters are at any one moment of the adventure – what they are feeling, who they are with, who they want to talk to."

At first, attention on the project was mainly drawn to the performative aspect of social media. Indeed, the virtual world is a stage. The Twitter performance expanded the

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[11] Twitter is a social networking and microblogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as *tweets*. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author's profile page and delivered to the author's subscribers who are known as *followers*. (from: Wikipedia)

definition of performance art and set the new virtual public space as a space for artistic expression. However, the register of this project would not last in cyberspace. Two years later, the whole project, its website and "branch" pages, vanished from the web and only the outdated Twitter page remained.

Surely, there have been other literary adaptations on Twitter such as *Twittering Rocks*, created by Ian Bogost and Ian McCarthy from the Georgia Institute of Technology. *Twittering Rocks* is an adaptation of James Joyce's *Ulysses* chapter 10, Wandering Rock, which is famous for showing the interlocking events of 19 characters walking through central Dublin going about their daily business. The performance takes place every year on June 16 (or Bloomsday), which is the day the action in the novel takes place in 1904. During the performance the characters all send tweets about what they are doing at the correct fictional times. Another type of literary adaptation on Twitter is *Twitterature: The World's Greatest Books in Twenty Tweets or Less* (also published in paperback by Penguin in 2009) written by University of Chicago students Alexander Aciman and Emmett Rensin. *Twitterature* is an irreverent adaptation of the classics as a series of 140-character tweets from the protagonist. In fact, *Twitterature* restates Shakespeare's famous quote "Brevity is the soul of wit" (Hamlet, Act 2, Scene 2). Also, there has been a flourishing production of poetry on Twitter, such as the twaikus, the twitter haiku movement, as well as flash fiction (or microfiction) in general, which is not exactly a new style of writing (take for instance the six-word novel "For sale: Baby's shoes. Never worn"). Nevertheless, none of these literary experiments on Twitter have demonstrated such enthusiastic possibilities as *Such Tweet Sorrow*, providing an integration of multiple platforms and a new way of interacting with characters, especially through comments and posts in peripheral platforms such as YouTube.

In *Such Tweet Sorrow*, the convergence of media is applied to literature and theatre innovating in form and the 24/7 experience celebrates the *always on* generation. For instance, if you followed Juliet's profile in Twitter, you received her status in real time. When Juliet threw her 16th birthday party, the followers received a link via Twitter that would redirect them to a Facebook invitation in which the guest should accept it or not. While the party was happening, followers also received a link to the Last.fm website in which the "guests" could listen to the party soundtrack while they followed the story streaming live on Twitter. In the morning after the party, Juliet posted a YouTube video

where she tells about her night with Romeo and the followers could like or dislike, share and comment. The performance also used real websites with real information. For instance, the central tragic flaw, which is the message Romeo misses about rescuing Juliet, is justified in this version by a problem with the mobile phone company. Juliet sends a message via SMS, but Romeo never gets it because of a bug in the system. As we can notice, Twitter worked as the fundamental basis for the story, but several different platforms were used to enhance the experience.

Also, the audience could choose which characters they wanted to follow. The result of the choices has led to a nonlinear experience and consequently multiple perspectives of the story. Moreover, the project provided several different ways of viewing the story. One option was via Twitter, or TweetDeck, a pop up installed in your computer that would alert you whenever there was a new post from the characters you followed. If the follower read on Twitter, he/she would have to scroll down to keep track of the story in chronological order; while reading on Tweet Deck only made sense if it was in real time since the pop up box would disappear from the computer screen after some seconds. Another option was reading via website where you still could choose two different ways of reading: the summary entitled *What happened so far?* or the Timeline. The summary was a daily synopsis in narrative form. Sometimes the summary included links to other pages in order to keep the reader updated. The Timeline was a horizontal timeline that moved horizontally, from left to right and vice versa, featuring the characters posts in the exact moment they were published in Twitter, namely a sort of story database. Furthermore, the experience could be enhanced if the reader followed the performance via mobile phone, in fact, fiction invaded real life.

As we can notice, the performance on Twitter provided new forms of reading and interacting with the text. The most striking question that could be raised about the experience is the role of the actor in this virtual performance. Firstly, most of the times the actors performed by twitting, i.e., by writing, so they represented a mixture of actor and author. Since it was an adaptation of Shakespeare's original text and they followed instructions given by the main authors of the adaptation, the actors would work as co-authors. Secondly, the inherent presence of the body in theatre is being put into question here. But as Barlow states in the *Declaration of Independence of Cyberspace* (1996),

"Ours is a world that is both everywhere and nowhere, but it is not where bodies live."
(BARLOW, 1996)

All in all, the combination of hypermedia, hypertext, collaboration, interaction and mobility provided by the web 3.0 forces us to face a variety of aesthetic problems that must be discussed by Adaptation Studies. Moreover, this discussion is central if one intends to develop any critical thinking about the teaching of literature nowadays.

2.2 WHAT IS 'NEW' ABOUT NEW MEDIA?

New Media is a 21st century broad term used to define all that is related to the internet and its interaction between technology, images and sound[12]. The term is constantly being reshaped and redefined as technology evolves and media scholars develop new researches. Possibly the terminology for New Media Studies is unsettling because as a new form of expression it is still being judged and assessed by the standards of old media. For instance, the first printed texts were called *incunable* or *incunabula*, Latin for "cradle", which means the earliest stages or first traces in the development of anything. Similarly, Joseph Nicephore Niepce's *heliographs* or *sun prints*, the prototype for modern photography, were also not acknowledged as a valid art form and would only be recognized in the 20th century. Likewise, the first films were called *photoplays*, an addition of photo and theatre, which clearly demonstrates that the movies were not at first recognized as an individual and self-sustained art form. In short, all media have once been 'new media' and therefore, terms such as 'multimedia' or even 'new media' are signs that the medium is still in the early stages of development.

> One of the lessons we can learn from the history of film is that additive formulations like "photo-play" or the contemporary catchall "multimedia" are a sign that the medium is in an early stage of development and is still depending on formats derived from earlier technologies instead of exploiting its own expressive power. (MURRAY, 1997, p. 66)

Janet Murray anticipated the relation between old and new media in her 1997 book *Hamlet on the Holodeck*, one of the most influential works on the subject. Nevertheless, it is unquestionable how much digital art and New Media Studies have evolved in the past 25 years by exploring its own path of expression. Murray introduces the subject by comparing the computer to the 1890s cinematographer and affirms that the computer is

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[12] This is the definition from The New Media Institute (NMI), a research and fact finding organization whose mission is to improve public understanding of issues surrounding the Internet and other forms of new media communications. The website is available here: http://www.newmedia.org/what-is-new-media.html

the result of five centuries of investigation and inventions since the printed text. As a literature scholar, Murray's main interest lies in the potential of digital art for humanistic expression.

> In trying to imagine Hamlet on the holodeck, then, I am not asking if it is possible to translate a particular Shakespeare play into another format. I am asking if we can hope to capture in cyberdrama something as true to the human condition, and as beautifully expressed, as the life that Shakespeare captured on the Elizabethan stage. (MURRAY, 1997, p. 274)

Moreover, she wisely affirms that it is not possible to judge and analyze works produced in the digital medium with the same parameters from older media. She mentions that the printed book also went through a period of adjustment when it comes to conventions to a coherent communication. Although narrative tradition and storytelling is continuous and feed off each other, it is necessary to create an innovative study on the language of this new medium and its terminology to discuss works produced in our digital era.

> [...] if we want to see beyond the current horizon of scrapbook multimedia, it is important first to identify the essential properties of digital environments, that is, the qualities comparable to the variability of the lens, the movability of the camera, and the editability of film, that will determine the distinctive power and form of a mature electronic narrative art. (MURRAY, 1997)

According to Murray, the four essential properties of the computer as a representational medium are procedural, participatory, spatial and encyclopedic. According to her, procedural and participatory properties are what makes digital creations interactive[13], while spatial and encyclopedic are what makes them immersive.

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[13] For the purposes of this work, it is important to highlight that the comprehension of any cultural text involves active mental processes, i.e., there is always a psychological process of filling in hypothesis and identification. For instance, understanding ellipses in literary narration and bridging mental gaps between unrelated images in film montage. However, in computer-based media "interactive" also refers to physical

(MURRAY, 2003, p. 78) The procedural property of computers is the capability of executing tasks according to a series of rules, created by a programmer. In short, the procedural property is computational programming, which transforms the medium into a sort of engine that makes everything else possible.

For instance, in 1966, in a mother tongue processing experiment, MIT Computing Sciences professor Joseph Weizenbaum, developed a program called *Eliza*, which was capable of maintaining a conversation by answering with printed responses the questions texted on the computer screen. The result was that Eliza, the first computerized character in history, "looked" and "sounded" very much like a Rogerian psychotherapist.[14] Some versions of Eliza are still available on the internet nowadays. This is an example of a real and current conversation with Eliza:

> Interactor: Hi
> Eliza: How are you today… What would you like to discuss?
> Interactor: My current situation…
> Eliza: I am not sure I understand you fully.
> Interactor: That's because I am confused
> Eliza: Do you think it is normal to be confused?
> Interactor: It depends…
> Eliza: Tell me more about it.

What made *Eliza* so convincing at the time was the set of rules (procedural property) that Weizenbaum created. Whenever a person typed "I am X". Eliza would answer with another question "Did you come to me because you are X?", for example. In short, the program plays with substitutions and canned responses based on keywords.

The participatory property is dependent on the procedural property because it refers to the commands, i.e, the answers according to the rules defined in programming such as "if a = 1 then print file". In simple terms, List Processing Language (LISP) could be understood as a sort of script. 1990s popular text games like *Zork* are an example of

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interaction between a user and a media object. For instance, pressing a button, choosing a link, etc. (MANOVICH, 2011, p. 56 – 57)

[14] Person-centered therapy (PCT) is also known as Rogerian psychotherapy, is a form of talk-psychotherapy developed by psycologist Carl Rogers in the 1940s and 1950s. The goal of PCT is to provide clients with an opportunity to develop a sense of self wherein they can realize how their attitudes, feelings and behavior are being negatively affected.

how LISP functions as a dynamic interpreter because it replies with an immediate answer to any command inserted. *Zork* can still be found and played on the internet nowadays. Here is an example:

> West of the House
> You are standing   in an open field west of a white house, with a boarded front door. There is a small mailbox here.
> Interactor >open it
> Opening the mailbox reveals a leaflet.
> Interactor> read it
> (Taken)
> "Welcome to Zork!"

Zork was created in the late 1970s by MIT Computing Sciences researchers and it was inspired by the fantasy tabletop role-playing game *Dungeons and Dragons*. In *Zork* the computer plays the role of Master and guides the player in an imaginary table game in a fictional universe described by words on the screen. Inside *Zork*, players move around by typing commands such as "turn left" or "open the door" and manipulate objects by typing commands such as "read the book" or "drink potion". According to Murray (2003, p. 82), Eliza would focus on the intelligent world created around the machine, while *Zork* focused on the interactor's experience through the adventure. Moreover, games like *Zork* showed that the creation of scripts was extremely important to the conception of digital narrative universes.

The third and fourth properties mentioned by Murray are what make digital creations immersive. Digital environments are essentially spatial because we can move from one place to another and this is the reason why we refer to it as "cyberspace". Although spatial property can be enriched by graphics, this is not fundamental to the property. Spatial property is inherent to the medium because it is the ability to navigate in cyberspace and navigability is created by the interactive properties (procedural and participative). Murray metaphorically compares cyberspace to the theatrical stage because "the computer screen is displaying a story that is also a place" (MURRAY, 1997, p. 82) When you are navigating on a website (no matter if it is fictional or not), the action is happening now and you are the actor and interactor. "The interactor's navigation of virtual space has been shaped into a dramatic enactment of the plot". (MURRAY, 1997,

p. 83) *Zork* is an example of how navigation creates space and narrative without graphics or images, just text.

> You, as player/interactor, have walked into a dungeon that some-one is sealing shut behind you! The moment is startling and immediate, like the firing of a prop gun on the stage of a theater. You are not just reading about an event that occurred in the past; the event is happening now, and, unlike the action on the stage of a theater, it is happening to you. (MURRAY, 1997, p.81)

Differently from most traditional novels, the action is happening now, at the moment of reading. And contrary to a play, the actor is you, that is, the reader/player/interactor is a fundamental participant in the story that unfolds.

The fourth property of digital environments is the encyclopedic. The fact that nowadays the digital medium is a global database accessible through the World Wide Web and the resources are endless is exactly what defines the encyclopedic property. In 1997 Murray already realized that

> Not only does the weblike structure of cyberspace allow for endless expansion possibilities within the fictional world, but in the context of a worldwide web of information these intersecting stories can twine around and through the nonfictional documents of real life and make the borders of the fictional universe seem limitless. (MURRAY, 1997, p. 87).

What she was referring to then is what we nowadays call *transmedia storytelling*. Henry Jenkins defined the term *transmedia storytelling* in his 2006 book *Convergence Culture*: "A transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole." (JENKINS, 2006, p.95)

For instance, the multiplatform adaptation *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries (2013)* is a modern day retelling of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice which* reimagines the story around a fictional vlog (video blog) filmed in the bedroom of a 24 year-old grad student,

living at home and burdened with a mountain of student debt. Although the creation of such an adaptation is collective, the person mainly responsible for its success is the writer, executive producer and director Bernie Su, who is also responsible for other recent multiplatform adaptations such as *Emma Approved* (2014) and *Frankenstein MD* (2014). The adaptation was produced by Pemberley Digital and aired on YouTube from April 2012 to March 2013. Lizzie Bennet's story is told through a series of vlogs, and during the performance, audiences could get involved and watch the story continue on platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Tumblr. The characters all had Twitter accounts and interacted with other characters and viewers enriching the story and expanding the fictional universe. The outcome was so impressive that *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* became the first YouTube series to win a Primetime Emmy, receiving the 2013 Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Creative Achievement in Interactive Media-Original Interactive Program.

In 2001 Lev Manovich publishes *The Language of New Media* in another attempt to understand the core principles of the digital environment and present a systematic theory. While Murray highlights the supremacy of narrative, confident that the new medium will be a channel for storytelling, Manovich emphasizes the database properties. For Manovich, the power of new media is not in the distinctive forms of expression it may allow, but in the extent and complexity of information available to users/narrators/audiences/interactors. Manovich believes that the computer is a meta-medium, that is to say, a support tool for production and distribution of other media objects. His premise is that previous cultural expressions, such as the analog photography and cinema, suffered a great impact from computing techniques and tools. Thus, the software programming paradigm influenced aesthetics, which developed an emergent new visual and media culture.

> What is more likely is that just as the printing press in the fourteenth century and photography in the nineteenth century had a revolutionary impact on the development of modern society and culture, today we are in the middle of a new media revolution -- the shift of all of our culture to computer-mediated forms of production, distribution and communication. This new revolution is arguably more profound than the previous ones and we are just beginning to sense its initial effects. Indeed, the introduction of printing press affected only one stage of cultural

> communication – the distribution of media. In the case of photography, its introduction affected only one type of cultural communication -- still images. In contrast, computer media revolution affects all stages of communication, including acquisition, manipulating, storage and distribution; it also affects all types of media -- text, still images, moving images, sound, and spatial constructions. (MANOVICH, 2001, p. 19)

Indeed, things have changed and the cultural outcome is unprecedented. According to Erik Qualman, author of *Socialnomics: How Social Media Transforms the Way We Live and Do Business* (2012) and creator of *Socialnomics*, a website founded with the intent of providing short social stories, statistics and studies about social media, we have been going through a major revolution. According to the website[15], if Facebook were a country, it would be the third largest and if Wikipedia were made into a book, it would be 2.25 million pages long and you would take 123 years to read it. "Today's users upload an average of 42,000 videos, create over 1.6 million Tumblr posts, type 6 million Tweets, and click over 2 million Facebook "likes" in just one hour." (GALLANO, 2014)

To sum up, we have been dealing with a new context for cultural production in which users have assumed new roles. Henry Jenkins (2006) and Mirko Schäefer (2011) describe it as "participatory culture":

> Participation has become a key concept used to frame the emerging media practice. It considers the transformation of former audiences into active participants and agents of cultural production on the Internet. Popular media acclaimed the new possibilities for consumers to actively create and produce media content. Users became explicitly active participants in the cultural production thanks to the latest WWW developments. (SCHÄEFER, 2011, p. 10)

In other words, technological innovations and the advances of the internet have been promoting a large-scale shift turning media audiences from interpreters, or readers, to producers of media texts. "The new technologies allow common users not only to produce, alter, and distribute media texts, but also to develop or modify software, *the* production means of the digital age." (SCHÄEFER, 2011, p. 40) According to Vilém

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[15] http://www.socialnomics.net/about-socialnomics/

Flusser (2007, p. 153), when messages, namely information of any kind, can be copied and transmitted by a mobile technology, we are not talking about a new technique; we are talking about a cultural revolution. Therefore, the term "participation", as defined by Schäefer (2011) and Jenkins (2006), is expanded in comparison to Stuart Hall (1980) and John Fiske's (1995) definitions of the term, who understood participation of mass media audiences as limited to reading and interpreting media texts. (SCHÄEFFER, 2011, p. 41)

For Schäefer (2011) participation has to do not only with production of content but also with social progress through technological development.

> This discourse is related to the struggle against exclusion from political decision-making processes, as well as exclusion from ownership of the means of production and the creation of media content. The promise of social progress and a reconfiguration of power through participation is embedded in technological development and postulated anew with each 'media revolution'." (SCHÄEFER, 2011, p. 13)

Certainly, the database logic in web 3.0 and its social networks have been expanding new ways of interaction and communication and providing a collective and collaborative experience. Furthermore, user-generated content websites, social networking and sharing have promoted a unique revolution in the way we experience the world. The individual experience is now shared in the visual poetics of social media. The green on black has long been replaced by a much more elaborated graphic design. The new mantra, according to the artist and designer Brendan Dawes, is "storing data by itself is not enough, data needs poetry." (DAWES, 2012) Put differently, Dawes is proclaiming the need for translating the digital information into digital poetics through structure and design.

According to Manovich (2001, p. 227), "the database becomes the center of the creative process in the computer age." Manovich understands that the computer database and the 3-D computer based virtual space are cultural forms that "represent the human experience, the world and human existence in this world." (MANOVICH, 2001, p. 215) In simple terms, the database metaphorically conceptualizes individual and collective memory while 3-D navigable space portrays the human experience in the world and

narrative itself. Manovich argues that information access is a new category of culture, thus, it demands a theoretical analysis of its aesthetics. Furthermore, he claims that the user's experience of a computerized collection is different from reading a literary or cinematic narrative, but each presents a different model of what the world might be like. "After the novel, and subsequently cinema, privileged narrative as the key form of cultural expression of the modern age, the computer age introduces its correlate – the database." (MANOVICH, 2001, p. 218)

Manovich recognizes the fact that new media objects organize information in a different way and not always tell stories. They might not have beginning or end, and might not present a sequence. Mostly they are collections of individual items and these items might possess the same significance as any other; and collections are rarely complete, instead, they always grow because it is easy to add new elements in the database. In fact, many factors contribute to the "anti-narrative logic of the Web". (MANOVICH, 2001, p. 221)

An example of a masterwork database in the literary field is *Banquo*[16], a Shakespeare data visualization, or Shakespeare's digital heartbeat (as they prefer to call it), on the internet. *Banquo* is a microsite created alongside the project *myShakespeare*, produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company as part of the World Shakespeare Festival, which ran from April to November 2012. According to the website, the idea was to measure the user-generated content online about Shakespeare and his work. *Banquo,* shows global, Shakespeare-related social media by the hour, taken from Twitter, Flickr and eBay, in a format that assembles 3-D navigation and a pleasant database interface.

