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Turning b(l)ack in translation:
An analysis of *To kill a mockingbird* & *O sol é para todos*

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ABSTRACT: The specific context of my study, that of Harper Lee's novel, is one of hardship and suffering: the deep south of U.S.A. during the Great Depression. Taking such context into account, my overall purpose is to reflect upon the (im)possibility of translating race. Analysing the original narrative and, at some points, its translation into Brazilian Portuguese, the specific purpose is to trigger a debate regarding the social aspects of racism, as well as the different narratives permeating it. Both historically and geographically, translation, through language, is a place for dialogism and mediation. The overall context of the analysis, thus, establishes a parallel between history, class, and race in the novel(s). Relying mainly on Frantz Fanon – Black skin, white masks –, among other names, the findings of my analysis of Lee's novel and its translation into Brazilian Portuguese show how to think of race, history, and translation may come to be a necessary and fruitful step for an eventual emancipation of black people, objective and subjectively.
KEYWORDS: Black identity. Literary translation. History of racism.

Transformando a negritude através da tradução:
Uma análise de *To kill a mockingbird & O sol é para todos*

RESUMO: O contexto específico do meu estudo, o romance de Harper Lee, é um de dificuldade e sofrimento: o extremo sul dos E.U.A. durante a Grande Depressão. Levando esse contexto em consideração, meu objetivo geral é o de refletir sobre a (im)possibilidade de traduzir raça. Analisando a narrativa original e, em dados momentos, sua tradução para o português brasileiro, meu objetivo específico é iniciar um debate sobre os aspectos sociais do racismo, assim como as diferentes narrativas que o permeiam. Tanto histórica quanto geograficamente, a tradução, através da linguagem, tem sido um espaço de dialogismo e mediação. O contexto geral da análise, assim, estabelece um paralelo entre história, classe e raça no(s) romance(s). Partindo das reflexões de Frantz Fanon – Pele negra, máscaras claras –, entre outros nomes, minhas considerações acerca da análise do romance de Lee e

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sua tradução para o português brasileiro mostram como pensar em raça, história e tradução pode vir ser um passo necessário e frutífero para uma eventual emancipação da população negra, objetiva e subjetivamente.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Identidade negra. Tradução literária. História do racismo.

1 Introduction

> If there's just one kind of folks, why can't they get along with each other? If they're all alike, why do they go out of their way to despise each other? Scout, I think I'm beginning to understand something. I think I'm beginning to understand why Boo Radley's stayed shut up in the house all this time... it's because he wants to stay inside. (Harper Lee, *To kill a mockingbird*, p. 208)

My epigraph consists in the moment of *To kill a mockingbird* when its youngster characters get to an important epiphany: for some of us, it is ok not to enjoy living in the world we have been provided. They are talking more specifically of the character Boo Radley – who never leaves his home –, but, after they realise how unequal and unfair living in society really is, their assumption actually seems to fit to anyone anywhere. The specific context of my study, that of Lee's novel, is one of hardship and suffering: the deep south of U.S.A. during the Great Depression – which commences precisely in the U.S. Characters, nonetheless, seem to live in harmony; especially the central ones, aided by the fact that they are all children – i.e. they are overtly oblivious to most social problems that encapsulate them. “Scout, Jem, and their playmate Dill climb trees, shoot air rifles, and run merrily amok among friends and neighbors. Everyone knows his or her place, a matter of race and class that continuously, and comically, confuses the children” (ATKINSON, 2016, p. 97). Atticus—Scout and Jem's father—is the one responsible for mitigating such confusion, as he is the one who 'explains' the world to the kids; and this is pretty much the linear order that forms the backbone of this narrative.

Taking such context into account, my overall purpose in this essay is to reflect upon the (im)possibility of translating race – precisely the element that pervades the chosen novel as a ubiquitous ghost, which is never directly addressed, but configures the background for everything to be where it is. Analysing the original narrative and, at some points, its translation into Brazilian Portuguese, the specific purpose is to trigger a debate regarding such shifts, of races, of colours, and of distinct histories of racism, rather than to prescribe how race should or should not be translated for, I repeat, this would be an impossible endeavour. To be black is

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not a given, but a construction, a narrative, and this is both individual and contextual; there is no equivalent "terms" to replace the language about race or the language of a race, as there is no equivalence for a reality that has been built by distinctive colonial contexts, experiences, lives. However, "although translations can be accurate or inaccurate, they can also be seen as productive or unproductive, fecund or sterile" (STAM, 2012, p. 389). In this sense, the inexistence of equivalence does not stop translation – on the contrary, it emphasises the importance of translating. Unbeknownst, we have all been living within transnations and communicating through translanguages; nothing is pure any longer – as a matter of fact nothing ever was.

Stam (2012) advocates for what he calls a translinguistic view on translation: one instilled with borrowings, adaptations, and so much geographical blending that the frontiers separating what is one and what is other becomes growingly blurred. "As a plurilogue across multiple locations, the diverse critical race/coloniality projects have drawn on a range of discourses not reducible to a national origin, especially given postcolonial dislocations" (2012, p. 392). Consequently, translation gets farther away from notions of fidelity, betrayal, or even equivalence. "At the same time, these mediations do not escape the gravitational pull of history; they are produced and reshaped within specific geographies and political contexts. Each act of translation is situated, inevitably shadowed by the architectonics of inequality" (STAM, 2012, p. 387). Both historically and geographically, translation, through language, is a place for dialogism and mediation. Concerning such discussion, Karl Marx's dialectical theory of social change invites us to rethink the relations that are established between class and identity. "Just as his theory of social development evolved in a more multilinear direction, so his theory of revolution began over time to concentrate increasingly on the intersectionality of class with ethnicity, race, and nationalism" (ANDERSON, 2010, p. 241). Those who insist to allege that Marxism fails to acknowledge ecological, gender, or racial matters (themes that cultural studies would effectively reclaim) do not actually understand how intricate the tentacles of the capital really are:

> On the one hand, Marx analysed how the power of capital dominated the globe. It reached into every society and created a universalizing worldwide

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> system of industry and trade for the first time, and with it a new universal class of the oppressed, the industrial working class. But on the other hand, in developing this universalizing theory of history and society, Marx strove to avoid formalistic and abstract universals. Again and again, he attempted to work out the specific ways in which the universalizing powers of capital and class were manifesting themselves in particular societies or social groups, whether in non-Western societies not yet fully penetrated by capital like Russia and India, or in the specific interactions of working-class consciousness with ethnicity, race, and nationalism in the industrially more developed countries. (ANDERSON, 2010, p. 244)

Maybe, if (as many critics and philosophers once have dreamt) some inspired translator recreated Marx's *Capital* into Portuguese as if he were born in contemporary Brazil, such text would be rather different from what we have. After all, his findings regarding the intersectionality of class with race and ethnicity perhaps make much more sense to the readers of our century in relation to the readers of his own. The overall context of the following analysis, in this sense, establishes a parallel between history, class, and race, which I consider an urgent rapport. Globalisation, diasporas, and migration have made of our global geography a racial mess – and such mess, as Marx suggests, does not develop in isolation, but hand in hand with industrialism and class struggle. "Colour caste founded and retained by capitalism was adopted, forwarded and approved by white labour, and resulted in subordination of coloured labour to white profits the world over" (DU BOIS, 2014, p. 30). The working class is not simply an ontological epitome, the body of the proletariat is not empty, but instilled with identity – an identity that is nourished by, among other things, master narratives about race. Translating race, thereby, is a historical movement of writing or rewriting narratives; and, in this movement, we can either choose erasure or epistemological adjoining – i.e. when peripheral discourses are written, translated, and shared, instead of replaced they are expanded: and the subaltern might get stronger. Efforts in ignoring the influence of the capital and class struggle on race, therefore, are not very effective if our agenda is to ultimately alter the status quo – to a great extent, my hypothesis is that this is precisely what is stopping us from doing it.

