



BRUNHARA, Rafael. Presentation. Epic in lusophone modernity. In: *Revista Épicas*. Ano 4, N. 8, Dez 2020, p. 16-19. ISSN 2527-080-X. <http://dx.doi.org/10.47044/2527-080X.2020v8>

### EPIC IN LUSOPHONE MODERNITY

This volume of *Revista Épicas* seeks to embrace the multiple and changing context of epic poetry from modernity. Such modernity, inaugurated in the 19th century with the advent of Romanticism, calls into question the agency of literary discourse in poetic genres and makes the epic begin to occupy an ambiguous position, seeking to accommodate, with its canonicity, to the aesthetic paradigm of Romanticism, averse to the conventions that breathed life into old gender theories. Such a perspective will bring about a radical transformation in the appreciation of the epic. Formerly considered superior within the hierarchy of classical genres, it will gradually lose its prestige throughout the 19th, into the 20th century, according to a current of Hegelian inflectionists, as unable to fulfill what would be its prerogative: embrace the reality of totalizing mode. Its replacement would be the novel, in Hegel's famous definition “the modern bourgeois epic” (2004), a more adequate way to portray the values and practices of the modern world.

However, a new direction in the study of epic poetry, has revealed how complex, dynamic and multiform the genre and its potential are, showing a resizing that began in the 19th century and persists to the present day – often unsuspected because of Hegelian interpretations still prevalent – through long narratives that incorporate epic elements or through the renewal of the very formal structures that characterized the

epic. In this sense, the articles collected here are an invitation to think about the permanence of the epic genre in Portuguese language literature from the 19th century to the present day.

It is worth mentioning that this volume was born from the Project “Discursos da épica nas culturas lusófonas do século XIX”, developed by a group of researchers from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul and Ruhr-Universität Bochum and funded by PROBRAL – a program supported by CAPES/Brazil and DAAD/Germany. Indicative of this is the first section, the Dossier “Modernidades Lusófonas”, which brings five texts originally presented at the University of Augsburg in September 2019 during the 13th German Congress of Lusitanists in the section, organized by the referred group of researchers, “*Epopéia, narrativa e modernidade. Espaços, limites e transgressões de um gênero clássico em renovação*”.

They are as follows: “Forja épica e sentido trágico de Grande sertão: veredas”, by Danielle Corpas (UFRJ), who analyzes the tragic elements within the epic fabric of this novel; “Sílvio Romero e a poesia épica”, by Bárbara Sager Zeni (UFRGS/CAPES/DAAD), which gathers Romero's diverse reflections on the epic in order to outline the epistemological framework from which the critic leaves; “A comemoração do terceiro centenário de Camões no periódico A estação”, by Bruna Nunes (UFRGS/CAPES/DAAD), which presents the commemorative volume of this magazine about Camões and to what extent the scope of the magazine – supposedly aimed at the female audience - suits to celebrate the Portuguese epic poet. “Maria Valéria Rezende e o seu Vasto mundo: uma transfiguração do épico?”, by Maria Aparecida Ribeiro (Coimbra), who analyzes the work *Vasto mundo* and seeks to see it as a book that reconfigures traces of an epic Brazilian tradition. Finally, in a similar direction goes the article by Teresa Bagão (AEE/Escola Secundária de Estarreja), “‘Para manter as coisas inteiras’ – viagens no futuro em A vida no céu, de José Eduardo Agualusa”, which observes the epic continuities in the novel of the contemporary Angolan writer.

Two other articles continue to work on the epic in modernity: Vinícius Ferreira Barth (UFPR) in “Contemplação nas sombras: O guesa de Sousândrade e a meia-noite às margens do Solimões” analyzes the passage from Canto I d *O Guesa* that anticipates the episode from the descent into hell in Canto II, verifying the formal and thematic influences that shape and reconfigure this commonplace of the epic in the work of the

Maranhão poet; Ellen dos Santos Oliveira (UFS / CAPES), in “Aspectos épicos em “Os gatos” e “Remédio” (1949), de Fernandes Barbosa” studies, in these satirical poetry books of the first half of the 20th century, the presence of characteristics that could point to an accommodation of epic in contemporary times.

In the Free Section – focused on different themes – Amós Coêlho da Silva (UFRJ) offers reflections on epithets in the classic epic in the article “Achegas sobre o simbolismo do epíteto”; Bárbara Ribeiro Tofoli and Leni Ribeiro Leite, both from the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo, investigate in the article “The reception of Ekphrasis in the poem Prosopopeia, by Bento Teixeira” the permanence, in the poem, of this trope characteristic of both epic and rhetorical discourse. The article by Antônio Trindade dos Santos (UFS), “Do épico ao lírico: a mulher selvagem na epopeia Argonáutica e no Romanceiro sergipano” compares the figures in the Media of Apollonius of Rhodes with Juliana, from the homonymous traditional Iberian novel, as collected by folklorist Jackson da Silva in *Romanceiro Sergipano*. Victor Hugo Sampaio (UFPB) contextualizes the epic of the Finnish people, demarcating its generic elements, in “A Kalevala finlandesa: contexto histórico, seu processo de coleta e escrita, questões de gênero e possíveis motivos mitológicos”. Closing the section, Fabio Mario da Silva (UFSSP), in “Notas de investigação sobre as duas primeiras edições do Memorial da infância de Cristo e Triunfo do divino amor, de Soror Maria de Mesquita Pimentel”, brings important news about recent discovery involving the editions of the epic work of Pimentel.

This section of Epics concludes the sections “Project Epopée”, “Research Report” and “Review”. In the first, the text “O estado da arte da crítica anglo-saxã sobre o gênero literário épico”, by Marguerite Moulton, a professor at the ESPE de Beauvais and a member of the Center d'Études des Relations et Contacts Linguistiques et Littéraires at the Université d'Amiens, translated by Antônio Batalha (UFS). Alexandra Ferreira Bispo (UFS) presents the research report entitled “A resistência ao autoritarismo na épica de Leda Miranda Hühne”, showing the presence of this theme in her work from different theoretical considerations. Finally, Paulo Geovane e Silva (Universidade de Coimbra) reviews the second modernized edition of “Memorial da Infância de Cristo e Triunfo do Divino Amor”, by Soror Pimentel, and Christina Ramalhorepresents two works: *Eneas. La trayectoria transatlántica de um mito fundacional*, which brings together chapters by

different authors, and *Temps, mémoire, narration (Discours de l'épopée médiévale 2)*, de Jean-Pierre Martin.

Before closing, we would like to thank all the authors who contributed to the volume and, above all, Christina Bielinski Ramalho, editor of *Revista Épicas* and adjunct coordinator of CIMEEP, who promptly welcomed our proposal for a volume dedicated to the speeches of the Portuguese-speaking epic in modern times.

## References

HEGEL, Georg W. Friederich. **Curso de Estética**. Trad. Marco Aurélio Werle, Oliver Tolle. São Paulo: Edusp, 2004. vol.4.

NEIVA, Saulo (org.). **Désirs & débris d'épopée au XXe siècle**. Berna: Peter Lang, 2009.

NEIVA, Saulo (org.). **Déclin & confins de l'épopée au XIXe siècle**. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 2008.

SILVA, Anazildo Vasconcelos da; RAMALHO, Christina. **História da Epopeia Brasileira**. Rio de Janeiro: Garamond, 2007.