In conclusion, new media objects are organized as a structured collection of data, i.e, a database, that can be assembled in a variety of models (hierarchical, network, relational, and object-oriented). The data in any collection may contain texts, images and sounds and, therefore, are hypermedia[17] programs. They are accessed through a human-computer interface, a virtual interactive 3-D space, navigable through links and knots, which are usually non-linear, non-sequential and non-hierarchical. When 'immersed' in this environment, the user can perform various operations such as view, navigate and

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[16] Banquo is a ghost, a character who appears in Macbeth.
[17] Since the 1990s, when no longer only text but also image, sound and animation were seen on the computer screen, all of them accessible through links, hypertext transmuted into hypermedia. (SANTAELLA, 2007, p. 317) [my translation]

search. According to Manovich (2001, p. 15), any new media object – whether a website, a computer game or a digital image – can be said to represent, as well as, construct some outside referent. Therefore, new media objects are cultural objects.

Although we understand that new media objects are cultural objects, not all cultural objects are narratives. Nevertheless, according to Manovich, all new media objects are databases, in terms of structure and organization. The database structure allows multiple routes through the data, which might lead to several trajectories through the same database. When more than one trajectory is possible it is assumed to constitute an "interactive narrative". According to Manovich (2001, p. 228), "a database can support narrative, but there is nothing in the logic of the medium itself that would foster its generation." Manovich believes that the databased is privileged over narrative, because narrative is just one of the possible outcomes of a database.

> The narrative is constructed by linking elements of this database in a particular order, that is by designing a trajectory leading from one element to another. On the material level, a narrative is just a set of links; the elements themselves remain stored in the database. Thus the narrative is virtual while the database exists materially. (MANOVICH, 2001, p. 231)

However, although the user/reader is making choices, the end result will always be a linear sequence of screens. As language is constructed by choosing one word after another, or, in the case of the cinema, one frame after another, new media users make sense of the objects by clicking on one icon after another, creating a sequence of screens and, perhaps, a form of narrative.

Although both Manovich and Murray are worried about the construction of an informational aesthetics and poetics, they disagree about the narrative issue. While Murray stresses the supremacy of the narrative[18] and approaches the topic more traditionally, Manovich casts doubts on the dominance of the narrative lending much weight to the database structure and suggesting that narrative needs to work with the computer structure within the aesthetics of information.

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[18] Apparently, in *Hamlet on the Holodeck* (1997), Murray uses the term *narrative* as a general term and does not make any distinction between narrative and story or storytelling.

Rather than understanding database and narrative as "enemies"[19], N. Katherine Hayles, sees database and narrative as natural symbionts, organisms of different species that have a mutual beneficial relation. "Because database can construct relational justaposition but is helpless to interpret or explain them, it needs narrative to make its results meaningful". She argues that data analysis requires interpretation and interpretation invokes narrative. Databases tell stories that need to be interpreted. While narrative is temporal, database is spatial, but time and space are intrinsic to human sensory-cognitive faculty. (HAYLES, 2007, p. 1605) Therefore, they inevitably coexist. In conclusion, she clearly states that she does not believe that database will replace narrative, as Manovich implies.

While Hayles calls it "a symbiotic dance", Ed Folsom calls it a battle, "once narrative begins to win, database rallies […]". (FOLSOM, 2007, p. 1608) Folsom believes database is an emerging genre that democratized the circulation of knowledge. The more inclusive a database is, "the better the user's chances of questioning and challenging whatever narrative the creators have attempted to tag onto the data." (FOLSOM, 2007, p. 1610) No matter what side we choose, Murray vs. Manovich or Hayles vs. Folsom, the debate is far from being over. Fortunately, the debate about the changes that narrative is undergoing are especially relevant to the practice of contemporary digital fiction.

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[19] Much polemic has been raised in the academic field about Manovich's characterization of narrative and database. Ed Folsom cites Manovich in his essay "Database as Genre: The Epic Transformation of Archives" in which he suggest that database and narrative are enemies and cannot coexist. Hayles wrote a passionate reply in response to his essay in which she states that narrative and database are natural symbionts.

2.3 NARRATIVE IN DIGITAL FICTION

One of the most prominent scholars to deal with the issue of narrative in digital environments is Maurie-Laure Ryan. She is the co-editor of *The Living Book of Narratology* among other important works in the field of narratology. Ryan is also the author of *Narrative as Virtual Reality*[20] (2000), in which she discussed the aesthetics of immersion, the text as "world", as environment; and the aesthetics of interactivity, the text as game and the reader as a player. As a literary theorist, she is interested in new ways to describe the two dimensions of virtual reality, immersion and interactivity, to "describe the types of reader response that may be elicited by a literary text of either the print or the electronic variety." (2000, p. 2) In her perspective, the narrative devices transport the reader into the text and give him/her a sense of spatial, temporal and emotional immersion; i.e., the sense of presence that the user/reader feel when connected to a virtual world, that might or might not be digital. Although the focus of her text is on interactive drama, she acknowledges that the virtual reality is not the only environment where people can simultaneously experience immersion and interactivity.

Her work is vital for literary theory since she transfers the technological concepts of interactivity and immersion to the literary domain in order to discuss traditional literature and new genres produced in the digital era. It is interesting to notice that these two key concepts, usually relegated to the digital domain, have already been discussed, from a different perspective, by the Reception Theorists, especially interactivity. For Reception theorists, the reader has always been an active participant in the process of interpretation of any text. According to Wolfgang Iser in *The Play of the Text*, "The staged play of the text does not, then, unfold as a pageant which the reader merely watches, but is both an ongoing event and a happening for the reader, causing his or her direct involvement in the proceedings and indeed in the staging." (ISER, 1989, 335-336)

However, experiencing the narrative and actively participating in the construction of the story does not turn the reader into an author. The agency (most commonly found in digital games, for instance), which is the ability to act consciously, that is, make

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[20] Ryan develops a concept of *virtual* that goes beyond the common sense as (1) ''imaginary'' and (2) ''depending on computers.'' She suggests three different senses of virtual: an optical one (the virtual as illusion); a scholastic one (the virtual as potentiality); and an information technological one (the virtual as the computer mediated). (RYAN, 2000, p. 13)

choices, and observe the results, does not turn the reader into author. According to Murray and Manovich, authorship is essentially procedural. To be precise,

> Procedural autorship means writing the rules by which the texts appear as well as writing the texts themselves. It means writing the rules for the interactor's involvement, that is, the conditions under which things will happen in response to the participant's reaction. […] The procedural author creates not just a set of scenes but a world of narrative possibilities. (MURRAY, 1997, 152)

Therefore, although the reader/interactor experiences a relevant part in artistic digital creations, this is not authorship; it is agency.

For instance, imagine you are reading a story about a couple who are planning to kill the woman's husband. You are completely absorbed, reading from a comfortable chair by the fireplace. While reading the description of the house, you picture your own house. Then you read that the man enters the room in which the husband's character is sitting by the fire and *voilà*! It is too late for you to avoid the knife your wife's lover strikes into your chest. You have just become Julio Cortázar's character in the short story *The Continuity of Parks* (1964). Whenever we transport ourselves in imagination into a foreign world (which represents this world, whether it exists or not, as if it were actual), we are performing a fictional recentering. However, recentering should not be confused with immersion. According to Ryan (2011, p. 4-5),

> Whereas recentering is a logical operation which we deliberately perform whenever we read (or watch) a work of fiction, immersion is an experience created by artistic devices. The text must be able to bring a world to life, to give it presence, and to capture our interest in a story. All fictions require recentering to be properly understood, but only some of them turn recentering into immersion. […] Conversely, immersion is not restricted to fiction. I can be immersed in a true story without having to recenter myself into a foreign world.

When it comes to digital literature, the reader of the story should be able to actually "kill" the character in the story and we should be able to "read" digital literature

or, better say, interpret not just the text but what happens to the text. Put differently, in digital literature, the reader should be able to "do" something to the text. Therefore, the paths chosen through the network will tie the knots and form a particular story, and every time we permute different textual fragments, we will have a different outcome. According to Espen Aarseth (1997) ergodic literature is the foundation of cybertext since in the hypertext environment readers create their own structures, sequences and meanings. The ergodic dimension, though, is not exclusive of digital environments. In Cortázar's print novel *Hopscotch* (1963) the reader must decide which order to pursue in order to build the jigsaw puzzle provided by the author. The lack of linearity does not necessarily disrupt narrative since each reading of a digital narrative is a linear experience because within each chosen path of story the order of events does not alter, thus maintaining a temporal chain of events. According to Ryan (2005), "If we alter the sequence, we get a different story, but within each story, the order of events cannot be changed." In this sense, the reader/player/interactor is an agent and a co-producer of the story's plot. That is to say, the reader/player/interactor needs to respond to changing conditions through input in order to build the story.

If Ryan (2001) is right and the most distinctive resource of digital media is the ability to respond to changing conditions, and the changes in conditions are determined by the user's input, then one of the most important features of this medium might be interactivity[21]. The author distinguishes four forms of interactivity in order to demonstrate how different types of interactivity provide different possibilities at the level of narrative and plot. In the internal mode of interactivity, the user/reader/player is a member of the fictional world (e.g. he/she is an avatar or sees the world from a first person perspective). In the external mode of interactivity the user/reader/player is outside the virtual world (e.g. he might be a god who controls the fictional world or just navigates the database, seeing the world from a third person perspective).

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[21] Interactivity is in the realm of technology while interaction is in the realm of sociological relationships, i.e., interactivity is mechanical while interaction is instructional. Furthermore, Jenkins also distinguishes interactivity from participation: "Interactivity is a property of the technology, while participation is a property of culture." (2009, p. 8) Therefore, I understand that the terms *interactivity, interaction* and *participation* are different concepts but Ryan does not approach the variation.

> a world-internal participation will logically result in the user's personification, since worlds are spaces populated by individuated existents, while world-external involvement does not require a concrete persona. (RYAN, 2001)

The exploratory mode of interactivity leaves the user/reader/player free to move around the database but his/her actions do not alter the plot or affect the virtual world. In contrast, in the ontological mode of interactivity, the user's decisions impact the destiny of the virtual world on different paths and determine which possible world and, consequently, which story will develop from his/her choice.

> Whereas the distinction internal-external is analog, the dichotomy exploratory-ontological is strictly digital. The user can situate herself at various distances from the fictional world. But her decisions either do or do not have the power to affect the history of the fictional world. (RYAN, 2001)

For instance, most "classical" hypertexts, such as Michael Joyce and Stuart Moulthrop's novels, are internal-exploratory because the logical structure of the narrative is densely connected and does not allow the user/reader to wander around the textual space. Moreover, in this example the space or map of the text is a network of lexia and not the geography of a fictional world. Simulation games such as *Simcity* or *Caesar*, for instance, are external-ontological because the user/reader rules over a city or empire and his decisions affect the evolution of the system. Games such as *Grand Theft Auto* are internal-ontological because the user/reader engages with the fictional world producing a new story with every run of the system. Also, the destiny is enacted dramatically rather than narrated. In this case, the main difference from drama and film is that the actor and spectator are fused in the same persona: "It is the same person who participates in the enacting of a plot, and reads a story from the action that takes place in the virtual world." (RYAN, 2001).

Ryan concludes that hypertexts implement diegetic narrativity and virtual environments implement mimetic narrativity, while computer games seem to present a more complex relation to narrativity. Firstly because they do not always make use of narrative (e.g. Tetris would represent the lowest degree of narativity in games). Secondly,

the use of narrative elements in computer games "is not an end in itself but a means toward the goal of luring the player into the game-world" (RYAN, 2001), that is to say, narrativity might be just an instrument to immerse the player in the game. In any case, what the author is advocating for is an expansion of narrative modalities that could also be applied to digital works such as games.

Ryan points out that the perspective towards narrative is usually language-based (or speech-act approach). For instance, a speech-act approach to narrative (as conceived by Metz, Chatman, Jost and Gaudrault), "defines narrative as an act of storytelling addressed by a narrator to a narratee, or as the recounting by a narrator of a sequence of past events." (RYAN, 2006, p. 30) From this perspective the analysis of a play or a film is based on the "utterances of a narratological figure" (RYAN, 2006, p. 30), even if voice-over narration is not used (she acknowledges that Bordwell's perspective differs from the theorists cited above). However, in order to conceive a definition of narrative in digital environments it is essential to maintain a transmedial perspective. "A transmedial definition of narrative requires a broadening of the concept beyond the verbal, but this broadening should be compensated by a semantic narrowing down, otherwise all texts of all media will end up as narratives" (RYAN, 2006, p. 31). At last, Ryan uses the definition proposed by H. Porter Abbott: "story is an event or sequence of events (the action), and narrative discourse is those events as represented." (RYAN, 2006, p. 31) In other words, narrative is the textual story, while story is the virtual narrative, that is, story is encoded in mental images.

In an attempt to approach the issue of narrative in digital environments formally, Ryan suggests a scalar perspective on narrative rather than binary, heading for a more inclusive direction and attempting to balance the transmedial perspective and the medium-free theory of narrative. The author states that narrativity is a matter of degree (a postmodern novel can be less narrative than simple forms such as fables or fairy tales). Also, narrativity is independent of fictionality (one can be immersed in a true story) and tellability (the act of telling verbally). (RYAN, 2001) According to Ryan, the concept of "having narrativity" is opposed to "being a narrative".

> The property of "being a narrative" can be predicated of any semiotic object produced with the intent to evoke a story to the mind of the audience. To be more precise, it is the receiver's recognition of this intent that leads to the judgment: this text is a

narrative, though we can never be sure that sender and receiver have the same story in mind. "Having narrativity," on the other hand, means being able to evoke such a script, whether or not there is a text, and if there is one, whether or not the author intended to convey a specific story. (RYAN, 2006, p. 10-11)

Thus, by establishing the four degrees of narrativity (spatial, temporal, mental, formal and pragmatic), Ryan provides criteria to determine a text's degree of narrativity and its semantic typology as well. Ryan suggests a set of narrative modes that provide recognizable patterns other than the standard way of evoking narrative scripts, i.e, "a distinct way to bring to mind the cognitive construct that defines narrativity". (RYAN, 2006, p. 12) As a result, this formal perspective also positions narrative as a category with multiple dimensions and it helps the analysis of many kinds of texts (digital and non digital).

Below, I generated a table based on the author's ideas (RYAN, 2006) in order to visualize the narrative modes. It is important to highlight that the author stresses that this is not a fixed definition and the modes might presuppose or exclude others.

Mode	Definition	Example
External/Internal	In the external mode, narrative meaning is encoded in material signs; it is textualized. In the internal mode, it does not involve a textualization: we can tell ourselves stories in the privacy of our minds.	Explicit textualization vs. internal imagery.
Fictional/Nonfictional	There are two fundamental modes of thinking about fiction: one is narrative and the other is "virtual thinking" or "nonfactual thinking". Ryan also believes that fiction depends on "signposts of fictionality", in other words, on the judgment of whether a certain work is	Narrative fiction means that fiction does not have to fulfill all the conditions of narrativity but it has to create a world by means of singular existential propositions, i.e., it must offer an embryonic story. "Virtual thinking" or "nonfactual thinking" is the ability to detach

	fiction or not. Therefore, fictionality would not be "a semantic property of texts, nor a stylistic one, but a pragmatic feature: a feature that tells us what to do with the text." (RYAN, 2011)	thought from what exists and conduct experiments about what could be or what could have been (for example, the act of examining all possibilities that one's faced with in order to take a certain decision). (RYAN, 2006, p.31)
Representational/Simulative	A representation is an image of one possibility (in a world), while a simulation is a productive engine that generates many different courses of events through a combination of fixed and variable parameters.	Simulation is a narrative mode specific to digital media, simulation is found in story-generating programs and in computer games.
Diegetic/Mimetic	A diegetic narration is the verbal storytelling act of a narrator, which presupposes language, either oral or written. A mimetic narration is an act of showing, a visual or acoustic display. But each of these two modes can intrude into a narration dominated by the other.	Diegetic narration is typical of the novel and of oral storytelling. Mimetic narration is exemplified by all the dramatic arts: movies, theater, dance, and the opera.
Autotelic/Utilitarian	In the autotelic mode, the story is displayed for its own sake; in the utilitarian mode, it is subordinated to another goal, such as making a point.	An example of utilitarian mode is in a speech or sermon, explaining a situation through an example, or motivating people to adopt certain behaviors.
Autonomous/Illustrative	In the autonomous mode, the text transmits a story that is new to the receiver. In the illustrative mode, the text retells and completes a story, relying on the receiver's previous knowledge of the plot.	The illustrative mode is typical of pictorial narratives, for instance, medieval paintings of biblical scenes. Halfway between these two poles are texts that offer a new, significantly altered version of a

		familiar plot, such as a modern retelling of a classical myth.
Scripted/Emergent	In the scripted mode story and discourse are entirely determined by a permanently inscribed text. In the emergent mode, discourse, and at least some aspects of story, are created live through improvisation by the narrator (oral storytelling), by the actors (commedia dell'arte), by the recipient (see participatory), or through computer programming.	Examples of scripted mode include both print narratives and dramatic performance relying on memorized text. An example of emergent mode would be live performances and improvisation.
Receptive/Participatory	In the receptive mode the recipient plays no active role in the events presented by the narrative nor in their presentation: she merely receives the account of a narrative action, imagining herself as an external witness. In the participatory mode (a subcategory of emergent), the performance of the recipient actualizes the narrative and completes it on the level of either discourse or story.	In discourse-level participation (hypertext fiction), the recipient-participant determines the order of presentation of the text, while in story-level participation (pencil and paper role-playing games [e.g. Dungeons and Dragons], interactive drama, and computer games) she impersonates an active character who influences the evolution of the storyworld.
Determinate/Indeterminate	In the determinate mode the text specifies a sufficient number of points on the narrative arc to project a reasonably definite script. In the indeterminate mode, only one or two points are specified, and it is up to the interpreter to imagine one (or more) of the	The indeterminate mode is typical of narrative paintings that let the spectator imagine what immediately preceded and what will immediately follow the represented scene.

	virtual curves that traverse these coordinates.	
Retrospective/Simultaneous/ Prospective	In the retrospective mode, narrative recounts past events; in the simultaneous mode (TV and radio commentaries of live broadcasts), it recounts events almost as they happen; in the prospective (prophecies and political speeches), it focuses on future events.	Setting events in what is from our historical point of view the future does not necessarily result in a prospective narrative: science fiction stories are usually told in the retrospective mode.
Literal/Metaphorical	What constitutes a literal or metaphorical narration depends on the particular definition given to narrative. If we define narrative as the representation of a world populated by individuated characters, and if characters are intelligent agents, the following relaxations of the definitions should be regarded as metaphorical.	

2.4 PERFORMANCE IN THE NEW MEDIA

Historically, theatre has always gone through major changes because of new technologies; or still, new technologies were perceived and experimented because of historical circumstances. Either way, from the ancient Greeks' interest in the science of acoustics and Roman engineering skills on stage, to the introduction of electric light in the 1800s and the use of audio and visual devices by the European Avant-Garde movements, technology has always played an important role on stage. If the theatre is the art of the presence of the body, and, if, according to McLuhan, media (and technology) are nothing but extensions of the body and the senses; then, the relation between technology and theatre would be inherent.

Although virtual reality[22] and the suspension of disbelief are longstanding tools of theatre, what digital media is offering now is a different form of expression and storytelling. Digital media has been pushing the theatre to the limits of creative experiment by exploring the impacts of computer-mediated communication in human life. Moreover, the theatre has contributed more than we realize to digital media in terms of language, structure and concepts.