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2 Discussion

> The dialectic that brings necessity into the foundation of my freedom drives me out of myself. It shatters my unreflected position. Still in terms of consciousness, black consciousness is immanent in its own eyes. I am not a potentiality of something, I am wholly what I am. I do not have to look for the universal. No probability has any place inside me. My Negro consciousness does not hold itself out as a lack. It is. It is its own follower. (Fanon, 2008, p. 103)

Translation, as a movement akin to swaying back and forth, likewise drives one out of oneself. Race, as such, can be thought as a negotiation that happens through translation. Writing in first person, Fanon summarises the black experience. But to understand such experience, as it is constructed in *To kill a mocking bird*, its setting must, first of all, be taken into account, for, as Fanon himself reminds us, racial consciousness is about the locale, rather than the universal. The narrator, an 8ish year girl named Scout, explains how Maycomb becomes temporally secluded as a result of its spatial isolation: “The town remained the same size for a hundred years, an island in a patchwork sea of cottonfields and timberland. Although Maycomb was ignored during the War Between the States, Reconstruction rule and economic ruin forced the town to grow. It grew inward” (LEE, 1960, p. 117). By “inward” she means that it does not really grow, as people are born much in the same number of people who leave; and everyone is physically similar because the same families have been marrying the same families for many years. In what concerns class struggles, she poses that “there were sit-down strikes in Birmingham; bread lines in the cities grew longer, people in the country grew poorer. But these were events remote from the world of Jem and me” (LEE, 1960, p. 104). Even though she reminds us that, for her 12ish year old brother and herself, these are not very familiar issues, Scout seems to be aware of a handful of social commotions in the surroundings of Maycomb: coherent with the beginning of the Great Depression (1930).

In Scout’s daily life, readers can see the impact of social inequality right at the beginning, when her classes are described. Her teacher, Miss Gates, ignorant to the problems and difficulties that her students’ families go through, is the caricature of institutional and

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systematic alienation. In a school where many vulnerable children go either dirty or hungry (sometimes both), she endeavours to impose certain "manners". Mesmerised and horrified by a lice infestation, she suggests that one of her students, Burris Ewell (the one who brought them), go home, and has his hair cut as to get rid of the problem. "'And Burris,' said Miss Caroline, 'please bathe yourself before you come back tomorrow'" (LEE, 1960, p. 22). Laughing, the boy responds ironically, and says he is going home for good, for the whole year. Miss Gates, surprised, is enlightened by another student. "He's one of the Ewells, ma'am, [...], they come first day every year and then leave. The truant lady gets 'em here 'cause she threatens 'em with the sheriff, but she's give up tryin' to hold 'em". These are children whose families, in many cases, do not care about school – survival is hard enough without homework to go through every day.

This is a kind of reality Miss Gates proves not to be prepared to face. Before he leaves, Burris ridicules his teacher, and she, the adult, is comforted by the other students: "'why don't you read us a story? That cat thing was real fine this mornin'... Miss Gates smiled, blew her nose, said, 'Thank you, darlings,' dispersed us, opened a book and mystified the first grade with a long narrative about a toadfrog that lived in a hall" (LEE, 1960, p. 24). Back to alienation, at the end of the scene Miss Caroline seems not to have learned much. Another interesting moment comes up when she tries to lend some money for a kid who does not bring food to school, nor has money for lunch, and he refuses to take it. Now it is Scout herself who tries to explain:

> 'Miss Caroline, he's a Cunningham [...]. The Cunninghams never took anything they can't pay back [...].' Walter's father was one of Atticus's clients. After a dreary conversation in our living room one night about his entailment, before Mr. Cunningham left he said, 'Mr. Finch, I don't know when I'll ever be able to pay you.' 'Let that be the least of your worries, Walter,' Atticus said. When I asked Jem what entailment was, and Jem described it as a condition of having your tail in a crack, I asked Atticus if Mr. Cunningham would ever pay us. 'Not in money,' Atticus said, 'but before the year's out I'll have been paid. You watch.' We watched. One morning Jem and I found a load of stovewood in the back yard. Later, a sack of hickory nuts appeared on the back steps. With Christmas came a crate of smilax and holly. That spring when we found a crokersack full of turnip greens, Atticus said Mr. Cunningham had more than paid him. 'Why does he pay you like that?' I asked. 'Because that's the only

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> way he can pay me. He has no money.' 'Are we poor, Atticus?' Atticus nodded. 'We are indeed.' Jem's nose wrinkled. 'Are we as poor as the Cunninghams?' 'Not exactly. The Cunninghams are country folks, farmers, and the crash hit them hardest.' Atticus said professional people were poor because the farmers were poor. (LEE, 1960, p. 16)

Atticus, the father, appears here as he does in many other occasions: as the voice of reason, the organiser of disorganisations. Explaining the meaning of poverty, and what it is to be a member of the working class at a moment when there is no work available, he shows his two kids how complex the different social layers that touch one another within the proletarian reality are. Notwithstanding the fact that crises such as the Great Depression affect every member of the proletariat, regardless of their race/colour, it is however undeniable that racism is augmented in this process, and the reason for that is rather straightforward: "The plight of the white working class throughout the world today is directly traceable to Negro slavery in America, on which modern commerce and industry was founded, and which persisted to threaten free labour until it was partially overthrown in 1863" (DU BOIS, 2014, p. 30). For the ex-slave, Native or African-American, to a great extent, once a colony forever a colony. This, however, is a difficult thing for one to realise: especially for the white hegemony.