Computer-based technology is filled with metaphors about the human-computer activity. Graphic interface is one of the features that makes computers more user-friendly by displaying a recognizable representation of things that exist concretely in the real world, such as can be seen in the use of terms such as desktop, folder, page, etc. In *Computers as Theatre* (1991), Brenda Laurel suggests ways in which we can conceptualize human-computer interaction by relating it to the notion of theatre.

Laurel compares the role of the graphic designer in human-computer interaction to the role of the theatrical scene designer. She parallels both activities because both "create representations of objects and environments that provide a context for action." (LAUREL, 1991, p. 9) While scene designers in the theatre provide objects such as chairs, canvas and rugs, and lighting designers use color, intensity and direction to illuminate the action, both providing contextual information for the play, the graphic designer provides "representations of worlds that are like reality only different." (LAUREL, 1991, p. 10)

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[22] Antonin Artaud used the term in the context of theatre in 1938.

However, the elements of scene design as well as graphic design are just a part of the representation. A play, just like a website, needs representations of characters and action. In the digital environment, we call the whole of this representation interface.

According to Laurel, "the theatre bears some similarities to interface design in that both deal with the representation of action" (LAUREL, 1991, p. 14) and she points out that the potential of computers lies in "its capacity to represent action in which humans could participate" (LAUREL, 1991, p. 1). In the theatre, the play might take place on a stage or another scenic space and, traditionally, is enacted by one or more actors who portray characters by performing actions in a context provided by scene and light design. There is usually an audience who might or might not participate directly (1960s avant-garde) or indirectly (reactions such as laughter) in the action. In the digital environment, the scenic space would be a virtual world populated by agents (human and computer-generated) and elements of graphic design. No matter how the "magic" is created (hardware or software), the representation "on stage" is only what matters, meaning that "For actor and audience alike, the ultimate 'reality' is what is happening in the imaginary world on the stage – the representation" (LAUREL, 1991, p. 16). According to Laurel,

> The idea of human-computer activity suggests a number of interesting corollaries. Since all action is confined to the world of the representation, all agents are situated in the same context, have access to the same objects, and speak the same language. Participants learn what language to speak by noticing what is understood; they learn what objects are and what they do by playing around with them. (LAUREL, 1991, p. 18)

We might trace other interesting relations between the digital environment and the notions of theatre and performance, especially those human interactions found in social networks. In *Performance, Réception e Lecture* (1990), Zumthor discusses the act of reading as performance and places the reader and his/her body as a foundation to the conception of the poetic voice. Although his book is not about performance and media, Zumthor raises important aspects when discussing the elements of performance: he questions which aspects are essential in a performance. The presence of a body, the actor's body, might be one of them but it is not the only one. He quotes Josette Féral's article *La Théâtralité* (1988) in order to manifest the idea that the fictional space might

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be the most important element in performance, whether it is theatrical – a programmed fictional space such as the theatre stage – or spectacular – when the space is not programmed such as a public space (the underground, a bus, the street). The spectator might register the theatrical aspect of the scene and space even without the presence of the actor's body on stage. Likewise, in a public space, the theatrical aspect might be perceived if the spectator is aware of the intention of theatre (ZUMTHOR, 2007, p. 41). More precisely, the spectator needs to modify his/her perception of the place/space, turning a common and ordinary place into a fictional space and making sense of theatrical signs in order to "read" the performance. According to Zumthor (2007, p. 41), theatricality emerges from the spectator's acknowledgement of the theatre intention, i.e., when a theatre intention is perceived, the spectator automatically changes his point of view in order to see the spectacular where before he would only see the ordinary.

Now, allow me to place the discussion above in the digital environment. If we take into account the fact that in this environment anyone who uses online social media networking (such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.) represent themselves to others through avatars[23], whether it is 3D or just as the user profile (SANT, 2014, p. 248), the potential for the creation of fictional spaces in the digital environment is immense. Therefore, the condition to have a performance in the digital environment might emerge from the identification of *another space*, the "perception of a spatial alterity in the text" (ZUMTHOR, 2007, p. 41). Moreover, human interaction in social networks might also raise discussions about fictional and non-fictional spaces, and the fictionalization of everyday life.

In fact, much before the popularization of PCs and the accessibility to the internet, Erving Goffman (1959) had already employed a dramaturgical approach to social interactions viewing them as performance. According to the author, each performance, or social interaction, is shaped by environment and audience, constructed to provide others with impressions that are in agreement with the goals of the actor. That is to say, people construct themselves in social situations through performances. According to Robert Ezra Park (1950, p. 249),

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[23] The term avatar refers to any specifically constructed online portrayal of an Internet user, regardless of whether it is made up of a simple text-based user profile or an elaborate 3D graphic representation (SANT, 2014, p. 248)

It is probably no mere historical accident that the word person, in its first meaning, is a mask. It is rather a recognition of the fact that everyone is always and everywhere, more or less consciously playing a role… It is in these roles that we know each other; it is in these roles that we know ourselves.

More recently, scholars like Ruth Page state that although story-like fragments found in social media contexts might not be intentionally fictional, the "day-to-day accounts of life experience are selective, artistic, reflective, playful, emotive, and sometimes as unreliable as the texts more centrally positioned in digital narratology." (PAGE, 2012, p. 3) Furthermore, the expanding networks of people and relations provided by social media might provoke a multiplicity of selves and voices, aspects of one's own personality that not necessarily harmonize with each other. Therefore, digital social networks provide potentially rich and varied, public and private, performances of the self.

According to Toni Sant (2014), performance in the internet started in the late 1980s with enactments of Shakespeare and other major authors in the Internet Relay Chat (IRC), a precursor of chat environments such as MSN or Skype, which was designed for group chats and discussions. In IRC performances what called attention were the script-like quality and the direct speech (SANT, 2014, p. 249). In 1993, on the IRC channel #Hamnet, *Hamnet: Shakespeare's Play Adapted for IRC* premiered on the computer screens. The online play was credited to The Hamnet Players[24] and used shortened names and abbreviated words. Commands were preceded by a forward slash and references to other channels were indicated with the hash prefix. "For example, Hamlet's reproach to Ophelia in the first scene of the third act is reduced to '<Hamlet> Oph: suggest u /JOIN #nunnery'." (SANT, 2014, p. 251) According to Sant (2014), in 1994 the Hamnet Players also produced *PCbeth* (an IBM clone of Macbeth), adapted by Gayle Kidder. In 1995, Antoinette LaFarge, a pioneer of theatrical productions on MOOs[25] and other online

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[24] Hamnet Players was an amateur online theatre company established by Stuart Harris in 1993. Aside from the reference to Shakespeare's own son Hamnet, who died aged 11 from the bubonic plague in 1596, the company's name is a play on slang words related to amateur acting or amateur radio (ham) and the Internet (net). (SANT, 2014, p.251)

[25] Multi-User Dimension Object Oriented (MOOs) is a text-based online virtual reality system to which multiple users (players) are connected at the same time.

environments, and The Plaintext Players produced their own version of Hamlet called *LittleHamlet*, which could be seen off-line via live projection in the Xavier Lopez Gallery in London.

In the early 1990s other text-based online chat environments became popular, like Multi-User Dungeon or Multi-User Dimension (MUDs) and MUD Object Oriented (MOOs). These computer games originate from the concept and structure of Role-Playing Games such as *Dungeons & Dragons* (1974). In these games, what you see on screen looks like a theatrical script with the speaker's name at the start of every line. Differently from IRC, the speech is usually in third person, which probably influences players and readers, and users can construct an online environment and save it in order to share with others users and interact with them even when they are not online. In the mid-1990s, better graphics were introduced by Massively Multi-player Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs), and in the mid-2000s live or pre-recorded audio and video streams were introduced along with 3D avatars and environments (SANT, 2014, p. 249). *Second Life* is an example of 3D voice-enabled MMORPGs. Although Second Life offers great potential for theatrical performances, according to Sant (2014, p. 249-250), the most notable use of online environment for the enactment of dramatic texts is ANTHEMOO, a MOO created for the Association of Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) by Juli Burk at the University of Hawaii in 1995. Before disappearing completely, ANTHEMOO hosted performances online such as Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (1604) by Steve Schrum, the *MetaMOOphosis* project by Rick Sacks based on Kafka's novel *Metamorphosis* (1915), Karen Wheatley's *Scheherazade's Daughters*, and a multinational theatre project entitled *Oudeis* based on Homer's *Odyssey*. (SANT, 2014, p. 250)

In 2008, Sarah Schmelling, in collaboration with graphic designer Angela Lioa, wrote a version of *Hamlet* for Facebook in which Shakespeare would log on to his own Facebook News Feed, where the main characters and events in Hamlet appear in reverse chronological order. (SANT, 2014, p. 251) Also, in 2010, a Twitter version of *Romeo and Juliet* was produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company entitled *Such Tweet Sorrow* in which @julietcap16 and @romeo_mo interact on Twitter and other social networks including webcam video clips on YouTube (see Chapter 2).

According to Sant (2014), theatrical activities in Second Life, which is a 3D MMORPG, started in 2004 and its most outstanding projects include productions by the

Second Life Shakespeare Company (SLSC). Theatrical projects in Second Life approached play readings, storytelling, production of classic and new plays, as well as experiments in theatre architecture, including the reconstruction of Shakespeare's The Globe Theatre, which included interactive tools, scenarios and teaching materials. Theatrical projects in Second Life call attention for their magnitude and complexity.

> One of these Globe simulations in Second Life is on Renaissance Island, where it has rarely been used for live performances but fits in well with the theme of the island and serves as an excellent teaching aid for history lessons about this period. Islands in Second Life are the equivalent of channels in IRC; although they are not commonly referred to as such, we can even think of them as elaborate chat rooms. Renaissance Island serves as an environment where elements of sixteenth-century life in Europe can be experienced within the online environment of Second Life. (SANT, 2014, p. 253)

The SLSC performed versions of Shakespeare's plays, such as *Hamlet* and *Twelfth Night*, in Second Life between 2007 and 2011. Besides using sets, costumes and avatars custom-made for each play, they also used live voice in their online performance. However, Sant seems to disagree about the use of voice in theatrical online performances.

> The use of voice in theatrical productions presented on 3D online virtual worlds like Second Life is becoming more and more popular as time passes. Ironically, this means that some of the elements that made for creativity in online productions presented prior to the introduction of voice communication over the Internet are relegated in favour of cartoonish simulations of other mediated and non-mediated forms of live performance. (SANT, 2014, p. 254)

Curiously, Sant's statement seems to echo divergent opinions about the cinema transition to the *talkies* in the beginning of the 20th century. Nonetheless, Sant's article is fundamental to establish historical awareness and terminology about theatrical productions on the internet. Furthermore, Sant raises the discussion about the terminology used in the field, which varies from Live Art on the Internet, Digital Live Art, Digital Performances, Desktop Theatre, Cyberformance and Cybertheatre.

Live Art on the Internet was a term used by Franklin Furnace since 1997. It is the most descriptive term but difficult to define or delimit since it requires the use of the Internet to produce and/or disseminate works of Live Art, which might include several kinds of work. On the other hand, Digital Live Art encapsulates any use of computing, digital technology and human-computer interaction within Live Art, as defined by Sant in 2008. Digital Performance is a broader term established by Steve Dixon in 2007 and "covers many types of performance that somehow involve media technology, stemming from a tradition dating back to the historical avant-garde in visual, auditory and performing arts." (SANT, 2014, p. 255) In 1997, Adriene Jenik and Lisa Brenneis started using the term Desktop Theater, and defined it as "intentional theater-like activity [that] wafts through the layers of unintentional drama and surreal banality encountered in online visual chat rooms' (SANT, 2014, p. 256) Cyberformance, a term defined by Varley Jamison in 2008, would be "live performance that utilises internet technologies to bring remote performers together in real time, for remote and/ or proximal audiences" (SANT, 2014, p. 256). In 2010, Maria Chatzichristodoulou defined Cybertheater as an "emergent networked performance practice" which seems to be a more appropriate way to describe live performances of dramatic literature on the Internet, according to Sant (2014, p. 256). Intermedial Performance (Albersmeier and Roloff, 1989), Cyberdrama (Murray, 1997), Virtual Theatre (Lanier), Telematic Performance (Salz, 2004), Cyberperformance (Causey, 2006) and Hyperformance (Unterman, 2007) are other terms that have already been used to describe techno-performative practices.

Christina Papagiannouli, in her 2011 article *Cyberformance and Cyberstage*, chose to adopt Varley Jamieson's term Cyberformance and argues that the cyberspace can be used as a theatrical stage, which she named cyberstage. The author understands cyberspace as an "in-between space and not space, *spaceless*, where the participants are present and absent at the same time, *bodyless*, in a live and midiatised experience, *liveness*." (PAPAGIANOULI, 2011, p. 276) For the author, spaceless, *bodyless* and liveness are crucial characteristics that describe cyberspace, and consequently, the cyberstage.

However, from an intermedial perspective[26], the space would be better characterized as the compound "both-and" due to digital culture's inherent interdependencies. According to Robin Nelson (2010, p. 17)

> The manifestations of digital culture – the media forms, operational modes of devices, and cultural habits of consumers and users – not only inherently entail a relationship with an 'Other', but are structured according to a necessary interrelation with any number of 'Also-Others'. In the first instance, this may appear to resemble 'in-between-ness', the oscillation between identifiable points of reference. But this very aspect of digital culture – where devices, events and activities are formed out of relationships, necessary interdependencies, and mutually co-relating entities – provides a structuring principle that helps to explain the paradigmatic character of the digital.

Moreover, in intermedial theatre[27], the actor's agency is no longer the only fundamental element on stage but rather one of the signifiers in a complex, multilayered event and "displaced by microphones, cameras, TV monitors, laptop PCs, projection screens, motion sensors and related technologies". (NELSON, 2010, p. 21)

In conclusion, technological innovations have already provoked interesting tensions in the notions of theatre along the 20th century. While the avant-garde movements highlighted the struggle between man and machine but maintained a certain dramatic structure, the 1960s movements called for a more radical rupture with the dramatic text. It was only in the second half of the 20th century that the theatre eventually broke free from the dominance of the dramatic text, and the text became one of other several elements in the theatrical performance. In post dramatic theatre (LEHMANN, 2007), a development of theatrical practices since the 1970s, Aristotelian notions of drama not only have been questioned but completely abandoned. To be precise, mimetic imitation of human actions and, consequently, the construction of a "ficticious cosmos" in which the stage represents the world (LEHMANN, 2007, p. 26), is no longer a practice in

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[26] "An intermedial perspective on performance would be: taking all discourse to be 'mediated', we are interested in the 'mediatised' in the sense of technologically (digitally) wrought, as it functions in performance". (NELSON, 2010, p. 15)

[27] "Intermedial theatre may be both physically based and on-screen; experiences may be both actual and virtual; spaces may be both public and private; bodies may be both present and absent." (NELSON, 2010, p. 17)

theatrical performances and it begun to move from dramatic into post-dramatic much earlier than the emergence of digital culture in the late 20th century.

> The domain of theatre has been unsettled by the challenge of digital technologies but also by its expansion into – some would say its appropriation by – the notion of 'performance'. Over the past 30 years, the study of the performing arts has embraced not only a broad spectrum of practices which were formerly categorised under other art disciplines but also a wide range of social activities under the banner of 'performance' that were previously considered aspects of everyday life. (NELSON, 2010, p. 14)

Surprisingly, some scholars concerned with interactive drama and games such as Michael Mateas, in *A Preliminary Poetics for Interactive Drama and Games* (2004) and Brenda Laurel, in *Computer as Theatre* (1993) have suggested a theory of interactive drama based on Aristotle's *Poetics* that also reminds us a bit of Gustav Freytag's *Pyramid*. However, the tone of such models sound more like a manual and completely ignores not only what post-dramatic theatre has already done for theatre theory, but also the progression of theatrical practices along the 20th century. Moreover, there is no reason to believe that the aesthetic experience of contemporary audiences should resemble those of the audience of classical drama.

In conclusion, fundamental elements of classical and modern theatre[28] have already been questioned by post-drama such as the triad drama, action and imitation (LEHMANN, 2007, p. 57). Furthermore, the digital technology's capacity to integrate sound, words and temporal dynamics have extended multimodality in theatre and have "invoked the possibility of transformation from the physical to the virtual in additional dimensions of space and time." (NELSON, 2010, p.14) Therefore, the emergence of theatrical practices in the digital environment raises other issues that challenge the traditional *protocols of theatre*. If we understand theatre not only as part of media but as a media form in itself that intersects several different media, and consequently, different technologies (or arts), then theatre also has protocols. Hence we might conclude that the theatre "constitutes a medium par excellence, and its most common components are

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[28] Lehmann seems to use modern theatre as a synonym for dramatic theatre.

themselves also constituted of different media" (PAVIS, 2013, p. 132), which also suggests theatre's multimodal essence. In view of that, Lisa Gitelman defines

> media as socially realized structures of communication, where structures include both technological forms and their associated protocols, and where communication is a cultural practice, a ritualized collocation of different people on the same mental map, sharing or engaged with popular ontologies of representation. (GITELMAN, 2006, p. 7)

Also, according to Gitelman,

> If media include what I am calling protocols, they include a vast clutter of normative rules and default conditions, which gather and adhere like a nebulous array around a technological nucleus. Protocols express a huge variety of social, economic, and material relationships. [...] And protocols are far from static. Although they possess extraordinary inertia, norms and standards can and do change, because they are expressive of changeable social, economic, and material relationships. (GITELMAN, 2006, p. 7 -8)

In other words, the traditional protocols of theatre would be the most stable elements of theatre throughout history (even in post drama) such as the physical presence of body (actor and audience), emission and reception of signs happening at the same time and space, whether it is theatrical or spectacular (Zumthor, 2007). From this perspective, digital environments have created new protocols for potential performances online such as the presence/absence of bodies or bodiless; time/timeless, since emission and reception of signs might not occur at the same time as in traditional theatre; and space/spaceless, i.e., cyberspace as an in-between, non-space or even "both-and" space. Although, a discussion on the elements above would prove extremely fruitful and mentioning them seem unavoidable, a further discussion would place this dissertation on matters of effect, perception and reception, which is not the main aim here since the focus is on the product (text) and not on media processes (intermedial relations).

3   ROMEOS AND JULIETS

3.1 DEFINING MY METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 The object

Shakespeare's works have been an endless source of inspiration to adaptations in different cultures and in different media across centuries. Nowadays, we face a stunning variety of materials on Shakespeare's works: from printed texts to audio recordings, from big screen films to digital videos on the internet. The prominence of Shakespeare's work adapted to different media suggests that these adaptations "provide a revealing site that might illustrate the impact of digital culture on our sense of drama." (WORTHEN, p. 230) Furthermore, the array of Shakespearean resources and materials and their availability through electronic means is "expanding and altering the practice of research and our understanding of Shakespearean drama itself." (WORTHEN, p. 229)

In face of all technological innovations discussed in the previous chapters, and having in mind the concept of participatory culture by Jenkins and Schaeffer, what would be the result if readers became writers? What if readers adapted a Shakespearean work[29] to their own socio-cultural context? What would happen if they used digital media to do so? This was the premise to develop the object of this study: the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*.

Choosing specifically Romeo and Juliet as inspiration for this enterprise was no coincidence. It was motivated by the context itself and by the people involved in the making of the adaptation. The adaptation was developed by students from two at risk communities that presented a history of clash and struggles between themselves, a sort of Montague-Capulet brawl. Hence, adapting a fictional material was a creative way of telling their own story and promoting individual and collective identity awareness.

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[29] I am not referring to the 'original' text here but a contemporary reinterpretation of Shakespeare's work to text or any other media.

Furthermore, the motivation to work with digital technology was due to the fact that this group had little or no contact with digital media. Being an at risk group detached them from the emerging digital culture. Hence, the criteria to choose the digital platforms used in the making of the adaptation were based on accessibility, that is to say, popular, free and user-friendly platforms. Each platform developed digital literacy and creativity based on its characteristics. For instance, *MySpace* is a social music sharing service, so it was a platform chosen to develop audio material; *Tumblr* is a social media in which images (be it photos, videos or gifs) are shared, so this platform was chosen to develop image content. Likewise, blogs are platforms in which the text predominates, so *Blogspot* was chosen to develop text material; and *Facebook*, being a social network in which profiles (the avatar's characteristics) are predominant, was used to develop the play character's profiles. *Vimeo*, which is a video sharing platform, contains a short film that is equivalent to the prologue in the play. The adaptation's opening page had to bear the characteristics of a convergent platform, so *Flavors.me* was chosen to initiate the reader/user into the story. The creation of the adaptation took one year. Teachers, students and collaborators met twice a week to take part in workshops and classes. The result was a multiplatform adaptation entitled *Romeus & Julietas*, which is the object of study of this dissertation.

3.1.2 Hypothesis and objective

Shakespeare's cross-cultural significance is irrefutable. Shakespeare's work is adapted in different cultures and contexts in accordance with particular expectations and anxieties. However, the decentering of Shakespeare and the contemporary adaptations focused on local value in various cultures worldwide have been raising questions that are not exactly about Shakespeare, instead they are about the adaptation itself. Therefore, this research will focus on adaptation as end product (target-oriented approach), which, according to Catrysse, might be "considered the most 'natural' way of starting a study of adaptation since it is the people-within-the-receiving-culture who identify this phenomenon as an adaptation." (CATRYSSE, 2011, p. 3) The multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* is the object of this study, and although the production context is

relevant to understand the object as a whole, this dissertation is not about the subjects (the makers or adapters), but about the text (the adaptation as end product).

All things considered, the hypotheses raised by this research are that (1) adaptation is a tool to make Shakespeare's work more accessible to people and (2) digital media can be used as an instrument to make an amateur adaptation happen. The objectives of this dissertation are (1) describe how the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* is presented and (2) interpret and explain the adaptational choices by focusing on issues raised by the description and questions provoked by *Romeus & Julietas.*

3.1.3 The method

The study will be separated in two different moments: (a) descriptive summary and (b) critical analysis, in order to distinguish between description and explanation since "facts illustrate but they do not speak for themselves, they need explanation." (CATRYSSE, 2014, p. 171) According to Catrysse, description and explanation are observer dependent processes, that is, they are "subjective in the sense that they are observer- or mind-dependent." (2014, p. 104) Nonetheless, it is important to separate description and explanation in two different moments in order to tell facts from values by contextualizing rather than universalizing. Additionally, following Elliot's (2013) ideas, I believe the methodological approach should adapt to adaptations. Therefore, I will use some principles and concepts presented by Catrysse as well as Robert Yin's case study methodology.

According to Robert Yin, "case studies are the preferred strategy when "how" or "why" questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context." (YIN, 2013, p. 1) Yin's definition seems extremely appropriate for this dissertation's particular object of study. Besides, the case study methodology is usually chosen, among a number of other methodological approaches, when the researcher investigates a contemporary phenomenon in which the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear, and especially, when the contextual conditions are highly relevant. Likewise, Catrysse (2014,

p. 194) acknowledges the importance of considering the production context in a descriptive research[30].

For the purpose of this research, although each case study can present different structures and a variety of analytical methods, I chose to use the embedded single case study, in which there is more than one unit of analysis. More precisely, even though this dissertation is about the adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* in the website *flavors.me* (which is the object as a whole), the description and analysis will include individual units. These individual units are the links that lead to other websites (e.g. Prólogo, Ato 1: Encontro, Ato 2: Amor, Ato 3: Exílio, etc.) that tell or show another part of the story, thus, forming this multiplatform adaptation.

Since I will be dealing with a hybrid multiplatform media adaptation, the enterprise is rather challenging because I need to avoid a single focus on media-specificity, which might disable adaptation studies entirely, and avoid focusing solely on text and language, since the object is transdisciplinary and involves a specific materiality. For this reason, I believe that the best approach to organize and structure the work is by separating the analysis into three distinct moments. First, I will contextualize and put the agents of this research into perspective, i.e., I will describe the cultural production context. After that, I will present a description of the object of study as a whole as well as its subunits separately. Finally, I will present a critical analysis by explaining the data presented previously. In conclusion, I will integrate a descriptive perspective approach and a critical analysis in the structure of an embedded single case study.

> In addition to revivifying both formal and cultural adaptation studies, we need to develop theories and methodologies that integrate these approaches of adaptation'. […]We need, however, to go further to develop methodologies for addressing adaptations that integrate rather than simply juxtapose formal and contextual analyses in edited collections. Integration requires both more politically inflected formalisms and more formally inflected contextual studies. (ELLIOT, 2013, p. 33)

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[30] Catrysse refers here to the agency-structure debate, i.e, agency being the 'maker' or adapter and structure being the text or adaptation.

In brief, if (1) the object of study requires multi-disciplinary methodological approaches; (2) these approaches need to adapt to adaptations; and (3) the concepts should rise from the text (target-oriented), then, it seems evident to conclude that the research should start from a descriptive perspective in order to generate ideas and integrate formal and cultural approaches, i.e, descriptive summary and critical analysis.

Furthermore, "every movement between forms or media can be an act of theorization 'about' intermedial relations" (ELLIOT, 2013, p. 37), including creative responses to theories or methodologies through the construction of new stories in different media. Elliot believes that "adaptations need to talk, write, film, dance, sculpt, game, compose, costume, photograph and computer program (etc.) back to the theories that have colonized them" (ELLIOT, 2013, p. 37) in order to produce concepts that are unavailable through the structure of academic essays. Thus, I daresay the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* provides a contextualized critical commentary and accesses the star-crossed lovers' archetype creatively, which is exactly where the innovation of this research lies.

In summary, I created seven methodological principles to approach this dissertation:

1. The field of adaptation studies should embrace its most innate process – stasis and change – , thus, a research methodology should adapt to adaptations;
2. Adaptation approaches, which might be cross-disciplinary, should emerge from the adaptation itself, so we should apply the concepts that the adaptation gives rise to;
3. The approach should emerge from the adaptation as end product (target-oriented approach), i.e., it is not a dissertation about Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* but rather about the 2013 Brazilian adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*;
4. The embedded case study methodology should help structure the analysis by revealing the object as a whole as well as its subunits.
5. Adaptation approaches should integrate and promote balance between formal (descriptive summary) and cultural approaches (critical analysis);

6. It is necessary to identify the adapters, the audience and the cultural context situating adaptations within a broader framework relating to political, economic and cultural circumstances;

7. Adaptation is innovation, rather than repetition with variation: innovation lies in the object of study itself, *Romeus & Julietas*, as a critical commentary, which was able to produce concepts about adaptational relations unavailable through the thesis-argument-conclusion structure of traditional academic works.

3.2 THE PRODUCTION CONTEXT: WHERE? WHAT? WHO?

The object of study of this dissertation is a multiplatform adaptation in the website *flavors.me* called *Romeus & Julietas*[31]. The adaptation was produced in 2013 by a group of students and collaborators within a project called *GLADS - Gêneros Literários em Ambientes Digitais* (Literary Genres in Digital Environments) from *Universidade Federal do Pampa* (UNIPAMPA). The project was part of an extension program called *Observatório de Aprendizagem*, fomented by PROEXT MEC with a grant from the Brazilian Ministry of Education. The main objective of GLADS was to promote contact with different literary genres by appropriating them to the digital media, thus, stimulating self-expression, identity awareness, critical thinking and digital inclusion. The project operated at *Universidade Federal do Pampa* (UNIPAMPA) in Bagé, a city in the very south of Brazil.

UNIPAMPA was created in 2008 within the Brazilian government's program to expand public universities in order to develop higher education in areas that were economically stagnated, thus fostering economic and cultural progress in the region. The fact that the university was created to become an agent of transformation on the border region between Brazil-Uruguay is probably one of the reasons why extension programs are so numerous at UNIPAMPA. Extension programs, which form an integral triangle with teaching and research, are a way to foster a meaningful exchange between university and society by means of giving the general public access to academic knowledge and renewing its academic practices as a result of this dialogic relation. UNIPAMPA is formed by 10 campi spread along the border between Brazil and Uruguay in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. The 64 undergraduate courses are distributed among these 10 campi and the English major, which we call *Letras* in Brazil, is in the city of Bagé.

Bagé, which has around 116 thousand inhabitants, is located in the pampa gaucho region, also known as *campanha*, and is around 60 km from the border Brazil-Uruguay. Due to its location on the shortest route between Porto Alegre in Brazil and Montevideo in Uruguay, the city has always played an important role in the history of Brazil and the state of *Rio Grande do Sul*. Historically, it was the scenario of struggles between Amerindians, Portuguese and Spanish and of events such as the Cisplatine War, the

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[31] Available here: http://romeusejulietas.flavors.me/

Farroupilha and the Federalist Revolution. In the end of the 1800s, Bagé experienced considerable progress, mostly due to the *charque*[32] industry, which was the main economic activity at the time in the region. For instance, the first railroad was inaugurated in 1884, electrical lighting arrived in 1899 and in 1913 a piped water system was installed. By the end of the 1930s the *charqueadas* on the border region started to decline, probably due to structural changes and trade protection policies. However, the most important economic supply in the region of Bagé, *Charqueada Santa Thereza*, resisted until the 1960s. (SOARES, 2006, p. 69 – 70) In the second half of the 20th century, the *campanha* region suffered an enormous economical decay. Nowadays, the region's economy is based on services, cattle and agriculture, but the border region never recovered from its tremendous deterioration. The situation might change slightly and slowly with the arrival of the university, which has the potential to provide new possibilities and opportunities for generations to come.

Universidade Federal do Pampa (UNIPAMPA) in Bagé is located far from the city center, in a rural area between the districts *Malafaia* and *Ivo Ferronato*, where you can see the pampa fields and drive close to horses, cows and sheep. It is a low-income area that has received more public attention after the university started its activities in 2008. Although the university has been in the region for 8 years, it is still an underdeveloped area with practically no shops, industrial properties or offices. Most families lead a very simple life cultivating their food in their own backyard or buying and trading with neighbors. Many parents work in shops in the city center while their children go to the schools around the neighborhood. There are two public schools in the region: *EMEF Professora Creusa Brito Giorgis* in *Ivo Ferronato* neighborhood and *EMEF Peri Coronel* in *Malafaia* neighborhood, both schools are run by *Secretaria Municipal de Educação*.

There is no written material about the history of the neighborhoods, but in oral interviews registered in the short film *Duas Casas* (which will be further described in 7.2.3) we can point out some important facts. According to the dwellers, *Malafaia* was populated around the 1980s and it was said to be a strictly horticultural area with few houses, while *Ivo Ferronato* was created to become a housing development in 1992 but ended up being invaded/occupied by the homeless. According to Jandir Paim, chairman

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[32] Air dried meat, similar to beef jerky

of *Ivo Ferronato*'s residents association, *Ivo Ferronato* was supposed to be a governmental housing project but because the prices were so high, people signed up but could not afford the houses. Therefore, in 1994 the population decided to occupy the houses that at this point were already deteriorating. Later in the film, *Ivo Ferronato*'s dwellers describe the difficulties of living in a place with no infrastructure whatsoever and having to fight for basic living conditions. The dichotomy "invasion versus occupation" is what calls most attention in the dwellers' speech throughout the film and in my view as GLADS project coordinator, it was the motivation to work with these two neighborhoods and explore the story of *Romeo and Juliet* and the clash between Montagues and Capulets.

By reading the section *Quem somos* (About us), we learn more about the process of building the final product *Romeus & Julietas* and get to know the subjects involved in this enterprise. Students, ranging from 13 to 15, from both schools in the two neighborhoods, *EMEF Professora Creusa Brito Giorgis* in *Ivo Ferronato* and *EMEF Peri Coronel* in *Malafaia*, formed a single group in order to adapt Romeo and Juliet closer to their reality and to make sense of Shakespeare in the pampa gaucho. Two English major students were responsible for the group and created the lessons under my coordination and supervision. In addition, volunteer collaborators from different areas such as cinema, design, photography, fashion, dance and advertising performed short workshops for the students and helped develop the project as a whole.

Furthermore, the section *Epílogo: Outros Romeus & Julietas* was entirely produced by an elderly group at *Centro do Idoso*, a cultural and fitness center maintained by the City Hall for the elderly. Another English major student was responsible for this group and developed the lessons under the supervision of a former GLADS project teacher. In short, it is possible to say that the final product, the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*, is the sum of the work of around 50 people who got involved with the project, be it as students, teachers or collaborators.

Another fact that is important to highlight at this point is that most students (young and elderly) had little or no contact with digital media. Most students from *Ivo Ferronato* and *Malafaia* had no computers at home and depended solely on the schools' computer laboratories (which were not in very good shape) to access the internet occasionally. Some of them had Facebook profiles, for instance, but had no awareness of the platform's

potential. The elderly had no contact with digital media at all and had no computers at home. For this reason, most lessons were held at UNIPAMPA's laboratories, which was extremely valuable for the young students, because even though they lived quite close to the university they had never been at a university before; and rewarding for the elderly because they clearly felt valued and respected. Also, the work was based mostly on free softwares available online and the equipment available at the university in order to perpetuate the idea that with very simple tools and a lot of creativity it is possible to create and innovate.

Finally, the section *Quem somos* identifies the literary sources that were used in the process of adaptation. The English majors (who were, at the time, freshmen students) studied four versions translated to Portuguese – Elvio Funck (Movimento/Edunisc, 2011), Beatriz Viégas-Faria (L&PM, 2012), Bárbara Heliodora (Nova Aguilar, 2006) e Carlos de Almeida Cunha Medeiros e Oscar Mendes (Abril Cultural, 1978) – two versions adapted to target public – *Romeu e Julieta: Versão para neoleitores* (2010) by Pedro Gonzaga and *Romeu e Julieta: Um romance na terceira idade* (2011) by Julio Emilio Braz – and two cinematographic adaptations – Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) and Baz Luhrman's *Romeo+Juliet* (1996). Also, the Twitter adaptation *Such Tweet Sorrow* (2010) produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company and Mudlark was a strong source of inspiration for the project's final result. *Romeo and Juliet* was presented to the students (young and elderly) through film adaptations. The young students watched and discussed Baz Luhrman's *Romeo+Juliet* (1996), and the elderly students watched and discussed *Letters to Juliet* (2010) directed by Gary Winick and inspired by the homonymous non-fiction book by Lise Friedman and Ceil Friedman.

At last, the section also presents the "story map", i.e., a draft in the form of a fluxogram that illustrates how the adaptation would be organized, which parts of the story would be approached and how and which social media would be used to develop it. The fluxogram already denotes an incipient act of adaptation in which the creators are simultaneously reading and writing the play and expressing an embryonic critical commentary.

3.3 DESCRIBING *ROMEUS & JULIETAS*

3.3.1 Romeus & Julietas

Romeus & Julieta's opening page is hosted on the website *flavors.me*, a nameplate site that provides personal space to create profile pages and add links to other social media. Nameplate sites usually function as digital business cards or digital portfolios, but in the case of *Romeus & Julietas*, the page functions as a sort of "opening page" with an index to which all other platforms converge. (Fig. 1)

Fig. 1 - Romeus & Julietas opening page
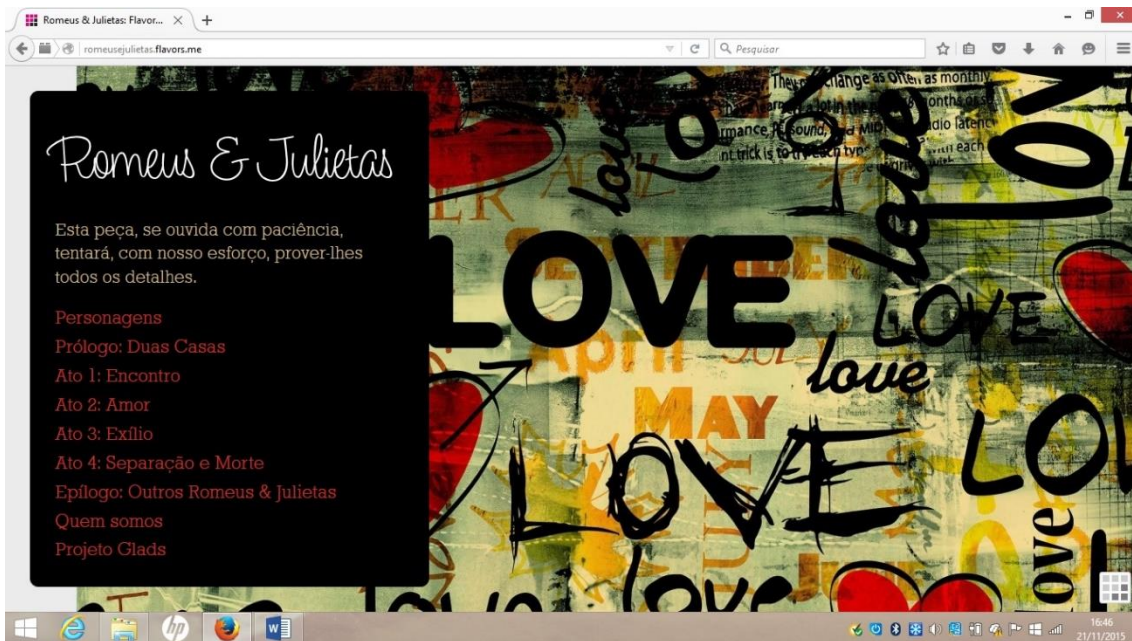
Source: Romeus & Julietas' website[33]

Using the website *flavors.me* is very easy because the drag-and-drop page builder is intuitive and does not require knowledge about coding or even graphic design. For this reason, the user has a limited set of options to create his/her page such as choosing between displaying the content as panels or columns, choosing the page structure (pre-established layouts), choosing between images provided by the website or uploading

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[33] Available here: http://romeusejulietas.flavors.me/

background images, choosing the color theme palette and the typography, and etc. The website *flavors.me* also does not provide options when it comes to navigation structure, i.e., the navigation flowchart of how the visitor will be guided through the material in the website, because it builds single pages and not websites. However, the way the content is displayed on the page reflects the material's priorities and determines the sort of interaction expected from the visitor.

The background image reminds us of a palimpsest in which the text has been scraped or washed off so that the page can be reused, which denotes an object worked upon several times. We can see layers of text that show the months of the years, indicating the passage of time, and the word "love" written in black with different fonts. The image could also trigger a resemblance to graffiti art. In addition, it prompts the ancient technique known as *sgraffiato* (meaning "to scratch" in Italian and, ultimately, "to write" in Greek), which involves works of art produced by scratching through one layer of pigment to reveal another beneath it. Although graffiti is considered a modern urban practice, the art of carving on walls could be traced back to ancient times. Nonetheless, the origins of today's spray can graffiti culture lies in New York in the late 1960s, which emerged as a way of expression of a generation of artists responding to protests of black power and civil rights movements.