Scout, in another occasion, gets curious after she perceives a certain inconsistency in her teacher's discourse. Talking about Nazi Germany, Miss Gates makes the following assertion: "'That's the difference between America and Germany. We are a democracy and Germany is a dictatorship. Dictator-ship,' she said. 'Over here we don't believe in persecuting anybody. Persecution comes from people who are prejudiced. Prejudice,' she enunciated carefully" (LEE, 1960, p. 224). Not long after this, Scout looks for her brother in order to clarify her doubt. First of all, she explains what Miss Gates had said during the class as to check if what she had been saying about black people made any sense whatsoever: "I heard her say it's time somebody taught 'em a lesson, they were gettin' way above themselves, an' the next thing they think they can do is marry us. Jem, how can you hate Hitler so bad an' then turn around and be ugly about folks right at home?" (LEE, 1960, p. 226). Her restlessness has foundation, but the rule her teacher applies to judge Nazi Germany does not apply to the treatment of black people in the U.S. – not for her, at least. Miss Gates is what Fanon would describe as a Negrophobe, a subject

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who is educated to hate black people. “Hate is not inborn; it has to be constantly cultivated, brought into being […]. Hate demands existence, and he who hates has to show his hate in appropriate actions and behaviour; in a sense, he has to become hate” (FANON, 2008, p. 37). Again we get here the idea of a master narrative: the story of how hatred comes into being. Still about Nazism, it is important to remember its own narrative in Europe – for, until it was employed against European people, a large part of the continent turned a blind eye. “That Nazism they encouraged, they were responsible for it, and it drips, it seeps, it wells from every crack in western Christian civilization until it engulfs that civilization in a bloody sea” (Césaire 15).

This pervasive hatred of self against other seems thus to be all-embracing; however, as colour is maybe the most evident manifestation of racial identity, one could say it goes beyond religion and/or class in what concerns a direct response from the observer. “The light-skinned races have come to despise all those of a darker colour, and the dark-skinned peoples will no longer accept without protest the inferior position to which they have been relegated” (Burns 16). For the novel, however, such acceptance is not an option whatsoever; and' Tom Robinson’s trial is the clearest evidence of that. Before then, Scout gets in trouble by fighting a boy at school because he has said that “Scout Finch’s daddy defended *niggers*” (67). She feels offended, even though Scout has no idea what that means. At home she asks her father: “‘Do you defend *niggers*, Atticus?’ I asked him that evening. ‘Of course I do. Don’t say *nigger*, Scout. That’s common.’ It‘s what everybody at school says.’ ‘From now on it’ll be everybody less one’”. Reproached, Scout starts using other term. “‘Do all lawyers defend *negroes*, Atticus?’ ‘Of course they do, Scout.’ ‘Then why did Cecil say you defended *niggers*? He made it sound like you were runnin’ a still.’ Atticus sighed. ‘I’m simply defending a *Negro*—his name’s Tom Robinson’” (LEE, 1960, p. 68 emphasis added). Her father then explains that Calpurnia, their housekeeper, knows Robinson and his family for they go to the same church – and that he is probably innocent of the crime he is being accused of committing (raping a white woman). However, in Atticus mind there is no doubt that his defense is hopeless; so Robinson is a goner.

Let us take a special look in the terms I have highlighted. It goes without saying that the word “nigger” is perhaps one of the most offensive racist insults in English (unless it is black

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people themselves who are using the term to address one another, depending on the situation). It is such a strong term that some people do not feel comfortable even to overtly refer to it, saying "the N-word" instead. It dates back to the XVIII century, when the Spanish word "*negro*" enters the U.S. in this form. This entrance happens almost as if an abusive word had been born, for it became growingly pejorative – as it was constantly used to belittle black people and nothing more than that. The word "negroes", the plural for the now English word "negro" (that Scout starts to apply after she is corrected by her father), is considered much less derogatory than "nigger", no doubt about that. It "emerges" in the U.S. almost at the same time that "nigger" does, but is used, it seems, as an attempt at being "neutral" (with some exceptions depending on the region). Maybe influenced by the usage of the word "negroid" – suffix "-id" meaning "similar to" – the adjective has also been applied when one wants to refer to aboriginal people and people from other regions, whose skin colour is simply of a "darker tonality" in relation to the interlocutor.

At that time, some people felt that the words "negro/negroes" were deemed better to refer to black people than the word "colored", even though there is no consensus about this (some thought the opposite). In the U.S., it seems that "colored" and "African-American" might be seen as synonymic but, again, this depends a lot on spatial and temporal constraints – and/or even on individual impressions of black lives/narratives, which vary quite a lot. The word black, which was once a negative adjective for referring to black people, is seized and rearticulated by the very movement of blackness as a concept, built and redeployed by black people collectivity in our modernity/contemporaneity (to such an extent that I have been using the word since the beginning of this text).

Now, I shall shift my lenses to how these terms have been translated by Beatriz Horta, in the Brazilian version of the novel: *O sol é para todos*, published in 2019 (almost 60 years after the original book). Beforehand, let me reinforce that my purpose here is not to evaluate this translation and/or propose "better" choices (even though I might do it sometimes); my idea, with this discussion, is to think of the journeys that race goes through when translated. It is important to mention that there are other versions of the novel in Brazil, the first one published in 1982 and translated by Maria Aparecida Moraes Rego. I have opted to analyse the former

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precisely because it is the most up-to-dated. Here, Cecil Jacobs offence is to say that "*o pai de Scout Finch defendia pretos*" (101). The word "niggers" is replaced by "*pretos*", and again when she asks her father: "*'Você defende pretos, Atticus?' Perguntei a ele naquela tarde. 'Claro que sim. Não diga preto, Scout. É grosseiro.' 'Todo mundo na escola fala assim.' 'A partir de agora, todo mundo menos você'*". After that, another vocabulary is then required: "*'Todo advogado defende os, hum, negros, Atticus?' 'Claro que sim, Scout.' 'Então por que Cecil disse que você defende pretos? Ele falou como se fosse ilegal.' Atticus suspirou. "Estou só defendendo um negro... ele se chama Tom Robinson'*" (Lee, *O sol* 102). Her "correction", in the Brazilian version, is the usage of the word "*negros*" instead of "*pretos*".

This replacement makes sense, even though there would never be a word equivalent to the word "nigger", given its particular context and the level of aggression it implies. Consciously or unconsciously, it seems that even the translator is aware of that – as she adds the interjection "*hum*" to Scout's sentence, before she applies the term "*negro*", although in English there is actually no interjection at all. I interpret this addition as a strategy for the shift from "*preto*" to "*negro*" not to sound so natural than otherwise it would, in comparison with the shift from "*nigger*" to "*negro*". In Brazil, I dare say that, notwithstanding the existence of adjectives equivalent to the U.S. "colored" and "African American" ("*de cor*" and "*Afrodecendente*"), black people are either addressed as "*preto(a)*" or "*negro(a)*" – the former being indeed more common in the vernacular of black people themselves, and the latter mostly used by those who do not belong to the black community.[2]

This apparently subtle intervention by the translator — oscillating between "preto" and "negro" — resonates with what Prila Leliza Calado (2022) observes about the transmission of cultural memory in translations of Toni Morrison. Translation, in these cases, is never a mere semantic operation, but rather an act of negotiating silence and voice, trauma and

[2] Serving to "diminish" blackness, "*moreno(a)*" is often used to refer to tanned, brunette, and black people (with "brown skin", so to speak), the last case by those who do not feel comfortable using the word "*negro(a)*" – for, in some parts of the country, it is still taken as sort of a taboo, even though it is not. Even worse is "*mulato(a)*", which means of "mixed race" (e.g. a child of a black father with a white mother) and comes from the word "mule" – the sterile offspring of a male donkey and a female horse – thereby animalising the black person and/or putting his/her "purity" into question. When race is modulated, it is because we believe it to be a bad thing: reason why, in my view, the usage of these two words should undoubtedly be questioned.