On the left side of the page, we can see a black box with the information about the play *per se*. The title *Romeus & Julietas* infers multiple Romeos and Juliets, maybe referring to the several recreations of the archetypical characters or the perpetuation of these archetypes across time and culture, or a polyphonic perspective providing multiple voices to these characters. Below the title, we can read Barbara Heliodora's translation of a passage of Shakespeare's prologue: "Esta peça, se ouvida com paciência, tentará, com nosso esforço, prover-lhes todos os detalhes."[34] The sentence, which sounds like an introduction, or a micro prologue, invites the readers/users to engage in the activity of patiently following the story and trusting that everything about Romeo and Juliet will be explained and clarified. The choice of using an existing passage translated by a well-known Brazilian Shakespeare scholar such as Barbara Heliodora and maintaining the word "peça" (play) might indicate an intention of connecting *Romeus & Julietas* with the long-term tradition of adapting Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

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[34] The which, if you with patient ears attend, what here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

The structure and the content are displayed in a way that resembles the index of a dramatic text structure. It preserves the sections of a traditional dramatic text by maintaining words such as "prologue" and "act", and it upholds the structure of a dramatic text by presenting the characters first and then the prologue and the following acts. *Romeus & Julietas* presents four acts. Each act has a subtitle that describes briefly what the act is about. In *Ato 1: Encontro* we expect to learn how Romeo and Juliet met. In *Ato 2: Amor* the reader will understand how they fell in love. In *Ato 3: Exílio* we hope to understand Romeo's exile and in *Ato 4: Separação e Morte* the reader will explore the end of the idea of love and perhaps death. The adaptation also presents an epilogue with the subtitle *Outros Romeus & Julietas*, which implies that the story is unfinished or to be continued. The last two links *Quem Somos* e *Projeto Glads* are not part of the play but are part of the project. In *Quem Somos* we can learn more about the subjects involved in the process of adaptation and in *Projeto Glads* the reader can know more about the project itself.

3.3.2 Dramatis Personae

The link *Personagens* (characters) refers to the *Dramatis Personae* (in Latin means "persons of drama"), which is a cast list presented in the beginning of a dramatic text. A traditional cast list identifies major characters and some minor characters and sometimes there is a brief description next to the character's name, for instance: *Benvolio, Montague's nephew* or *Paris, a noble kinsman to the Prince*. In *Romeus & Julietas*, the link *Personagens* directs the reader to a Facebook page where we can see a collection of collage images that represent the characters. The collages, which were created by the students with the teachers' supervision in a classroom environment, were developed on paper first and later digitalized and uploaded as images on Facebook. (Fig. 2) The result,

which resembles Dadaist pieces, creates an interesting tension between the handcrafted paper assemblage and the digitalized screened image.

Fig. 2- Characters on Facebook
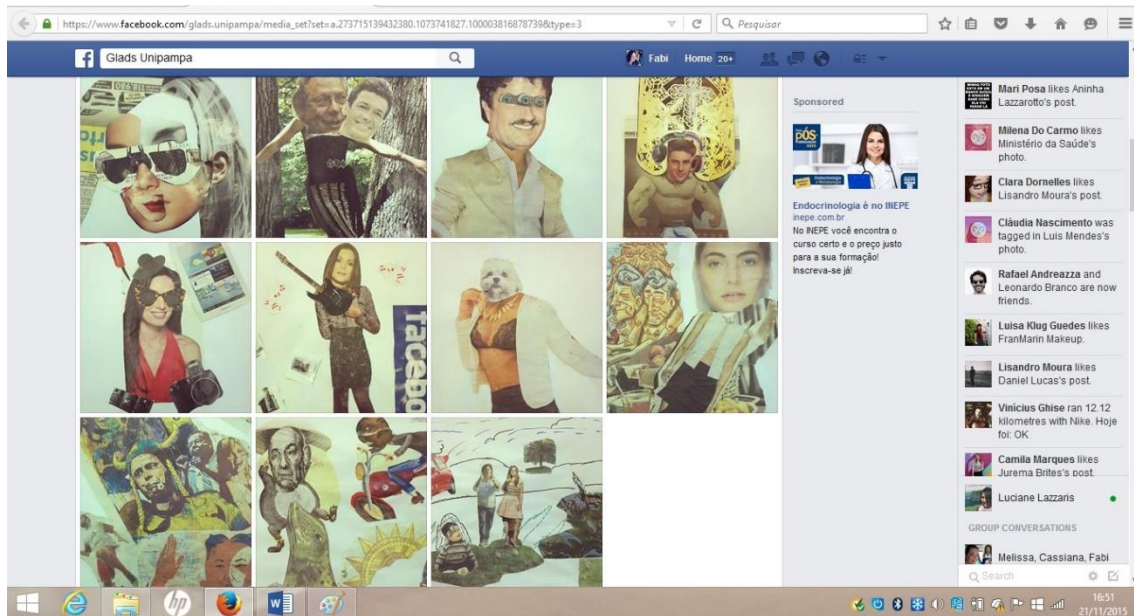
Source: Glads project Facebook page[35]

Some images present the name of the character they represent such as Juliet, Romeo, the Nurse and Lady Capulet. Juliet is represented as a young, modern girl wearing sunglasses while Romeo is represented by a three-eyed man. The representation of the star-crossed lovers is quite interesting because it might imply that Juliet was blinded by love while Romeo would possess a third eye, providing him with an extraordinary perception. The Nurse is represented by a young woman with pictures of modern household supplies such as a microwave, a coffeemaker and a guitar (a clear reference to a popular 2013 Brazilian soap opera called *Cheias de Charme* in which three maids became nationwide popstars). Lady Capulet, called Sarita Capulet, is represented by a beautiful young woman. Beside her we can see pictures of electronic devices, implying that she might be a modern up-to-date 21st century woman. Mercutio is represented by a

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[35] Available here:
https://www.facebook.com/glads.unipampa/media_set?set=a.273715139432380.1073741827.1000038 16878739&type=3

hybrid creature with the undressed body of a woman and the head of a dog. The reason for this unexpected creation might be Baz Luhrman's *Romeo+Juliet* (1996), in which Mercutio dresses up as a woman to go to the Capulet's costume party.

Other images do not present the name of the character but are easy to identify, such as the Friar, represented by a muscular young man wearing a sort of papal bejeweled crown. Another image shows a character with the body of a woman and two male faces. There is no description but it could represent Montague, Romeo's father, or Paris, or even another Mercutio. The last four images do not present any reference or description, so it is harder to recognize which characters they refer to. However, the last image shows a couple and a baby, which might indicate an alternative happy-ending for the tragic story of the lovers.

3.3.3 Prologue

The link *Prólogo: Duas Casas* directs the readers to the short film *Duas Casas* (Two Households) on Vimeo, a video sharing website. The prologue is the opening to a story that usually gives background details and supplies the audience with the information they need to make the succeeding scenes intelligible. As Shakespeare himself writes in *The Tempest (*Act 2, Scene 1) "What's past is prologue", meaning that all that happened before, in the "past", leads the characters to act the way they do in the play, in other words, the past described in the prologue justifies the character's actions throughout the play. The prologue of *Romeus & Julietas* is a short film, called *Duas Casas* (2013), which tells the history of the neighborhoods *Ivo Ferronato* and *Malafaia*.

The fourteen-minute film starts with a sequence of fragmented images that form a disproportionate face, each time with a different mouth or a non-matching eye, representing the faces of several Romeos and Juliets. The fragments of eyes and mouths gradually accelerate until they go into a frenetic rhythm along with the score, suggesting a confluence of several faces into a single one. (Fig. 3)
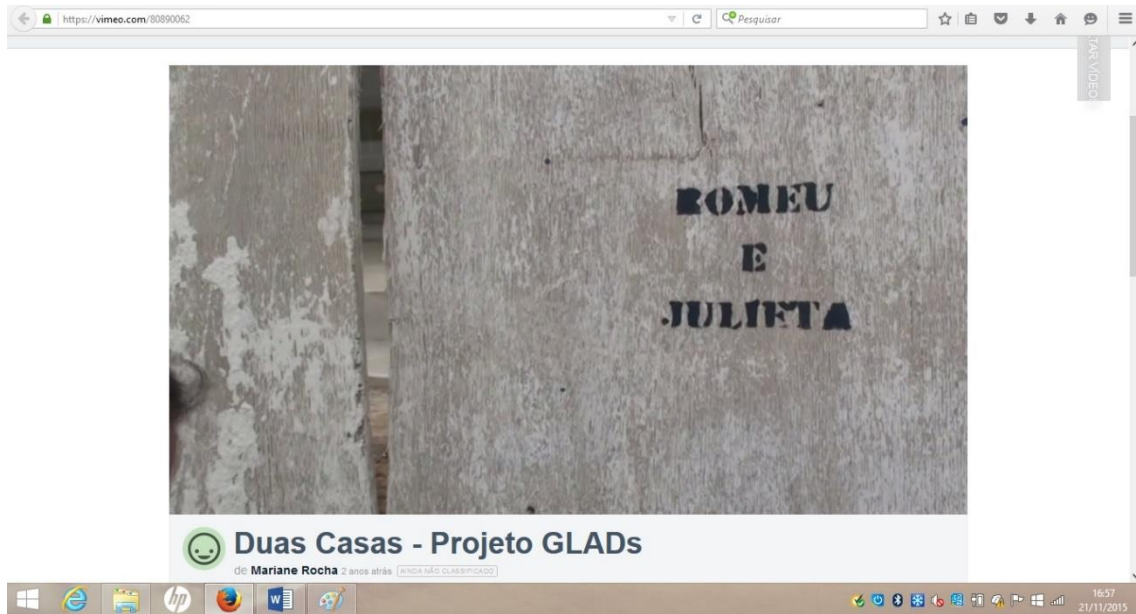
Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo[36]

In the next scene, we see GLADS project's coordinator explaining the motivation for choosing to work with *Romeo and Juliet* by saying that there were rumors that there might be some sort of brawl between the neighborhoods that surround the university. Therefore, studying and appropriating the story of Montagues and Capulets would make sense since the students would be able to confront their identity as individuals and as a collective community. Meanwhile, we see inserts of cutaway shots of hands applying stencils (a visual art technique also known as *pochoir*) on walls with questions such as "What do you mean?" and painting a question mark on a wall. (Fig. 4)

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[36] Available here: https://vimeo.com/80890062

Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo

The use of these cutaway shots, i.e., shots peripherally related to the main shot (we can call it main shot because the voice of the coordinator is not interrupted along the scene), might function as a commentary to illustrate the questions that motivated the

Fig. 5 - Girl reading the play Romeo and Juliet

creation of the project. The following scene shows a young girl wearing a school uniform in a library reading the play *Romeo and Juliet* (Fig. 5).

While she turns the pages of a version of Romeo and Juliet in Portuguese, we hear birds singing in the background. Would this sound effect be a reference to the lark/nightingale passage in Act 3, Scene 5?

> Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.
> It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
> That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear.
> Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree.
> Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

In the subsequent scenes, we learn about the dwellers' perspectives on the history of their neighborhoods. The speeches of *Malafaia*'s dwellers are shown first. They tell about the origins of the region and how quiet it all used to be. After that, *Ivo Ferronato*'s dwellers present their perspective on how they occupied (and not invaded) the area and how they had to struggle with the municipal government to acquire basic living conditions. More about the neighborhoods' struggle has already been discussed in the section *Production Context* (see 3.2). At all moments, the interviewer is implicit, i.e., the interviewer does not appear on camera but viewers understand that there is somebody questioning and monitoring the outcome. Interviewee utterances are characterized by informal language statements and conversation mode. Interviewees are shot in medium close up, which does not show the subjects in the broad context of their surroundings, and there are no camera movements.

After two shots of Malafaia's dwellers and two shots of Ivo Ferronato's dwellers, there is a cutaway scene, which interrupts the interviewee's statements with the insertion of a parted screen with an extreme long aerial shot of *Malafaia* (on the left) and *Ivo Ferronato* (on the right). (Fig. 6)

Fig. 6 - Extreme long aerial shot

Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo

These establishing shots set up the context and the location "where we lay our scene." In fact, we can read the passage "Duas casas, iguais em seu valor, em Verona, que a nossa cena ostenta"[37], a translation of Shakespeare's text by Barbara Heliodora. At this point, we can also listen to a score[38] with a clear hip-hop influence.

The cutaway scene is quick and returns to the interview scenes in which the interviewees discuss separately the possible rivalry between the neighborhoods. Again, there is an interruption and the insertion of a cutaway scene in which we see a parted screen showing the schools from both neighborhoods, *Malafaia´s EMEF Peri Coronel* (on the left) and *Ivo Ferronato´s EMEF Creusa Brito Giorgis* (on the right). (Fig. 7)

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[37] Two households, both alike in dignity, in fair Verona, where we lay our scene (Prologue)
[38] I use "score" and not "soundtrack" because the score was originally created for the short film "Duas Casas" by the collaborator and artist Hyra.

Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo

The schools are very much alike. We can read the prologue passage "brigam de novo, com velho rancor, pondo guerra civil em mão sangrenta"[39] and we hear a hip-hop score and a gunshot at the end. The scene returns to the dwellers´ statements in single shots in which, separately, they describe the differences and similarities between the two neighborhoods.

The following scene shows a sequence of shot/counter shot in which we see two groups of angry teenagers with heated body language approaching the same area as we read "Os capuletos estão por aí! Não vamos escapar de uma briga! Esse calor faz ferver sangue insano em nossas veias!"[40] (Fig. 8 and 9) Meanwhile, we listen to a score that resembles what might sound like a western film score but eventually it turns out to be a remixed hip-hop score and the teenagers start a street dance battle.

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[39] From ancient grudge break to new mutiny, where civil blood makes civil hands unclean. (Prologue)

[40] A reference to Benvolio's line in Act 3, Scene 1: "I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire. The day is hot; the Capulets, abroad; And if we meet we shall not 'scape a brawl, For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring."

Fig. 8 - Shot/countershot of angry teenagers

Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo

Fig. 9 - Shot/countershot fo angry tennagers

Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo

This scene is mostly a sequence of long shots and full shots (or medium long shots) so the subjects, in this case, the teenagers, are placed in relation to their surroundings. We can notice the battle takes place on a road, but in a rural open area at the same time. The road on which they battle is the one that divides the neighborhoods and leads to the university that we can see far away in the background. (Fig. 10)

Fig. 10 - Battle scene

Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo

After the battle scene, we have another cutaway scene, this time, a parted screen showing both health centers, again very much alike, and we read a passage from the prologue in Act 2: "ele leva a inimiga o pranto seu e ela tira do ódio doce amor"[41], which might suggest the healing power of love. (Fig. 11)

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[41] But to his foe supposed he must complain, And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks.
 (Act 2, Prologue)

Fig. 11 - Health centers

Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo

The cutaway scene quickly returns to the interviews in which the dwellers are describing the relationship between the people from *Malafaia* and *Ivo Ferronato*. In different and separate statements, they all conclude by saying that their relationship is mostly peaceful and that the region nowadays is a single community. We have another insertion of a cutaway scene; this time we see the parted screen showing both soccer fields in a full shot; a boy hits the ball trying to score a goal. Also, we can read another passage from the prologue in Act 2: "ir encontra-lo, seja onde for, e a paixão os faz vencer"[42] while we listen to a score that remixes hip-hop and *samba*. (Fig. 12)

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[42] To meet her new beloved anywhere. But passion lends them power, time means, to meet (Act 2, Prologue)

Fig. 12 - Soccer fields


Source: Duas Casas shortfilm on Vimeo

After that, there is a black screen with the word "epilogue" in white, which raises some doubts. If the film is understood as part of a wider work (in this case, the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*), an epilogue inside a prologue would not make any sense. The epilogue inside the film would only work if the film *Duas Casas* was viewed apart from *Romeus e Julietas*, as a work in itself and not as a prologue to the multiplatform adaptation. Therefore, the film can work within the multiplatform adaptation and also as an independent adaptation.

The epilogue shows the coordinator explaining the importance of the project to the students and communities involved. She elucidates that more importantly than having an answer to the initial questions on whether there is or was a brawl between the neighborhoods, are the discoveries throughout the process and the involvement of the participants in the act of constructing their own history and telling their own story. Cutaway shots of students painting, talking and laughing are inserted while we go on listening to the voice of the coordinator until the image dims to the final credits. In the final credits, videos produced and edited by the students are shown on the left while the credits slide up.

3.3.4 Act 1

Act 1 is entitled *Encontro* (Meeting, in English) and is hosted at Flickr, an image and video hosting website and online community where users share and embed personal photographs. Images on Flickr are organized into sequential photostreams, which can be displayed in four different ways: as justified viewed, slideshow, detail view or datestamped archive. When we open the link *Act 1: Encontro* we are redirected to a Flickr page entitled *Romeus e Julietas*. The background photo portrays a photo of daisies in black and white and we can visualize the photostream as we scroll down the page. (Fig. 13)

Fig. 13 - Act 1 on Flickr
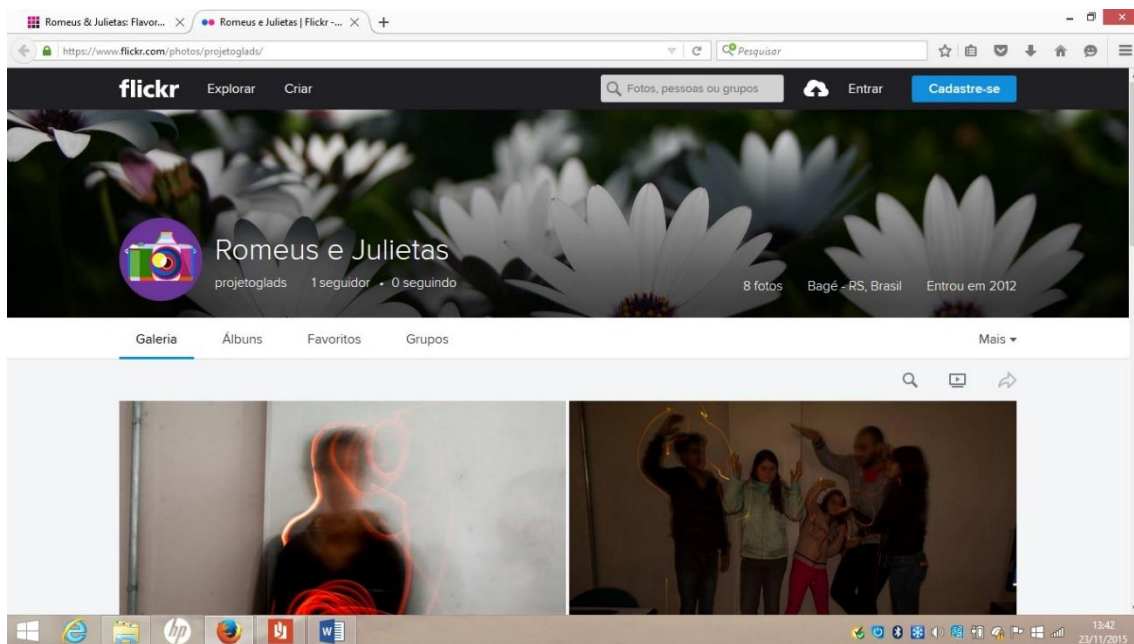

Source: Romeus & Julietas Act 1 on Flickr[43]

Flickr enables images to be labelled with titles and descriptions or images tagged[44] (which allows computer searching of Flickr). However, as we scroll down and click on the photos, we notice that all eight photos have the same title "Baile Romeu e Julieta".

Clicking on a photostream image opens it on the interactive photopage, where it is possible to visualize comments, tags and the number of views, as well as facilities for embedding images on external websites. Using the arrow on the right we can move on to the next photo, or using the arrow on the left we can move to the previous one. Another way of visualizing the photos is choosing the slideshow on the photostream page. In this case the photos will be viewed in full screen. Flickr also provides users with albums and geotagging (which can be related to a map using imapflickr), but none of these features were applied in *Romeus e Julietas*.