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representation. In the same vein, Britto (2012) reminds us that literary translation inevitably involves choices that go beyond the lexical; it is about constructing effects of meaning that reverberate within a specific historical and cultural context. Here, the translator's conscious hesitation — marked by the "hum" — can be read not simply as a hesitation of Scout herself, but as a textual mark of the translator's awareness of the historical weight and racial violence embedded in the original term. This echoes Calado's (2022) argument that translators, when dealing with narratives of racial oppression, must navigate between preserving the memory of violence and adapting it to the sensibilities of the receiving culture – especially given that we are dealing with both a target and source contexts whereto slavery has been an operational trigger of meanings and sufferings, in a very different manner. Thus, even an apparently small addition like an interjection becomes a space of mediation, revealing that translation is also — perhaps above all — an ethical exercise of remembrance and rewriting.

This comparison between the original novel and the translated one demonstrates how history and language are inherently intertwined: "In the case of traveling debates, translation is not merely a trope; it is entangled in the concrete arena of language conflict and dissonance" (STAM, 2012, p. 95). In what regards race, conflicts and dissonances are manifest because many terms have a strong relation with colonialism – and how it has happened in a particular place at a particular time. Moving race, as such, also requires moving a completely different history from one place to the other. If in Brazilian Portuguese the word "*preto*" might not sound as offensive as "*nigger*" in English, maybe the word "*macaco(a)*" (monkey) would, for it is indeed much more pejorative in Brazil. Problem is: its usage is much less recurring than either "*nigger*" or "*preto*", as it appears more in the case of individual aggressions – i.e. offending a black person in particular, that the interlocutor knows who is. To say "*o pai de Scout Finch defendia macacos*" would not sound right, as readers would probably think indeed of monkeys, and not of a black person being disrespected. This shows how words, even pejorative ones, develop in a rather particular way within each culture wherein they emerge; equivalence does not exist, but room for a thorough discussion upon their etymology is more than welcome. Speaking of which, another interesting moment of the novel is when Calpurnia and the kids go to the church together for the first time – but not any church, *her* church:

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> Calpurnia walked between Jem and me, responding to the greetings of her brightly clad neighbors. “What you up to, Miss Cal?” said a voice behind us. Calpurnia’s hands went to our shoulders and we stopped and looked around: standing in the path behind us was a tall Negro woman. Her weight was on one leg; she rested her left elbow in the curve of her hip, pointing at us with upturned palm. She was bullet-headed with strange almond-shaped eyes, straight nose, and an Indian-bow mouth. She seemed seven feet high. I felt Calpurnia’s hand dig into my shoulder. “*What you want, Lula?*” she asked, in tones I had never heard her use. She spoke quietly, contemptuously. *“I wants to know why you bringin’ white chillun to nigger church.” “They’s my comp’ny,”* said Calpurnia. Again I thought her voice strange: she was talking like the rest of them. *“Yeah, an’ I reckon you’s comp’ny at the Finch house durin’ the week.”* A murmur ran through the crowd. “Don’t you fret,” Calpurnia whispered to me, but the roses on her hat trembled indignantly. When Lula came up the pathway toward us Calpurnia said, *“Stop right there, nigger.”* Lula stopped, but she said, *“You ain’t got no business bringin’ white chillun here—they got their church, we got our’n. It is our church, ain’t it, Miss Cal?” Calpurnia said, “It’s the same God, ain’t it?”* (LEE, 1960, p. 106-107 emphasis added)

Before that, Scout explains that the name of this church is First Purchase African M.E. Church (because it was paid with the first salary of freed slaves). It is a humble but clean place, one of the few things owned by black people as a group – which makes the presence of Jem and Scout a very good reason for a heated argument. Regarding this argument, a reminder: Harper Lee’s narrator is one that transcribes oral speech in writing form; but, here, we see that this is not simply Alabama’s accent being transcribed, but one of the many varieties of African-American English (AAE) – also called Black English/Dialect: a specific language that surfaces during the contact between African-American enslaved population with English settlers in North-America (Green; Lanehart; Morgan). In Brazilian Portuguese, there is not much for the translator to do: “*‘O que quer, Lula?’ [...] ‘Quero saber por que está trazendo filho de branco em igreja de negro.’ ‘Tão me acompanhando’, respondeu Calpúrnia [...], ‘Sei, e acho que durante a semana você que é a acompanhante na casa do Finch’*” (LEE, *O sol,* 151).

In comparison to the original, the language used both by Calpurnia and Lula is turned into standard Brazilian Portuguese; but, again, turning it into something somewhat different maybe look preposterous. Perhaps a problematic impression caused in the readers here, if so, would be that “only black people makes linguistic ‘mistakes’”, as the white characters speak

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perfectly in the translation, whereas in the original this is far from being the case – for, although the whole book is translated in standard Brazilian Portuguese, Lee also transcribes U.S. Southern accent in the original, when the white people from Alabama are speaking. One possibility, then, is that the translator is simply sticking to the project. "*'Não tem nada que trazer filho de branco aqui, eles têm a igreja deles, nós temos a nossa. Essa é a nossa igreja, está lembrada, Srta. Cal?' Calpúrnia respondeu: 'O Deus é o mesmo, não é?'*" (Lee, *O sol* 151-152). It sounds curious to me, however, the decision not to bring the word "*preto(a)*" when we have the word "*nigger*" in the original – which is incoherent with the previous comparison I have made. Maybe the translator does not feel comfortable using this word in more neutral grounds – but, as I see it, this choice ends up silencing the complexity of a dialogue like this, between two very articulated black women who are using the word "nigger" with no purpose for it to sound offensive. They capture the word for their own good; but, in the translation, this is ignored.

Still regarding the content of this excerpt, why such a fuss over two white kids in a black church? "The Negro problem does not resolve itself into the problem of Negroes living among white men but rather of Negroes exploited, enslaved, despised by a colonialist, capitalist society that is only accidentally white" (FANON, 2008, p. 157). Accidentally white, for some members of the church, Jem and Scout might be symbols of colonialism, slavery, and exploitation. Otherisation and displacement, in this narrative, occurs not only as it is translated into Brazilian Portuguese; but actually per se – languages, cultures, and meanings are already in conflict, before this story is brought to another literary system. Translation, as such, highlights racial narratives in transit, "pointing to their reaccentuation as they circulate through various zones in a back-and-forth that transcends an idiom of origin/copy, native/foreign, and export/import, within a narrative that foreground the in-between of languages and discourses" (STAM, 2012, p. 393). Later, as they navigate within the borders of this black community, Jem and Scout feel comfortable enough as to ask Calpurnia some questions. First, they want to know why church members sing "lining": which means repeating what the preacher sings, without any hymnbook. "'They can't read.' 'Can't read?' I asked. 'All those folks?' 'That's right,'

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Calpurnia nodded. […]. ‘Where’d you go to school, Cal?’ asked Jem. ‘Nowhere’” (LEE, 1960, p. 112).

Kids realise they know nothing about Cal, regardless of the time they have always spent together. Then, they are surprised when they find out she is actually older than Atticus, and has a grown son, with kids of his own. “‘What’s your birthday, Cal?’ ‘I just have it on Christmas, it’s easier to remember that way, I don’t have a real birthday.’ ‘But Cal,’ Jem protested, ‘you don’t look even near as old as Atticus.’ ‘Colored folks don’t show their ages so fast,’ she said” (LEE, 1960, p. 112). Relentlessly, Jem and Scout keep asking questions: it is as if, out of the blue, they simply realised Calpurnia is a person: a black person, with a history and a narrative of her own. Regarding her private life, Scout admits: “I had never thought about it […]. The idea that she had a separate existence outside our household was a novel one, to say nothing of her having command of two languages” (LEE, 1960, p. 113). Another curiosity emerges over here – and it concerns Calpurnia’s way of speaking. In the previous excerpts, readers notice how her argument with Lula draws Scout’s attention not only for it is heated, but also because it is as if Cal was taking like “another person”, for the simple reason that she is addressing people from her community, and not white ones like Atticus or them, for instance:

> *“Cal,” I asked, “why do you talk nigger-talk to the—to your folks when you know it’s not right?” “Well, in the first place I’m black”* “That doesn’t mean you hafta talk that way when you know better,” said Jem. Calpurnia tilted her hat and scratched her head, then pressed her hat down carefully over her ears. “It’s right hard to say,” she said. *“Suppose you and Scout talked colored-folks’ talk at home it’d be out of place, wouldn’t it?* Now what if I talked white-folks’ talk at church, and with my neighbors? They’d think I was puttin’ on airs to beat Moses.” “But Cal, you know better,” I said. “It’s not necessary to tell all you know. It’s not ladylike, in the second place, folks don’t like to have somebody around knowin’ more than they do. It aggravates ‘em. You’re not gonna change any of them by talkin’ right, they’ve got to want to learn themselves, and when they don’t want to learn there’s nothing you can do but keep your mouth shut or talk their language.” “Cal, can I come to see you sometimes?” She looked down at me. “See me, honey? You see me every day.” “Out to your house,” I said. “Sometimes after work? Atticus can get me.” “Any time you want to,” she said. “We’d be glad to have you.” (LEE, 1960, p. 113-114 emphasis added)

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Didactically and patiently, Cal explains very well why such linguistic shift "has" to happen, only failing to mention that it is when she is with Scout's family that her English is "wrong" – i.e. it is only then that she trains a way of speaking that sounds fake and foreign to her. In the Brazilian translation, again one might suggest there is a sort of erasure in what regards this debate upon language. The first sentence/question of the excerpt is objective and could even sound rude, if it were not articulated by a kid who is very intimate to the person being asked. In the translation it becomes: "'*Cal, por que você fala como... os seus amigos quando está com eles se sabe que falam errado?' Perguntei. 'Bom, primeiro porque sou negra'*". The noun "nigger-talk" (something maybe like "*língua de preto*") is completely eliminated, and Scout sounds much more respectful, and inevitably distant, than she does in the original narrative. Afterwards, the word "black", which does not appear that often in the narrative to designate race, is translated as "*negra*", partially eliminating its strength (as in "*porque sou preta*").

During her explanation, in English she says "suppose you and Scout talked colored-folks"; as if "colored-folks" was a language (Black English) – but then indeed it is simply a less vulgar way of saying exactly what Scout says at the beginning of this conversation: "nigger-talk". In Portuguese, this idea of a "new or different language" disappears one more time: "*Imagine se você e Scout falassem como os negros em casa... seria estranho, não seria?*" (Lee, *O sol* 159). Instead of "speaking a black language", we have something closer to "speaking like black people do", which infers that the language is the same – only spoken in a rather different manner. Even though she does not say it, Calpurnia is talking about Black English: a dialect on its own, and with its own traditions, elements, and variations in opposition to standard English. Moreover, we see that here three words are used in Lee's novel to designate race: "nigger", "colored", and "black", in different moments and for different reasons. In Portuguese, alas, everything becomes "*negro(a)*", which, to me, feels like another patronising movement – in an attempt at, maybe, neutralising language.

The perceived erasure of linguistic variation in the Brazilian translation also dialogues with what Paganine and Fonseca (2012) point out when discussing the translator's task regarding linguistic variation and representation of orality: translation inevitably involves

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choices that are aesthetic, ethical, and cultural, but often these choices reveal an implicit standardisation that erases difference. In Calpurnia's speech, what vanishes is precisely the mark of a distinct linguistic identity: Black English as a dialect that embodies history, resistance, and cultural specificity. Hanes (2011) similarly highlights how the translation of oral variants into Brazilian Portuguese frequently gravitates toward an "invisible" norm, diluting the expressive force and the socio-historical meaning carried by dialects in the source text. Thus, what emerges is less a neutral rendering and more a flattening of difference, which ironically reaffirms precisely the hierarchy and marginalisation that the original text sought to expose. By choosing "negro(a)" systematically and smoothing out the "nigger-talk" or "colored-folks talk", the translation inadvertently participates in what Paganine and Fonseca (2012) describe as a tendency to erase the marks of otherness, silencing the cultural memory and social critique inscribed in language variation. In this sense, translating Calpurnia's voice becomes not just a technical challenge, but an ethical crossroad: to decide what violence should remain audible, and whose language must remain foreign within the narrative.

Calpurnia addresses the issue of language with the expertise of a person who knows what she is talking about – a person who has been living a sociolinguistic clash. "To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (8). To think that speaking a language may mean supporting the weight of a civilisation might sound overstated, but actually it is not. "A man [sic] who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language" (9). Language, thus, is moulded as a place of struggle, power, and negotiation – a negotiation between self and other. For the black person, it is important to express him/herself without relying on the language, accent, or way of speaking of the white oppressor. Concerning otherisation, then, it would be right to say that Scout and Jem's ignorance about Calpurnia's private life is rather predictable. "I do not try to be naked in the sight of the object.

The object is denied in terms of individuality and liberty. The object is an instrument. It should enable me to realize my subjective security. I consider myself fulfilled (the wish for plenitude) and I recognize no division". For the white children, Calpurnia is the other, she does

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not "exist" as a person, she does not have the experience of a person and, when she proves she does, Jem and Scout feels awkward. "The Other comes on to the stage only in order to furnish it. I am the Hero. I am the centre of attention […]. I do not wish to experience the impact of the object […]. I am Narcissus, and what I want to see in the eyes of others is a reflection that pleases me" (FANON, 2008, p. 165). A reflection that pleases "me" (as the hegemonic Self in opposition to the Other) by fulfilling a task, which varies depending on "my" needs at a given moment.