The photos portray blurred images of young people in a seemingly gloomy environment. The images explore a photographic technique called light painting, in which exposures are made by moving a light source while taking a long exposure photograph. The technique either illuminates a subject or shines a point of light directly at the camera. Picture 1 portrays a person but it is impossible to define whether it is a boy or a girl precisely because the image is so blurred (which is an effect that seems to be intentional), and in the foreground we see waves of light forming a red circle. (Fig. 14)
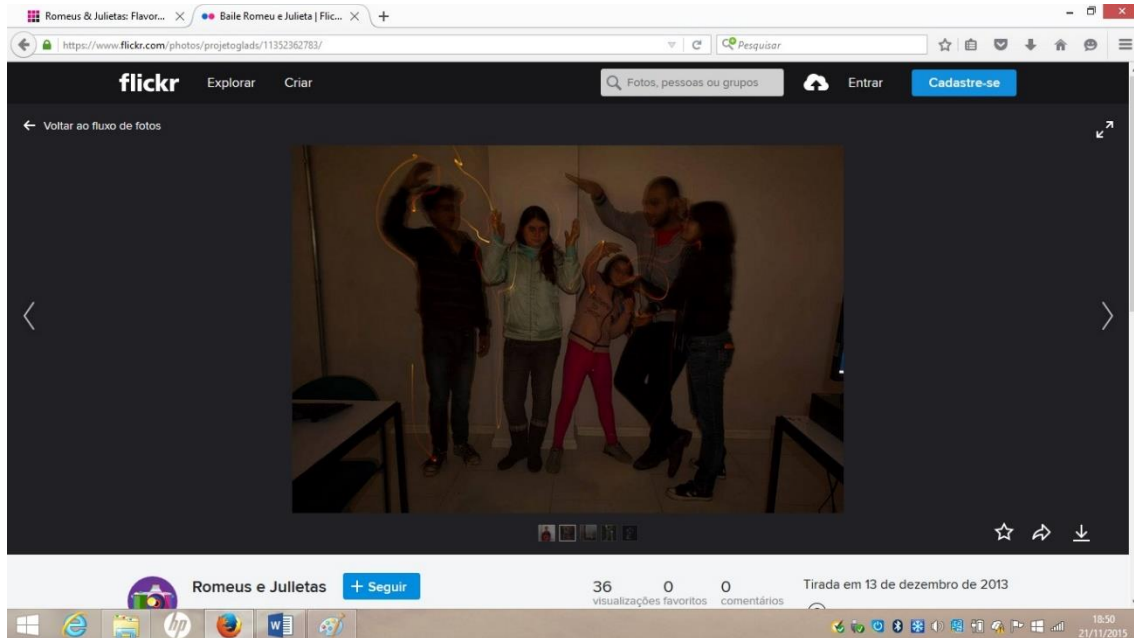
Fig. 14 - Picture 1

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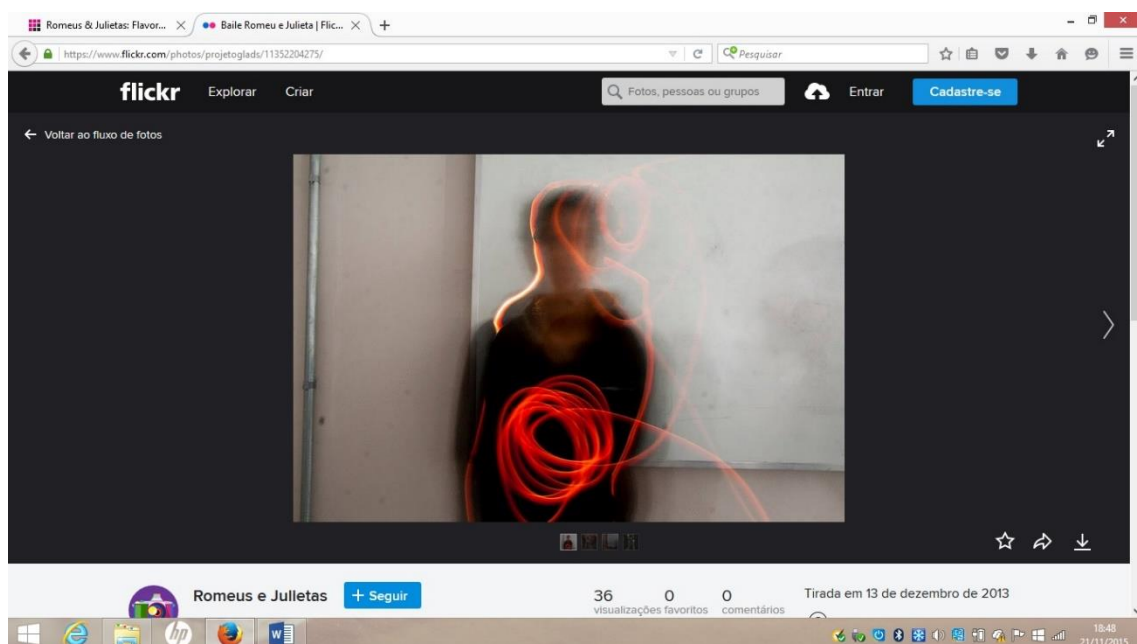
[44] Flickr was an early website to implement tag clouds and it is a prime example of effective use of folksonomy.

In picture 2 we can see five people who could be dancing or posing, and subtle light waves are seen in the foreground. (Fig. 15)
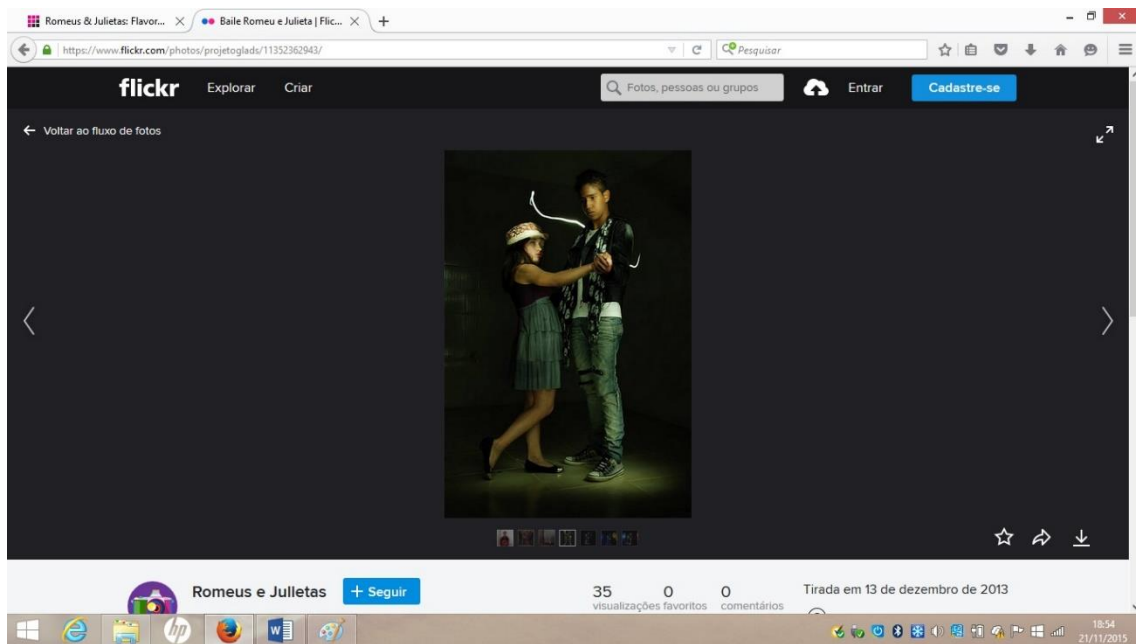
Fig. 15 - Picture 2

Source: Romeus & Julietas Act 1 on Flickr

In picture 3 we have shadows and a stronger exploration of light painting technique. In picture 4 we have a very clear image of a boy and a girl dancing in a spotlight. They do not look each other in the eyes and seem a little detached from the environment that surrounds them.

Fig. 16 - Picture 4

Source: Romeus & Julietas Act 1 on Flickr

Pictures 5, 6, 7 and 8 seem to be a sequential shooting (almost accomplishing a stop motion) that portrays a development in the boy-girl dancing scene. Picture 5 portrays two female faces emerging from the shadows in the background and these faces grow and approximate the foreground in pictures 6 and 7 and recede and minimize until they reach

Fig. 17 - Picture 5
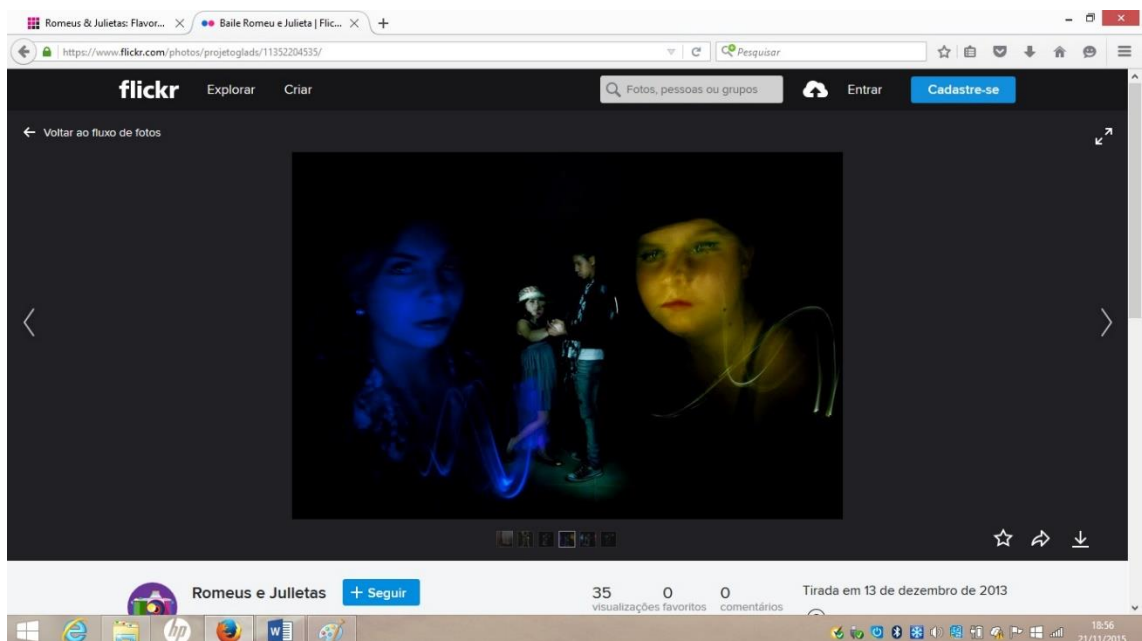
the background again in picture 8. (Fig 17) All photos portray a nightmarish atmosphere, and might explore unconscious influences such as the female faces in the last pictures.

3.3.5 Act 2

Act 2 is hosted on Blogspot, which is a popular publishing website. Blogs enable one or more users to generate content by posting information for an audience. Posts, which can contain texts, images and videos, are displayed in reverse chronological order and are frequently updated. Act 2, entitled *Amor* (Love, in English), is a multi-author blog but it does not portray the use of text as expected, i.e., typed text. Images of handwritten texts prevail, denoting either a misunderstanding of the platform, a misuse of its tools, or an intentional reference to handwritten love letters.

In any case, the effect of such a choice brings to the spotlight a discussion about the logic of writing and the logic of image. According to Gunther Kress in *Literacy in the New Media Age* (2010),

> In the era of the dominance of writing, when the logic of writing organized the page, image appeared on the page subject to the logic of writing. […] In the era of the dominance of screen, writing appears on the screen subject to the logic of the image." (KRESS, 2010, p. 8)

Digitalizing handwritten poems into images subverts both the logic of writing and the logic of image, and promotes a debate about the way the screen, which is our current dominant way of communication, is organized and how messages are shaped. According to Kress writing will become more and more image-like, "Writing will be subordinated to the logic of the screen, to the spatial logic of the image. Writing will inevitably become more image-like, and will be shaped by that logic." (KRESS, 2010, p. 48) Also, the material aspects of language as it appears in handwriting, its graphic and visual properties, and paper in a digital environment may be a "way to highlight the problematic relation of […] the language to the body, and of the machine to the human." (DIJK, 2012, p. 69)

As we open the link *Ato 2: Amor*, we are redirected to a blog entitled again as *Romeus e Julietas*. Below we can see the post title in a smaller font, *Poemas de Julieta* (Juliet's Poems, in English), which indicates that the poems we are about to read would have been written by the character Juliet. Another indication that this section refers to Juliet's voice is the blog's opening passage from act 1 scene 5 in which Juliet tells Romeo:

> Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
> Which mannerly devotion shows in this,
> For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
> And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss

In addition, the background shows a feminine theme with hummingbirds and flowers in light pink and blue.
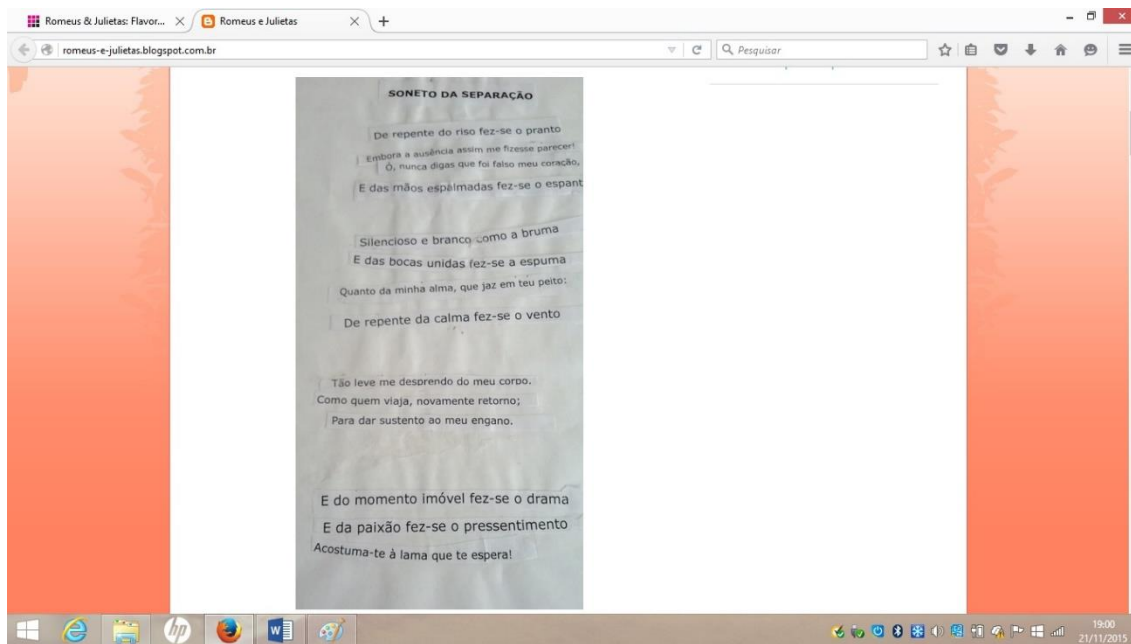
Fig. 18 - Feminine theme on Blogspot

Source: Act 2 on Blogspot[45]

There are 10 images of digitalized handwritten poems. The first image (Fig. 19) shows a remix collage of three different sonnets: *Soneto da Separação* by Vinícius de Moraes, *Versos Íntimos* by Augusto dos Anjos and *Soneto 109* by Shakespeare.

Fig. 19 - Remix collage
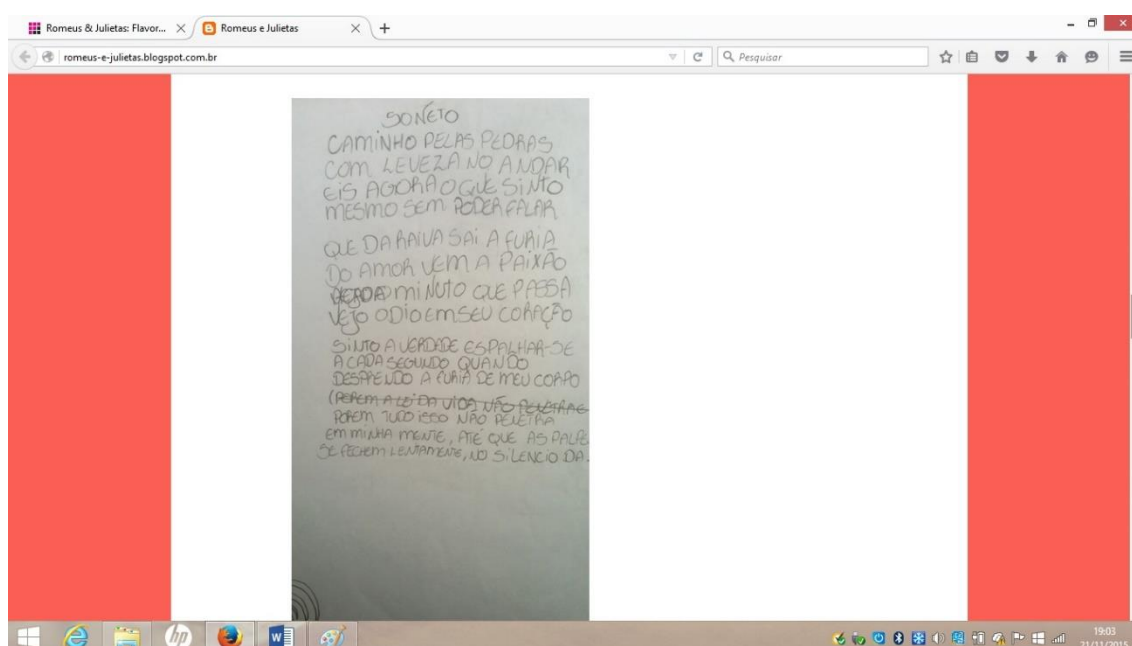

Source: Act 2 on Blogspot

All the other poems shown in the blog are clearly amateur creative expressions of the students involved in the project. The poems seem to be the result of an experimental practice of poetic techniques in the classroom context in which the students would write Juliet's sonnet to Romeo.

Some poems are in free verse, i.e, they do not use a consistent scheme of meter, rhyme or any musical pattern and they tend to follow the rhythm of natural speech. Poem 1, entitled *Pensando bem* (Thinking it over), talks about expression through poetry and creative process. It portrays an upbeat and cheerful atmosphere. Poem 2, entitled *Amar a música* (Loving music), also touches on the issue of self-expression, but this time through music. Poem 6, *A tristeza de uma jovem* (A young girl's sadness), tells the story of a young girl who fell in love but suffered intensely. The idea that love hurts and the fear of love and passion is recurrently present in some poems. Poem 3, entitled *Seria Melhor* (It would be better), is the one that called my attention the most for its use of repetition and

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a sense of musicality. Although it is in free verse, it presents a sense of structure and rhyme. It talks about a perfect utopian world where reality would be ideal and people would be better. The repeated use of "if clause" gives us an interesting sense of rhythm. The poem is also the only one to present metaphors such as "como nos contos de fadas" ("like in fairy tales", in English).

Other poems present an attempt to follow a rhyme scheme and the specific structure of a sonnet.

Fig. 20 - Poem 4 Sonnet

Source: Act 2 on Blogspot

Poem 4, entitled *Soneto* (Sonnet), presents the structure of 14 lines and an attempt to follow a rhyme scheme. (see Fig. 20) The poem presents a resentful perspective of love, a mixture of love and hate and a perception that one cannot express this anger. Poem 5, entitled *Soneto da dor* (Pain sonnet), presents 14 lines but it lacks the rhyme pattern. Again, the poem portrays love as painful and unbearable. Poem 7, is also entitled *Pensando bem* (Thinking it over), and it seems to be a more elaborated version of poem 1. However, it lacks structural characteristics to be defined as a sonnet. It presents 13 lines and no attempt of rhyme scheme. In poem 8, *Soneto do amor* (Love sonnet), the 14 lined sonnet also presents a lack of rhyme scheme. Here, the idea of love revolves around time

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and absence. Whenever the lovers are apart, the hours pass slowly by and when they are together, the day is brighter and more cheerful. Poem 9, *Qualquer música* (Any song), presents only 12 lines and a clear attempt to create a rhyme pattern (ABAB). The poem denotes a strong sense of denial using the words *impossible, uncertain, nothing, no* repeatedly.