What makes the process of otherisation even more complex in this specific narrative is the fact that most characters, white or black, are vulnerable to different extents. The family accusing Tom Robinson (Ewells) is not bourgeois; on the contrary, they live practically at a dumping ground in a "house" (if one could call it that) to which the windows are open holes. Their furniture consists in refuse; and they feed on leftover food: junk. "*Maycomb's Ewells lived behind the town garbage dump in what was once a Negro cabin***.** The cabin's plank walls were supplemented with sheets of corrugated iron, its roof shingled with tin cans hammered flat, so only its general shape suggested its original design" (LEE, 1960, p. 154-155 emphasis added). Another challenge surfaces now, in terms of translation, as the narrator describes the structure of their house. In Portuguese the highlighted sentence goes as follows: "*Os Ewell de Maycomb moravam atrás do lixão da cidade, no lugar onde um dia tinha havido um barraco de negros*" (Lee, *O sol* 213). The problem, here, is that, different from the Negro cabins, "*barraco de negros*" has no historical meaning – it only stands by a poor and humble house "of black people".

In Brazil, there is no such thing; we have the "*favelas*", which go through a completely different historical development and are occupied by people in general (not specifically black, even though there are much more of them in number). Additionally, in the "*favela*" (or even for the word "*barraco*") one cannot talk of a specific structure or pattern – as there is none. The Negro cabins in Alabama, on the other hand, configure a very particular thing: "The black servants of the planters lived either in a restricted section of the town or in cabins scattered here and there over the plantations. These cabins are nearly all alike, containing one or two rooms and having a brick, or stick-and-mud chimney built on the outside" (Cleland 368). In

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Brazil, this is closer to the idea of "*senzala*", the slave quarters of Brazilian colonial times; but, in this case, what we have is a huge lodging for black slaves, and not isolated dwellings. Another option to set forth such context would be an explanatory footnote by the translator – but there are none in the whole translation and maybe only here it would be rather awkward.

Once again, the novel articulates a racial debate in consonance with class struggle, which is coherent with a Marxist approach on the matter. "Marx's mature social theory revolved around a concept of totality that not only offered considerable scope for particularity and difference but also on occasion made those particulars – race and ethnicity – determinants for the totality" (Anderson 244). Marx's "totality", thus, does more than just include race and ethnicity in its analytical methodology – it depends on such elements for the whole analysis to make sense. Now, Scout is angry with Mayella Ewell, who is unduly and unfairly accusing Robinson of having raped her, but, at the same time, she pities her. "As Tom Robinson gave his testimony, it came to me that Mayella Ewell must have been the loneliest person in the world". Hearing Mayella answering to her father's questions during the trial, Scout realises that she herself is also a victim. Mayella has no mother, no friend, she is constantly sexually abused by her intoxicated father, and is of "a mixed race" – therefore rejected both by the white and the black community. "Robinson was probably the only person who was ever decent to her. But she said he took advantage of her, and when she stood up she looked at him as if he were dirt beneath her feet" (LEE, 1960, p. 175). Secluded and needy, Mayella feels attracted to the only man who treats her well, and who happens to be black – an impossible situation, which only his conviction or disappearance could disentangle.

At this point of the narrative, readers are still asking themselves who this Tom Robinson person really is. "Ontology, once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside, does not permit us to understand the being of the black man. For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man" (81). Meaning, then, emerges through this relationship established between these two poles: the white and the black one. But this is no horizontal polarisation, it is a vertical one – i.e., as women have been put under men, black people have been put under white. Hegemonies are born and sustained by these systems. Mayella is a very clear evidence of that: she is raped by her father, but he is

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a white man and white men cannot be punished by women – Tom Robinson, however, can be questioned by her, by a white woman like her. "The black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man. Overnight the Negro has been given two frames of reference within which he has had to place himself". The beliefs, language, history, and customs shared by the black community are set aside during this movement; besides that, "the sources on which they were based, were wiped out because they were in conflict with a civilization that he did not know and that imposed itself on him" (Fanon, p. 82). Prejudice against the black person – from colonial times up to our contemporaneity – has not been faced, questioned, or overcome with the passage of time. After all, "the majority of the world's labourers, by the insistence of white labour, became the basis of a system of industry which ruined democracy and showed its perfect fruit in World War and Depression" (Du Bois, 2014, p. 30). Capitalism, it seems, has nothing to do with racial justice; on the contrary, racism is a profitable component for its functioning.

Now, back to Tom Robinson's testimony, he describes the moment when, for the first time, he gets in Mayella's house. As he passes alongside Ewell's residence on his way home, Robinson gets used to making little favours to the girl – especially collecting timber, water, among other things. Mayella asks him in the house for a first time, with the excuse of another favour, and tries to kiss him. Desperate, he does not kiss her back and, as Mr. Ewell gets home, Robinson hears him calling her "a whore" and saying he is going to kill her. "Until my father explained it to me later, I did not understand the subtlety of Tom's predicament: he would not have dared strike a white woman under any circumstances and expect to live long, so he took the first opportunity to run". Because he left the house, Robinson does not know what happens afterwards; but it is easy to interpret that Mayella is attacked (perhaps even raped) by her father. Asked by Atticus to describe the polemic moment which is the cause for this trial (allegedly), it is Robinson's turn to bring language as a crucial element of his discourse. "She reached up an' kissed me 'side of th' face. She says she never kissed a grown man before an' she might as well kiss a *nigger*. She says what her papa *do* to her *don't* count. She says, 'Kiss me back, *nigger*'" (LEE, 1960, p. 177 emphasis added). The transcripts of oralisations which are not

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highlighted occur in the discourse of both black and white characters (such as "an'" instead of "and" or "th'" instead of "the").

The usage of "do" and "don't" instead of "does" and "doesn't" (i.e. the Zero Third Singular Verbal), however, occurs only in the speech of black characters, for, again, it is a mark of Black English (Godfrey, Tagliamonte). In the translation it goes as follows: "*Ela chegou perto e me beijou no rosto. Disse que nunca tinha beijado um homem e que dava no mesmo se beijasse um preto. E que o que o pai dela fazia não contava. Falou 'Me beija preto'*" (Lee, *O sol* 242). Here "*nigger*" is translated as "*preto*", which reinforce my hypothesis that, for this project, the translator applies "*preto*" only in offensive situations, and "*negro*" for more neutral ones. Tom's discourse, however, has no oral trace – which again is a questionable choice, but I repeat: how to translate such a peculiar manner of speech? Is there a way of recreating Black English without simply sounding as a Brazilian rural accent ("*caipira*")? Besides the more objective aspects of this excerpt, the objectification of the black body also draws my attention. Robinson is treated like a sexual object by Mayella – and she makes a point of calling him "nigger", exoticising his body in an attempt at dominating it. For the black man and the black woman, such objectification keeps being a concrete reality in our white-centred society.