What calls attention the most in the poems is the recurrent idea of romantic misery. Although the authors of the poems are quite young, with ages ranging from 12 to 15, they already reproduce the idea that romantic misery is inevitable and mostly self-inflicted, the idea that with love comes also suffering.

3.3.6   Act 3

While Act 2 seems to be more centered on Juliet's voice, Act 3 focuses on Romeo's perspective. Act 3, entitled *Exílio* (Exile, in English), refers to Romeo's banishment from Verona after revenge-killing Tybalt. In Act 3 Scene 3, Romeo reacts to the news of his banishment:

> There is no world without Verona walls
> But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
> Hence "banishèd" is banished from the world,
> And world's exile is death.

Romeo's desperation and anguish is captured in melancholic pinhole photographs. A pinhole camera is a variation of camera obscura, the optical device that led to photography as we know it nowadays. The pinhole camera has no lens and only a single, small aperture, i.e., a lightproof box with a small hole in one side. Light passes through this single point and projects an inverted image on the opposite side of the box, where there is a piece of film or photographic paper. Exposures can vary from five seconds to several hours depending on the amount of light. (see Fig. 21) Students and teachers were exposed to this technique by a volunteer photographer who taught them how to capture the images with tins and a photographic paper.

The platform chosen to host these digitalized photographs was Tumblr. Tumblr is a blogging platform which allows users to post multimedia and other contents to a short-form blog. It is also a social network since users can follow other user's blogs and share their material. Users can post many kinds of multimedia material but the platform is predominantly imagetic (especially still images and animated gifs).

Fig. 21 - Pinhole images on Tumblr
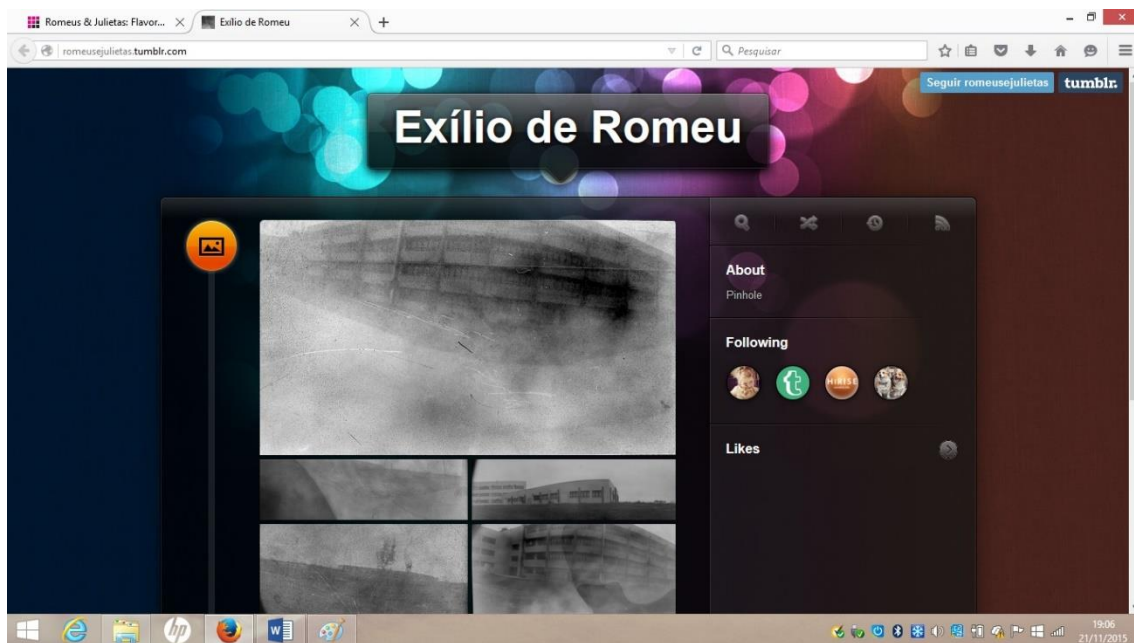
Source: Romeo's Exile (Act 3) on Tumblr[46]

The black and white pinhole photos portray a gloomy atmosphere. We can see a building and open space with some vegetation, but no people, possibly representing an abandoned building or a deserted ghost town. They also present a foggy atmosphere that resembles a dream-like scenery and echo the suspension of time. In fact, according to John Berger (1982), photographs can be compared to images stored in our memories. However,

> […] whereas remembered images are residues of continuous experiences, a photograph isolates the appearances of a disconnected instant. And in life, meaning is not instantaneous.

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[46] Available here: http://romeusejulietas.tumblr.com/

> Meaning is discovered in what connects, and cannot exist without development. Without a story, without an unfolding, there is no meaning. […] An instant photographed can only acquire meaning insofar as the viewer can read into it a duration extending beyond itself. When we find a photograph meaningful, we are lending it a past and future. (BERGER, 1982, p. 89)

Therefore, the context in which the collection of pinhole photographs is inserted, which is within *Romeus & Julietas*, and, more specifically, in the exile act, gives them a certain meaning, a past and a future.

Again, the tension between paper vs. screen, or analogic vs. digital, is raised in this section. On one hand, we have an artisanal handcraft photograph technique that indicates a sort of nostalgia for time and traditional procedures. On the other hand, the digitalization of such artisanal photographs reminds us of the new camera technologies available nowadays.

3.3.7 Act 4

Act 4: Separação e Morte (Parting and Death, in English) is hosted on MySpace, a social media website used specially for sharing music, music videos, and information about music artists. Other features of the website include chatrooms, forums, classified ads, newsgroups and a venue for sharing videos or music. The website became extremely popular among aspiring musicians and bands to share their music and concert dates. MySpace was created in 2003 and it was one of the most popular social networks before Facebook.

When we access Act 4 we are redirected to a page on MySpace that lacks a bit of personality. (See Fig. 22) There is no background image, no theme and the profile photo is very gloomy and blurred (it is probably a pinhole photo from Act 3). The title of the album is "Gêneros Literários em Ambientes Digitais", which is project GLADS' name, and there is no album cover as well. This lack of personality might be intentional, but it could also denote misunderstanding of the platform and underuse of its resources.

Fig. 22 - Act 4 page on MySpace
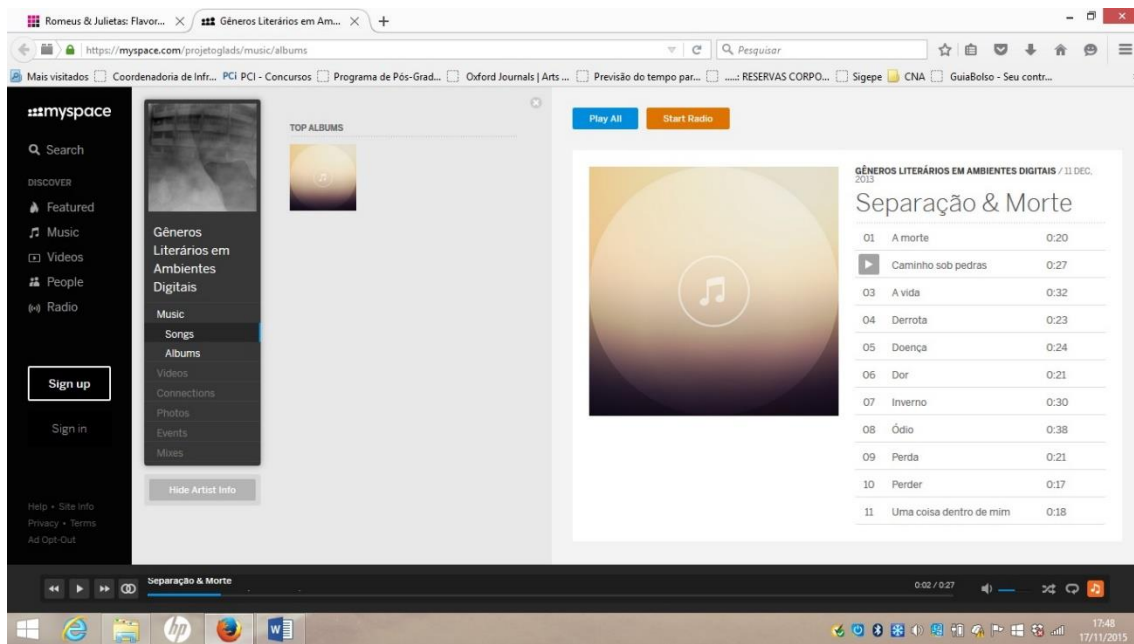
Source: Romeus & Julietas' Act 4 on MySpace[47]

The album title is *Separação e Morte* (Parting and Death, in English); there are eleven audio recordings, ranging from 15 to 30 seconds long, and in each one we can listen to a poem recited by one of the young students. The poems are clearly a production by the students, probably in an attempt to help them express what they understand and how they feel about death. It is clear that they portray some difficulty in discussing the topic, expressing their feelings and defining concepts. The impossibility of expressing feelings is discussed in poem 11, *Uma coisa dentro de mim* (Something inside me).

In general, the recitation of poems lacks a bit of personality, i.e., there is no balance between the matter expressed and the manner in which it is being expressed. Some poems lack a background frame, making it very confusing to understand what exactly the poem is about, such as poem 10, entitled *Perder* (Losing). Others present cohesion and coherence problems, which hinders interpretation, such as poem 9, *Perda* (Loss). Poems 8, *Ódio* (Hatred), and 6, *Dor* (Pain), debate the balance between love and hate and love as a source of pain, reinforcing once again the idea of romantic misery. Poem 7, entitled *Inverno* (Winter) is more descriptive and narrative-like. Poem 5, entitled

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[47] Available here: https://myspace.com/projetoglads/music/albums

Doença (Disease), presents a hopeful element and mentions how a disease can have a positive impact on a person's life and encourage her/him to restart again. Also, poem 5, 4, *Derrota* (Failure), and 3, *A Vida* (Life), present a prescriptive, even moralistic tone, , telling the listener what he/she should do. Poem 2, entitled *Caminho sob Pedras* (Walking on Stones) talks about dichotomic feelings in the face of imminent death and portrays a certain preoccupation with rhythm and musicality. Finally, poem 1, entitled *Morte* (Death) mentions the inevitability of death, uses metaphors successfully and presents an interesting voice modulation and interpretation.

It is interesting to notice that the idea of death in *Romeus & Julietas* was transposed in the form of poetry read out loud, specially because the digital reproduction of voices denotes the young poets' ghostly presences or even a perpetuation of life through digital repeatability, promising a kind of immortality. In relation to the impact of media technologies upon the poetic voice, Zumthor affirms that at the same time we lose the manifestation in bodily form (*corporeity*) and its ephemeral characteristic, and also gain a sense of disembodiment[48] and keep its abstraction. (Zumthor, 2007, p. 15 - 16)

3.3.8 Epilogue

The section *Epílogo: Outros Romeus e Julietas* (Epilogue: Other Romeos and Juliets, in English) was produced by a group of elderly students in a different classroom environment. They explored Blogspot as well, where they posted their former love stories in the form of short compositions, and YouTube, where they recorded the reading of these stories. According to the section *Quem Somos* (About us), the starting point of their work was the movie *Letters to Juliet* (2010), directed by Gary Winick and inspired by the homonymous book by Lise Friedman e Ceil Friedman. The idea of presenting an epilogue, which is a literary device at the end of the story to provide additional information in relation to the ending and clarifying what happens after the end of the story, denotes an intention of presenting alternative endings in this adaptation. What if the story of the young star-crossed lovers did not end up tragically? How would the rest

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[48] Some cultural critics, as N. Katherine Hayles, believe that information always operates in conjunction with bodies, whether these be computational embeddings or phenomenological embodiments.

of their lives be? These letters to Juliet, written by far more mature students, show that life goes on.

By clicking on *Epílogo* we are redirected to a blog entitled *Amor em qualquer idade* (Love at any age) with the subtitle *Endereçamos essas cartas para Julieta* (We send these letters to Juliet). However, the genre *letter* itself is not really explored and all the posts are actually short compositions. The background image shows photos of the students' own handwritten texts. There are five posts, four written by women and only one by a man. The YouTube links do not portray significant images and serve only as audio files.

Source: Romeus & Julietas' Epilogue on Blogspot[49]

The first post, entitled *Minha história de amor e de vida* (My life and love story), focuses on the outcome of the author's life, showing profound contentment with her present situation. The second post, entitled *O grande amor da minha vida* (My greatest love story), tells the story of a woman who is experiencing her second love story and feels extremely happy. The third post, entitled *O Amor* (Love), is a composition in which the

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[49] Available here: http://projetogladscentrodoidoso.blogspot.com.br/

author defines his concept of love and explains what is important to find true love. The fourth post, entitled *Amor de infância* (Childhood love), tells the love story of a couple who met in childhood and after some time apart reunited again, got married and had children. Although their love story did not last forever, the author believes that their story is worth remembering. The fifth post, entitled *Meu primeiro amor* (My first love), presents a more detailed story. The author tells the story of the first boy she fell in love with and their complicated relationship, which was forbidden by her mother. Although the love story was never consummated, the author shows no regrets and mentions other love stories she lived afterwards.

All compositions are written and recited in first person perspective; they seem very personal and probably non-fictitious. The recurrent feeling seems to be contentment with their current situation, gratefulness for the stories they have lived and apparently no regrets. In addition, the recitation shows personality and a sense of intonation and performance. At the bottom of the blog page we can see a photo of Vanessa Redgrave and Fabio Testi holding hands in a scene from the film *Letters to Juliet* (2010) portraying that love and romance is not constrained to younger ages only.

The following chapter, 3.4 Discussing *Romeus & Julietas*, will present a critical analysis by focusing on issues raised by the description of *Romeus & Julietas* in this chapter.

3.4 DISCUSSING *ROMEUS & JULIETAS*

3.4.1 Theatricality and narrativity in *Romeus & Julietas*

At first sight, *Romeus & Julietas* resembles more a dramatic text with hyperlinks than a performance. The opening page portrays the links, which are named as sections of a traditional dramatic text, implying a chronological and hierarchical order, from top to bottom. Furthermore, the text as a whole does not present a circular movement, in which readers could move from one page to the next. On the contrary, they necessarily have to go back to the opening page to follow the next section, which results in a very weak immersion experience, since the reader is always aware of his/her process of reading. Also, apparently, *Romeus & Julietas* presents more diegetic than mimetic narrativity since it is clearly not a live performance, in which emission and reception of signs happen at the same time, and in many sections does not present the physical presence of a (digitalized) body.

Nevertheless, once we realize the presence of theatricality, which, according to Zumthor (2007, p. 41), emerges from the spectator's acknowledgement of the theatre intention, the ordinary space transforms into a spectacular (not programmed or expected) scenic space. The reader realizes the theatricality of such spaces precisely when they perceive the work of adaptation as a whole in the opening page. That is to say, the title, the title sections, the character's names, the references to parts of the well-known story are what make the adaptation recognizable and what transforms these ordinary non-fictional social networks into spectacular fictional scenic spaces. According to Lehmann (2007, p. 18), "The theatre is not only the place of bodies subsumed under gravitational law, but also the real context in which the unique intersection of everyday life and aesthetically organized life meet."[50] Put differently, the way the information is organized and presented transforms ordinary social networks into scenic spaces. Indeed, cyberspace can be a stage.

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[50] O teatro não é apenas o lugar dos corpos submetidos a lei da gravidade, mas também o contexto real em que ocorre um entrecruzamento único de vida real cotidiana e de vida esteticamente organizada.

Furthermore, we are aware that digital environments have created new protocols for potential performances online. Diegetic and mimetic narration coexist in cyberspace since we are dealing with hypertexts, which implement diegetic narrativity, and virtual environment, which implement mimetic narrativity. (RYAN, 2001) Therefore, *Romeus & Julietas* concomitantly tells and shows the story of the star-crossed lovers. Having Ryan's (2001) modes of interactivity in mind, we can say that the reader/user navigates with an external exploratory perspective, that is, the reader/user navigates with a third person perspective looking from the outside and is free to move but does not alter or affect the story. In other words, the reader/user is outside the virtual world, thus, it does not require a persona, or an avatar, to explore the world. Although the reader/user does not affect the plot directly, he/she does have to engage in a profound exercise of interpretation since he/she has to fill the gaps of the story between the sections or even within the sections.

In addition, Ryan's (2006) broadening concept of narrativity, meaning that narrativity is a matter of degree, and her set of narrative modes provide substantial criteria to analyze *Romeus & Julietas*. *Romeus & Julietas* is a story told in retrospective mode, that is, it is a narrative that recounts past events. We can notice that even in the "micro prologue" passage in the opening page in which we are asked to attend with patient ears and listen to the story carefully. *Romeus & Julietas* presents a balance of diegetic and mimetic narration, because it shows and tells the story in different platforms with different resources.

Romeus & Julietas is encoded in material signs (be it texts, images or sounds), i.e, it is explicitly textualized. Therefore, it is an external mode of narrative. However, we have hints of internal modes of narrative in section *Epílogo: Outros Romeus & Julietas*, in which the elderly tell their love stories. In this case, since most of our experience is organized as stories, the internal narratives (memories, dreams and fantasies) are embedded and framed by the external narrative presented in the blog. According to Manfred Jahn (2003, p. 195), internal stories "are stored in memory and performed in the mental theater of recollection, imagination, and dream." The same might happen in the section *Prólogo: Duas Casas*, in which the Malafaia and Ivo Ferronato's dwellers tell their remembrances of a once invaded/occupied area. There will always be a cycle of narratives connecting internal (psychological and cognitive perspective) and external narratives (narrative as a form of communication and entertainment).

Also, *Romeus & Julietas* is representational, i.e., an image of one single possibility in its fictional world, and not simulative, as an engine that generates many different courses of events through a combination. In a sense, the course of events in *Romeus & Julietas*, which is expressed through the section's hyperlinks, presupposes linearity and hierarchy among them. Although the reader/user can choose alternative hyperlink order, it is very unlikely that he/she might feel compelled to do so. However, filling the gaps of interpretation among the sections and within each section might leave plenty of room for different perspectives.

Romeus & Julietas in its initial conception is utilitarian since it is an attempt to discuss a possible struggle between two neighborhoods and, therefore, motivate the students and other people involved in the project to discuss the issue and adopt a certain behavior. It is also utilitarian if we consider the pedagogical purpose of the project and we can notice this in every section. Each section portrays a different approach to the story and students appropriate and (re)create the story of Montagues and Capulets. It is also clear that the sections are the result of classroom activities and exercises denoting its utilitarian characteristic. However, as a whole work of adaptation it can be considered autotelic because it displays another story for its own sake. In this sense, it is at the same time autonomous and illustrative since it retells the star-crossed lovers story relying on the receiver's previous knowledge of the plot and at the same time transmits a story that is brand new to the reader because it includes local characteristics and aspects that are specific of that particular culture and socio-historical context.

Romeus & Julietas is mostly scripted because it is determined by a permanently inscribed text, i.e., it relies on a previous text. That is, it does not rely on the reader/user performance or improvisation. There could have been emergent mode if students or readers/users had visited the social networks and pages and had interacted with timeline comments, for instance, which would denote a certain amount of performance and improvisation. In addition, *Romeus & Julietas* is purely receptive because the reader/user plays no active role in the events presented by the narrative (in the sense of actually doing something to and within the story). The reader/user imagines him/herself as an external witness. Again, although the reader/user might choose a different order of presentation by clicking in a different order of section hyperlinks, it is very unlikely that he/she might feel compelled to do so because the hierarchical structure of the opening page intimidates such a behavior.

Romeus & Julietas presents a determinate mode in the opening page because it specifies a sufficient number of points (acts) on the narrative arc that project a reasonably definite script that will clearly connect us to the well-known story *Romeo and Juliet*. However, within each section, or act, we have the indeterminate mode because very few points are specified and it is up to the interpreter to imagine what immediately preceded and what will immediately follow the represented scene, leaving plenty of room for a wide range of interpretational possibilities.

Finally, *Romeus & Julietas* presents an interesting tension between the fictional and nonfictional mode since we are dealing with regular students that are potentially actors/authors, and ordinary nonfictional social networks that are turned into spectacular fictional scenic spaces. According to Ryan (2006) "Narrative fiction means that fiction does not have to fulfill all the conditions of narrativity but it has to create a world by means of singular existential propositions, i.e., it must offer an embryonic story". Although *Romeus & Julietas* creates a bubble to encompass the story successfully, there could have been a better result if there was an elliptical function (such as a "next" hyperlink or pop-up) in each section that would direct the reader/user to the next section without having to go back to the opening page, thus, promoting a more profound immersive experience.

3.4.2 *Romeus & Julietas's* cultural location

When William Shakespeare turned 7 years old in Stratford-upon-Avon, the Spanish had established a direct trade link between Asia and the Americas by creating Manila as an entrepôt in 1571, which is said to be the precise date when globalization started. The age of Shakespeare was filled with global imaginaries since the Bard "lived in an age when all the world's populated continents were first permanently linked by trade." (BOSMAN, 2010, p. 285) Furthermore, as the British Empire spread across the globe, the English language was being disseminated and would increase from around 7 million mother-tongue English speakers by the end of the Renaissance era to 350 million native speakers nowadays, achieving the current status of world language. "As English spread, Shakespeare's works travelled beyond Britain into colonies and across the empire, settling in the United States and throughout the post-colonial world." (BOSMAN, 2010,

p. 285-286) As a variety of "Englishes" emerged, so did a variety of global Shakespeare rewritings began.

According to Alexa Huang, Columbia University professor and MIT co-founder of the open access Global Shakespeares digital performance archive, the rewritings of Shakespeare have evolved into a genre manifested in festivals, performances, courses and research centers. In her article, *Global Shakespeares as Methodology* (2013), Huang argues that facing global Shakespeares as methodology places us "in a postnational space that is defined by fluid cultural locations rather than by nation-state", which enables us to debate archival silences and cultural exchange and articulate "new approaches to performances in marginalized or polyglot spaces."

In another article, Huang (2014) explains that rather than simply translating a master narrative into a new language, "the *fabula* of the foreign play—or its cultural location(s)—is recycled and reassigned to a new local context" exposing the cross-cultural encounters. "In this sense, cross-cultural stage translation resembles the making of a palimpsest." She explains that

> [...] because of the multiple layering of texts, contexts, translations and performances that grows larger every year, 'Shakespeare' has become a palimpsest on which performers constantly erase, re-write and gloss. These performances present a layered intertextuality and refer to one another, as well as to the barred 'original'. On a palimpsest, new writings can never quite conceal the old writings that have been partially erased. The point at issue is how new layers permeate the old, and how all these new texts refer to the original Shakespearean text and to the Elizabethan field of reception, which is referenced but intentionally lost. (HUANG, 2014)

For instance, the influence of Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet* in *Romeus & Julietas* is astounding, denoting the palimpsest-like nature of both adaptations. Baz Luhrmann's adaptation sets the lover's story in a modern day environment, changes locations of monologues and pairing of certain dialogues, but uses Shakespearean language. Filmed in Mexico City, Los Angeles and San Francisco, the natural sunshine, the vibrant and over saturated colors and the frenzied editing provide a Latin ethnicity to the adaptation. The film, which was released in 1996, is a Shakespeare story for the

attention span of the MTV generation. Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet* influence is spread all over *Romeus & Julietas*. From the hip hop references in the opening page lettering, the drag queen Mercutio collage, to the hip hop battle with spaghetti-western-like score in the documentary, *Romeus & Julietas* present a clear layered intertextuality to Baz Luhrmann's creation. Furthermore, Luhrmann explores modern media to act as medium for news to be spread, which is a premise to the whole adaptation in *Romeus & Julietas*.

There are several modern day film adaptations of Shakespearean plays, but few are as representative of a certain generation as Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet* (1996). The examination of Shakespeare's rewritings should focus on its temporal-spatial-cultural context. According to Huang (2005, p. 256),

> The questions as to what "Shakespeare" is and how "it" functions have been explored from a number of critical perspectives, but relatively under studied is the question of the locality of "Shakespeare" and its appropriations, its "local habitation."

In other words, a local perspective shows re-framings of Shakespeare's plays that reaffirm local reading positions. Rather than discussing whether the locality where Shakespeare authenticity is derived or the locality where global differences emerge, the focus of debate should be on the reconfigured localities within and beyond Shakespeare's plays. (HUANG, 2007, p. 22) Indeed, "Ultimately, the question 'where is Shakespeare' is connected to the question 'where is the reader'." (HUANG, 2005, p. 262)

Romeus & Julietas' "local habitation" is set in a place of border struggles. A border by definition insinuates limit, differences and segregation. However, at the same time, it suggests circulation, socialization, sharing and mingling. In any case, this hybrid territory manifests linguistically by speaking *Portunhol*, a mixture of Portuguese and Spanish, the official languages of Brazil and Uruguay, respectively. *Romeus & Julietas'* reader lives by the margin, on the outskirts of town, by the highway, outside the walls of the university, at the end of Brazil and far away from the intellectual and cultural centers.

At the same time, the globalized phenomenon of hip-hop comprises the traditional rural gaucho culture. We can see teenagers wearing colorful caps instead of hats, walking by unpaved roads or riding horses while they listen to the latest Beyoncé hit on their

mobiles. Martin Heidegger argues that "a boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something *begins its presencing*" (HEIDEGGER, 1971, p. 154). Therefore, *Romeus & Julietas*' reader is on an intersection of Brazilian and Uruguayan culture, and where local rural living meets the globalized hip-hop beat. According to Huang (2005, p. 262-263), these "historical and imagined boundaries constitute the very 'venue' and instances from which 'Shakespeare' as a locus of discourse begins its presencing." Eventually, the outcome of adapting Shakespeare in this specific locality, which is the border region, is producing local meaning by exploring and discussing site-specific subjects through Shakespeare, and consequently, promoting awareness about local identities and ideologies.

For instance, the fundamental motivation to develop the adaptation was a possible struggle between two rival neighborhoods, which is explicitly discussed in the film *Duas Casas*, in the section *Prólogo* (Prologue). In terms of result, it is not clear where the Shakespearean story ends and the real story of the neighborhoods start; and in terms of production, fiction was introduced to raise a debate and develop a line of thought, and thus re-construct the neighborhoods` imaginary and discuss their collective identity. By re-telling their stories, dwellers also fictionalize their own story, which enables them to revisit their experiences from a different perspective. By listening to the stories, the adapters historicize their own culture and become aware of their "local habitation".

In the section *Personagens* (Characters), for example, we learn about the characters through their profile adaptation on Facebook in visual collages, which demonstrate not only the readers` perspective on the fictional story but also their world view, which clearly denotes the social-historical context in which they are inserted. Female characters were more explored and were usually linked to a working environment (the exception being the Juliet collage). Male characters were under explored and hybrid travestied figures were created instead, showing a possible concern about gender and sexuality.

Self-expression, which empowers self-esteem and is a gate to identity discourse, was deeply explored in all sections of the adaptation. For instance, in the section *Ato 1: Encontro* (Act 1: Meeting), adapters explored their self-image through photography, showing an atmosphere of an internal journey, while adapting the meeting between a possible couple, Romeo and Juliet. Since the adapters were in early adolescence, which

is characterized by rapid biological, psychological and social changes, the result might have had some positive impact on their self-image awareness.

In sections such as *Ato 2: Amor* (Act 2: Love) and *Ato 4: Separação e Morte* (Act 4: Parting and Death)*,* for example, in which adapters expressed themselves through writing and reciting, the reflection and expression of their ideas possibly triggered their inner voices and activated the imaginary of romantic love, showing their social and cultural perspectives on the theme. The youngsters` idea of romantic love is interestingly complemented by the elderly idea of love and relationship in the section *Epílogo: Outros Romeus e Julietas* (Epilogue: Other Romeos and Juliets). Here, the palimpsest-like relation to another film adaptation, *Letters to Juliet* (2010), is not as direct as Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet* (1996). The motivation for the blog creation is to develop the letter genre, but the influence of the film is not clear. In this section, the adapters retell their stories, fictionalizing their own past love stories, thus making sense of their experience through a different perspective and unveiling the social-historical context in which they are inserted.

All in all, any work of self-expression is essentially ideological. Whether it reinforces or challenges the status quo, it is the result of a social and historical context inserted in a specific place and time, "because texts do not float above history, politics and local differences." (HUANG, 2013) Thus, to investigate language is to explore the ideological phenomenon. Studying cross-cultural adaptations of Shakespeare's works helps us develop critical tools to approach the interaction between Shakespeare and the local culture instead of incorporating local history under Shakespeare or vice versa. (HUANG, 2013) If the canon travels far, it is precisely because it allows readers or audiences to tell their own stories and shape their own identities.

3.4.3 The role of participatory culture in *Romeus & Julietas*

One of the first characteristics that calls attention in the adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* is the tension between analog and digital, paper and screen, flesh body and sign body. For instance, in the section *Personagens* (Characters), the collages are produced with and on paper, and later digitalized and posted on Facebook. In *Ato 1: Amor* (Act 1:

Love), handwritten poems written on paper are digitalized and transformed into images and posted on the blog, instead of writing digitally straight onto the blog platform. In *Ato 3: Exílio* (Act 3: Exhile) black and white pinhole photos are digitalized into images and posted in Tumblr.

Ultimately, the dichotomy paper versus screen is concerned with the human condition. According to Krämer (2008), the body under conditions of virtualization does not dissolve, but rather splits into a data body, i.e., a semiotic body:

> Descartes defined matter by spatial extension – a res extensa – and therewith specified as the concept of body as that which occupies a well-defined place in space. If now the conception of the body is subject to change, then this change must – in some way – have to do with a transformation of space. The metamorphosis of 'corporeality' under the condition of virtualization relates to a metamorphosis of 'spatiality' itself. (KRÄMER, 2008, p. 2)

The paper versus screen tension produces meaning because it also talks about the "locality" of the adaptation, portraying technological, social and cultural limitations. Therefore, it shows clearly the place from where these individuals, the adapters, speak from, namely their "cultural location". These adapters lie in the interstice between paper culture and digital culture and everything that encompasses this process of transition. On the other hand, by creating the adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*, they are inserted in what Henry Jenkins calls "participatory culture".

In the 2006 article *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*, Henry Jenkins and his fellow co-authors state that

> A participatory culture is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices. A participatory culture is also one in which members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created). (JENKINS et al, 2006, p. 3)

In a brave new world, in which every minute 24 hours of YouTube are uploaded, 20 thousand new images are posted on Tumblr and more than 6 thousand new photos are

uploaded on Flickr [51], most children acquire participatory culture functions (such as peer-to-peer learning, collaborative problem-solving, production of new creative forms of expression and promotion of circulation of information) on their own by interacting with popular culture. (JEKINS et al, 2006, p. 3) However, not all children have access to these participatory culture functions. Unequal access to opportunity experiences, skills and knowledge create a participation gap, excluding some strata of society from these innovations, and, consequently, from political decision-making processes.

> Empowerment comes from making meaningful decisions within a real civic context: we learn the skills of citizenship by becoming political actors and gradually coming to understand the choices we make in political terms. (JENKINS et al, 2006, p.10)

Hence, the importance of including media education in the classroom. Media literacy is not just about reading, decodifying, or interpreting the signs but producing, constructing and designing them as well.

> […] a computer does nothing in the absence of a user. The computer does not operate in a vacuum. Injecting digital technologies into the classroom necessarily affects our relationship with every other communications technology, changing how we feel about what can or should be done with pencils and paper, chalk and blackboard, books, films, and recordings. Rather than dealing with each technology in isolation, we would do better to take an ecological approach, thinking about the interrelationship among all of these different communication technologies, the cultural communities that grow up around them, and the activities they support. (JENKINS et al, 2006, p.7 - 8)

Therefore, including media education in the teaching and learning environment provides students with the opportunity to develop skills that will help them to be full participants in the new cultural context promoted by new media technologies, and encourages them to explore a variety of possibilities with the new media as well as the old ones.

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51 Source: http://www.socialnomics.net/about-socialnomics/

Besides helping students to improve their competencies as readers and writers, *Romeus & Julietas* fostered a range of social skills and cultural competencies to develop meaningful participation in a participatory culture. In order to develop all the content of *Romeus & Julietas*, students were encouraged to develop research skills, such as assessing the reliability of data and constructing arguments, and technical skills such as logging on, searching, using various programs, and some basic programming. Moreover, they practiced participatory functions such as *performance, appropriation, transmedia navigation,* and *collective intelligence*. (JENKINS et al, 2006)

For instance, when using an avatar on social networks, or creating profiles on Facebook (*Personagens*), students were practicing the *performance* skill, which stimulates the ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery. Whenever students were challenged to remix content (*Ato 1: Amor*), they were practicing the *appropriation* skill, which builds up the ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content. While creating the story flow, i.e., the organization of the adaptation as a whole, students were practicing the *transmedia navigation* skill, which develops the ability to deal with the flow of stories and information across multiple modalities. Finally, when elaborating the adaptation and discussing the creation process, students were practicing the *collective intelligence* skill, which encourages the ability to pool knowledge and compare notes with others towards a common goal. In fact, the most important social skill emerged collectively and collaboratively, because "[…] creativity operates differently in an open-source culture based on sampling, appropriation, transformation, and repurposing." (JENKINS et al, 2006, p. 20)

By using these strategies suggested by Jenkins et al (2006), and encouraging students to tell their story and express themselves through and beyond Shakespeare, this community was finally able to look at themselves and (re)discover their own stories, identifying their own "cultural location" and recognizing their collective identity and intangible cultural heritage. When students become adapters, we stretch our notion of literariness, because we connect the teaching and learning of reading and the teaching and learning of writing, promoting creative writing skills. The "de-sanctification" of literary texts legitimate students to appropriate, remix and transform the text, dealing with it as a living organism, persistently being revisited, reconfigured, reinvented and recreated.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to explore the issue of whether adaptation might be a tool to make Shakespeare's work more accessible to people and whether digital media could be used as an instrument to make an amateur adaptation happen. For this reason, the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*, which is the object created specifically for this study, was described and analyzed. Following methodological principles, the research focused on the adaptation as end product, which means that the study is more about the adaptation itself than about Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. In fact, Shakespeare's work, as well as other previous canonic adaptations of *Romeo and Juliet,* are serving the purposes of the adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* here, which clearly denotes a concern with the temporal-spatial cultural context (or "local habitation") in which the adaptation was produced.

Romeus & Julietas makes Shakespeare available in a new local context and in a different media. The adaptation has clearly de-sanctified the Shakespearean text and expanded our notions of literariness by reconfiguring and reinventing Shakespeare's text in digital media. Concisely, the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* is a contextualized critical commentary that accesses the Shakespearean archetypes creatively producing concepts about adaptational relations unavailable through the structure of traditional academic works. Thus, this dissertation compliments and broadens the discussions raised in the fictional adaptation by approaching the creative material critically.

Furthermore, by describing and analyzing the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas*, it became clear that digital media is an effective tool to provide adaptational experiences, especially because of its concomitantly mimetic and diegetic narrativity. Besides, with some instruction and guidance, free and user-friendly websites, adapters were able to appropriate and transform the given text as they liked it. However, in terms of technical accomplishment, *Romeus & Julietas* lacks a suitable outcome. Be it instructional problems or technical ones, the adaptation as a whole could have presented a better immersive and interactive experience. Nonetheless, the fact that all adapters

involved in the project were amateurs should be taken into consideration since this was the nature of the project itself.

The objective of this dissertation was to describe how the multiplatform adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* was presented and to interpret and explain the adaptational choices by focusing on issues raised and provoked by the adaptation itself. Unfortunately, a huge amount of discussion had to be left out. The discussion about whether the adaptation would be characterized as transmedia storytelling was conscientiously avoided for several reasons. The most important reason was that I wanted more than to just categorize this adaptation and, if I discussed transmedia storytelling, I would probably fall into a completely different set of questions and approaches to the object of study. Therefore, I chose to start from the description of the adaptation *Romeus & Julietas* and discuss and analyze the issues raised by the adaptation itself. Unfortunately, transmedia storytelling was not one of them.

Lastly, although the debate about adaptation as process and its application in the classroom was a topic that remained peripheral in this study, one of the most important humanistic accomplishments of this dissertation was to verify that indeed the adaptation made Shakespeare more accessible to people. It is possible to affirm that Shakespeare became more accessible to the individuals involved in the creation of the object because they have written, filmed, designed, photographed and talked back to Shakespeare producing concepts that are unavailable in the structure of academic essays. (ELLIOT, 2013, p. 37) The description and analysis developed by this dissertation demonstrates and discusses the concepts produced by these adapters. Therefore, for now, we can say that adaptation is a useful pedagogical concept and might be used as practical tool to be explored in the classroom environment. The relation between the teaching of literature and adaptation studies in the classroom is unfortunately understudied in the field of literary studies in Brazil and abroad. However, after completing this dissertation, I feel confident to direct my interest and research to this arena.

Moreover, in an attempt to be coherent with the ideas approached by this dissertation, I developed an on line version of this research, which is supposed to be more than electronic reproductions of standard formats, such as pdf documents. The on line version is called *Cyberspace is a Stage*[52] and is hosted by Moonfruit, a free and user-

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[52] http://cyberspaceisastage.moonfruit.com/

friendly website creator. The online version is a website and presents a summarized version of this dissertation. I chose to explore Chapter 3 exclusively because Chapters 1 and 2 are a revision of theoretical references. In any case, I will insert a link to the full version of this dissertation when it is officially included in the library system.

The website opening page displays eleven boxes with links to extracts of Chapter 3. In each box, we can read the section title in a font that mixes handwritten and type written style, and the boxes' background image shows a collage of different paper materials, from handwritten to printed text; the images allude to a palimpsest. The sections are not presented in a chronological order, i.e., the reader chooses the order of reading. Inside each section, the text presents links to internal pages and external websites, which range from Wikipedia definitions to YouTube videos. Therefore, the reader might navigate without a conventional and pre-established order, promoting a cyclical experience.

The intention of the on line version is to offer another possible reading experience, and put into practice some of the concepts discussed in this dissertation. Also, the on line version states a political ideology because it democratizes knowledge for a non-academic audience extending the research beyond the walls of academia. Ultimately, the website *Cyberspace is a Stage* talks back to the adapters on the frontier Brazil-Uruguay who developed *Romeus & Julietas* and maintains the dialogue open between university and community. In the future, the material will be translated to Portuguese as well, which will contribute to the debate within the region.

In conclusion, this dissertation is not only the result of 5 years of study on the topic; it actually represents the sum of my paths and choices as a researcher and professor. It probably reveals a great deal about the professional I already am and want to become. It is definitely not the end, but instead one more step in my career and development as a researcher and professor.

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