About Tom Robinson's behaviour – running away regardless of his innocence – one must consider that the black man is always at risk of being accused, always afraid of persecution. "Whenever a man [sic] of color protests, there is alienation. Whenever a man [sic] of color rebukes, there is alienation. The Negro, having been made inferior, proceeds from humiliating insecurity through strongly voiced self-accusation to despair" (p. 43). This condition, that Fanon calls "situational neurosis", is one that motivates the black person to live in a movement where his/her own presence should be annihilated. "[F]or the Negro there is a myth to be faced. A solidly established myth. The Negro is unaware of it as long as his existence is limited to his own environment; but the first encounter with a white man oppresses him with the whole weight of his blackness" (Fanon 116). The black person must fit in a preconceived narrative – s/he has no history of his/her own, but only a specific black spot which awaits him/her in a white supremacist history. In Robinson's own situational neurosis, he explains that he runs away from the Ewells house because he is scared – but Mr. Gilmer, the prosecutor,

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considers this attitude to be an evidence of his guilt. "'If you had a clear conscience, why were you scared?' [...]. 'I's scared I'd be in court, just like I am now.' 'Scared of arrest, scared you'd have to face up to what you did?' 'No suh, scared I'd hafta face up to what I didn't do'" (LEE, 1960, p. 181). For the black person, it is impossible to simply sit back and wait for the law to treat him/her impartially. Therefore, "[i]t is understandable that the first action of the black man is a reaction" (Fanon 23). Living, for the black person, is a movement of reaction.

At the end of the trial, Atticus summarises the "crime" that has really taken place: "She [Mayella] was white, and she tempted a Negro. She did something that in our society is unspeakable: she kissed a black man [...], a strong young Negro man. No code mattered to her before she broke it, but it came crashing down on her afterwards" (LEE, 1960, p. 186). It is the word of a black man against the word of a white family, and a society that needs racism to operate the way it does could not get to a result different from what Atticus calls our "evil assumptions": "that all Negroes lie, that all Negroes are basically immoral beings, that all Negro men are not to be trusted around our women" (LEE, 1960, p. 187). As everyone expected (except the children), Tom Robinson is convicted and sent to prison. Scout is yet too young to understand what this situation means, but Jem is deeply affected by it. Before he goes to sleep, he has a short conversation with his father: "'Atticus', said Jem bleakly. He turned in the doorway. 'What, son?' 'How could they do it?' 'I don't know, but they did it. They've done it before and they did it tonight and they'll do it again and when they do it – seems that only children weep. Good night'" (LEE, 1960, p. 194). Only children weep, because the white adult has learnt that black people are less people: they are animals, and no one cries when an animal is wronged or killed. "The creation of the Negro, the fiction of a dumb beast of burden fit only for slavery, is closely associated with the economic, technical, and financial requirements of Western development from the sixteenth century on" (Robinson 81). Development and progress are concepts built on the back of the black. "There's something in our world that makes men lose their heads—they couldn't be fair if they tried. In our courts, when it's a white man's word against a black man's, the white man always wins. They're ugly, but those are the facts of life." (LEE, 1960, p. 201). Atticus, however, still tries to put some faith in the system:

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> "It's not time to worry yet," Atticus reassured him, as we went to the diningroom. "We're not through yet. There'll be an appeal, you can count on that. Gracious alive, Cal, what's all this?" He was staring at his breakfast plate. Calpurnia said, "Tom Robinson's daddy sent you along this chicken this morning. I fixed it." "You tell him I'm proud to get it—bet they don't have chicken for breakfast at the White House. What are these?" "Rolls," said Calpurnia. "Estelle down at the hotel sent 'em." Atticus looked up at her, puzzled, and she said, "You better step out here and see what's in the kitchen, Mr. Finch." We followed him. The kitchen table was loaded with enough food to bury the family: hunks of salt pork, tomatoes, beans, evenscuppernongs. Atticus grinned when he found a jar of pickled pigs' knuckles. "Reckon Aunty'll let me eat these in the diningroom?" Calpurnia said, "This was all 'round the back steps when I got here this morning. They—they 'preciate what you did, Mr. Finch. They-they aren't oversteppin' themselves, are they?" Atticus's eyes filled with tears. He did not speak for a moment. "Tell them I'm very grateful," he said. "Tell them—tell them they must never do this again. Times are too hard...." (LEE, 1960, p. 194-195)

Scout's father gets emotional when Calpurnia shows him the many gifts that the Robinsons family and other black people have given him, simply because he had defended an innocent black person and even though he was unable to safeguard Tom's freedom. Bob Ewell, on his turn, feels disrespected by the words uttered by Atticus during the trial. Bumping into the lawyer a few days later, Mr. Ewell curses and spits on him, also threatening to kill him: "Too proud to fight, you *nigger-lovin' bastard*?" (LEE, 1960, p. 198 emphasis added), he asks, rhetorically. In the Brazilian translation, "nigger-lovin' bastard" is turned into "*defensor de pretos maldito*" (Lee, *O sol* 271). The way I see it, such exchange not only makes the offense less intense, but it also sounds artificial in what concerns register, the context in which the "conversation" – if we can call it that – happens; i.e. it is quite hard to imagine a mad person calling another one a "*defensor de pretos*" (Negro defender). Perhaps "*lambedor de pretos*", "*baba-ovo de preto*" (something like "bootlicker of blacks") would sound more natural in this case, even though, for this translation project, it seems slangs and far too vulgar words were not really conceived as a feasible possibility. But, again, readers realise that defending black people, or even listening to them, is taken as an absurdity by many characters – a behaviour amenable to be questioned. "The torturer is the black man, Satan is black, one talks of shadows, when one is dirty one is black – whether one is thinking of physical dirtiness or of moral dirtiness [...]. The Negro is the symbol of sin. The archetype of the lowest values is represented by the

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Negro" (FANON, 2008, p. 146). The genesis of human history has been rewritten as if the white person were the eternal victim and the black one the eternal perpetrator – anything else would unequivocally escape this seemingly fixed, inexorable, and unflappable logic.

Not long after the trial, Tom dies – supposedly because he tries to break from prison. Shot by the police, the narrator shares with readers how his fate is considered predictable by the other characters in the town. "To Maycomb, Tom's death was *typical*. *Typical of a nigger* to cut and run. *Typical of a nigger's mentality* to have no plan, no thought for the future, just run blind first chance he saw". People gossip about the fact that, if Tom were patient, maybe Atticus would have helped him be released earlier, in the future. "You know how they are. Easy come, easy go. Just shows you, that Robinson boy was legally married, they say he kept himself clean, went to church and all that, but when it comes down to the line the veneer's mighty thin. *Nigger always comes out in 'em*" (LEE, 1960, p. 220 emphasis added). Skin colour, it seems, also carries a colour of character: black people run away, black people cannot be trusted, black people do not wait, black people have no control – wild beasts, they may show good behaviour, but, eventually, they all crack. In the Brazilian version, the narrator says that: "*Para Maycomb, a morte de Tom foi típica. Era típico de um negro ficar desesperado e correr; não ter um plano, um projeto para o futuro, só correr sem direção quando via uma chance*" (Lee, *O sol* 299). Again, we see that intensity is deeply affected by some of the choices: first, the allegation "typical of a nigger" appears twice in the original version, and only once in the translation. Moreover, "*nigger*" is translated as "*negro*" which, one more time, shows inconsistency in relation to the rest of the narrative. For the sake of this intensity, maybe something like "*é coisa de preto*" would be more coherent in this case. Furthermore, the idea of a beast that is released when, in English, the narrator says that "Nigger always comes out in 'em", is also modulated in Portuguese: "*Os negros sempre acabam aprontando*" (LEE, 1960, p. 299), something like "black people always end up messing up" – which is way less heavy than the original comment. Between the lines of what is posed by the narrator, is the idea that the black person is a plain/flat character – one that everybody knows cannot and will not ever change.

> I am given no chance. I am overdetermined from without. I am the slave not of the 'idea' that others have of me but of my own appearance. I move slowly

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> in the world, accustomed now to seek no longer for upheaval. I progress by crawling. And already I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am fixed. Having adjusted their microtomes, they objectively cut away slices of my reality. I am laid bare. I feel, I see in those white faces that it is not a new man who has come in, but a new kind of man, a new genus. Why, it's a Negro! (FANON, 2008, p. 87)

The common sense that the black person is hopeless, that there is absolutely no way to save him/her, is also part of a Capitalist agenda. The future is white, our history is white and every solution for every problem must also be white – that which deviates from whiteness, threatens its foundations. "The scapegoat for white society, based on myths of progress, civilization, liberalism, education, enlightenment, refinement, will be precisely the force that opposes the expansion and the triumph of these myths. This brutal opposing force is supplied by the Negro" (FANON, 2008, p. 150). It is because my colour can change the colour of the world, the colours of progress, that my body must be silenced: the master narratives required by white hegemonic society are already in operation, and there is no room for another story, especially a story tainted by the colour black. I finish my analysis sharing the conclusion to which Scout herself gets, after everything that happens during the novel: "Atticus had used every tool available to free men to save Tom Robinson, but in the secret courts of men's hearts Atticus had no case. Tom was a dead man the minute Mayella Ewell opened her mouth and screamed" (LEE, 1960, p. 220). For the black person, being accused is being convicted: and this is a sad reality for a child to learn. Atticus knows that defending Tom is a drop amongst many other drops required for a sea of actions to take place, ultimately drowning racism. There shall be a day when the black and the white person will have the same value – but it was not then, not now, and probably never in a sociopolitical system like Capitalism. For the Capital, every story has a price: and the story of black people as inferior to white has always yielded good results

Final remarks

> "Dirty nigger!" Or simply, "Look, a Negro!" I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects. Sealed into that crushing objecthood, I turned beseechingly to others. Their attention was a liberation, running over my body suddenly

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> abraded into nonbeing, endowing me once more with an agility that I had thought lost, and by taking me out of the world, restoring me to it. But just as I reached the other side, I stumbled, and the movements, the attitudes, the glances of the other fixed me there, in the sense in which a chemical solution is fixed by a dye. I was indignant; I demanded an explanation. Nothing happened. I burst apart. Now the fragments have been put together again by another self. (FANON, 2008, p. 82)

The glances: as women learn to get used to the objectifying glances of men, and as LGBTQI subjects learn to get used to the objectifying glances of heterosexual subjects, black people also get used to the objectifying glances of white people. None of them should have been doing so, for this means the obvious: that the only person who is really free is the white and heterosexual man. The identity of the black person is a negotiation between what s/he thinks s/he is and the preconceived notions that society has already built around him/her. The black person is born asking for forgiveness: his error? Being black. It is a life of disproof, a life trying to show that s/he is not what people think of him/her. Instead of manifesting to others if he is "good" or "bad", like the white male does, he has either to prove that he is "good" or to confirm that he is "bad". The black person is the enemy, the threat, and if s/he is saying so him/herself, it only means s/he is trying to pretend that s/he is a victim – this is what black people do, they deceive, they want white people to accept such a colour, but white people cannot do that. The world where the black person once defined him/herself is long gone – it is time to show him/herself naked to the white eyes of the only world we have. The black person bursts apart, and his/her fragments need to be rearranged in a white mould.

Like the jar which is broken and leave its fragments to be reorganised – a common metaphor in the philosophical reflections upon translation –, racial issues, too, can never simply be transported from one language into another, as we have seen in this analysis. At the same time, "[a]s a site of cultural (mis)encounter, translation, both within and between languages, in sum, is key to our discussion". A discussion on racism needs to include the different racisms that have evolved around the globe. The history of Brazilian black people is very different from the history of U.S. black people; in comparison to the rest of these two nations, however, maybe there is a third nation, shared by the black community of both U.S. and Brazil – as well as a fourth, a fifth, a sixth… "To focus on the ramifying differences of language exchange as

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opposed to furthering petrified conceptions of national character is one way to avoid the fetishizing of the ethno-cultural essences" (STAM, 2012, p. 99). History, race, and translation, might seem to be three very separate subjects, but actually they are not. There is a historical reason for what we translate, and a historical reason for translating it this or that way. Authors and readers follow a pattern: they are also taken as white and male, even when they are not. This affects our judgement, on others and on ourselves, and translation is one of the keys for our rearticulation of such tradition – even maybe for our creation of a new tradition on its own.

But are we mere puppets attached to the invisible hands of history? Sometimes we may be, but we are also the ones holding the strings. Racism does not need to be accepted, literature does not need to ignore it, and translation does not need to silence it. This is what Fanon (2008) calls "intellectual alienation": "Intellectual alienation is a creation of middle-class society. What I call middle-class society is any society that becomes rigidified in predetermined forms, forbidding all evolution, all gains, all progress, all discovery". Putting the puppet strings in autopilot, the subject alienates him/herself, and allows the centre to keep defining and redefining its periphery in a boring and lifeless world, with no essence, and where no meaning goes beyond the surface. "I call middleclass a closed society in which life has no taste, in which the air is tainted, in which ideas and men are corrupt. And I think that a man who takes a stand against this death is in a sense a revolutionary" (2008, p. 175). I dare say that we, black people, are in need of this revolution – in need of picking the steering wheel of history up and reclaiming our right to be, also us, protagonists in it. Capitalist and Neoliberal stands "against" racism are a ruse, and it is high time marginalised subjects got together to find a third way. After all, and as Marx has repeatedly demonstrated, if there is a solution for the suffering of my black brothers and sisters, "[i]t implies a restructuring of the world" (FANON, 2008, p. 60).

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