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### ABSTRACT

The present work aims to analyze the relations of veiled racism between the characters of the narrative Bom-Crioulo, by Adolfo Caminha (1998), from the concept of "doublethink" presented by George Orwell (2013), in his work Nineteen Eighty-Four. To better understand the conditioning factors of this current thought, we seek to analyze the master-slave relationship of the protagonist Amaro, in the light of the concept of disciplinary

society and control, according to Gilles Deleuze (1992), from the historical context of the literary work. The present research goes through the novel of the Brazilian author in order to answer the following question: is racism, in the Caminhian work, perpetuated by the characters through a double thought? To broaden the understanding of racism in society, examples of this practice were used both in the sociocultural context in which the work takes place and in Brazilian society of the twenty-first century. The results indicate a constant displacement of the realist-naturalist novel in question, between an institutionalized control and a kind of flexible control over the color of the skin of the Caminhian hero and his condition as a low-ranking sailor.

**Keywords:** Good-Creole, Racism, "Doublethink", Control Society.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, 84% of the population perceives racism, but only 4% consider themselves racist. This is what the Locomotive Institute's research on the impact of structural racism on the lives of black people in the country states, commissioned by Carrefour in 2021 (CAMARGO, 2020). Despite the popular discourse that intends to mitigate the existence of prejudice and racial discrimination, the fact that our country is racist can be verified by numbers and empirical experiences of everyday life. The study points out the delicate difference between overt prejudice and silent prejudice, the latter very rooted in the social behavior still in force.

Silvio Almeida (2019), a specialist in racial issues, comments that, among other currents of thought, it is considered that racism stems from marks left by slavery and colonialism, that is, criminal practices of prejudice are, above all, fruits of a slave heritage. The author, in his studies on the black and Latino population in the United States and non-white immigrants in Europe, points out that "the marks of slavery could be seen in the economic and political discrimination to which racial minorities are subjected" (ALMEIDA, 2019, p. 118). This postulation converges with another view presented by the same author, namely, racism as an ideology that shapes the unconscious. According to this conception, the social structure is constituted by patterns of racial cleavage inserted in the imaginary and in everyday social practices (*Op. Cit.*, p. 45).

Cases such as the Carrefour store in Porto Alegre – where a black man was beaten and killed by white security guards – and research data that point to the tendency of Brazilians to deny the presence of discrimination, demonstrate that there is a difference in the treatment of whites and blacks by the justice system and the executive branch, often manifested by violent and police force. The black man, because he is treated with greater severity, may be more rejected than a white man when the latter commits a crime of the same nature. This is due to the veiled thought that criminality is something inherent to skin color (ADORNO, 1996).

The concept of *doublethink* or "doublethink" in Portuguese, presented by George Orwell in the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which will be better explained in the following topic, configures the characteristic of society in simultaneously behaving two contradictory ideas and accepting them both (ORWELL, 2013). The Brazilian people understand racism as something existing, but refuse to accept the reality that discrimination belongs to practical aspects of our coexistence, deeply rooted in culture, resulting, therefore, in the commission of discriminatory acts by those who deny being racist, preventing the fomentation of reflections and discussions on the problem.

In the same direction, *Bom-crioulo* (1998) points to this contradiction about racial thought. Having been published the work, originally, in 1895, Adolfo Caminha weaves the racial relations in a scenario represented by the enslaved black still on the way to being a social subject, therefore the author analyzes the Brazil of the nineteenth century (SEVCENKO, 2003). Characters such as Dona Carolina, a friend of the protagonist Amaro, present characteristics that can be framed as actants of "doublethink". This is due to the fact that, initially, the Portuguese treat Bom-Crioulo in a friendly manner, without making any discriminatory manifestation; however, when she falls in love with the grumete Aleixo, Amaro's current sexual partner, she externalizes curses with a racial slur against the protagonist, motivated by jealousy.

As well as the racism of Dona Carolina, which is externalized as a response to the slightest sign of disagreement with the protagonist, many are the elements found in the novel, which contribute to the consolidation of relations of domination over Amaro in relation to the color of his skin. These components, however, undergo changes in the way they are organized as power relations. Gilles Deleuze (1992) identifies a model of society of control in which, according to the author, the emerging properties are submissive to the dominant practices and implicit exercises of power, no longer being the closed spaces – schools, prisons, hospitals, etc. – the main sources of domination in society, but rather flexible modulations.

In the words of the philosopher, "[...] the man of control is rather undulating, functioning in orbit, in a continuous beam" (1992, p. 223), that is, the actions are no longer fixed, rigid, but, to a greater degree, fluid. Warning that humanity is already under the sign of transition to a new society,

Silvio Gallo indicates that "the basic characteristic of these societies [of control] is to give the illusion of greater *autonomy*" (2007, p. 108 [author's italics]), since, due to the illusion that we would participate in a time of more freedom, We fall under the influence of the institutions of power, which only reward us when we think and act in certain ways, and it is precisely these ways of acting and thinking that we judge to be free and spontaneous.

Among these elements of domination mentioned, we list within the work the influence of the constituents in the life of the Caminhian protagonist in two moments: during the condition of sailor and in his relations on land. Amaro was under a slaving oppression, being the "good-creole", a product of his "owner" who, in turn, exercised over the character a regime of sovereignty. Deleuze (1992) points out that, following the analyses of Michel Foucault, enclosure is the fundamental operation of disciplinary society, with its organization of space in closed environments, such as schools, hospitals, prisons, industries, etc., and its ordering of working time. The perpetuation of a disciplinary power comes from the processes of molding, since the same fixed and defined mold of behaviors could be applied to the most diverse social forms.

Amaro, however, decides to flee from the hands of the landlord and, after a long journey, to serve the armada, because, according to him, "he felt truly a man, equal to other men [...] and he was sorry, very sorry for those who stayed on the 'farm'" (CAMINHA, 1988, p. 9) and the discipline undertaken in the military regime of the Navy, although executed with excess, was incomparable with the rigorous service of the farm or with the punishment of the trunk. If we follow the same reasoning of Foucault (1987), although leading to the case of the novel studied, it can be considered that the protagonist of Caminha, when incorporating himself into the Armed Forces, enters on board a social organization that responds to a society whose forms of manifestation of power would succeed those of *sovereignty* and would therefore be *disciplinary* until then. Upon joining the corvette, Bom-Crioulo submits to this new social body, which is characterized by centralization in the institutions of confinement to the point of provoking in the individual a permanent state of wakefulness.

Amaro also used to spend "a month in the hospital [by the lashes] and another month on board, or on land, with permission" (CAMINHA, 1998, p. 13), with the house of his friend Dona Carolina being his main stay outside the boats. The first appearance of the hostess in the eyes of the reader occurs when the hero puts himself on land accompanied by the grumete Aleixo and, presenting him to the Portuguese as his romantic partner. She invites them to settle at home, without charging for funding and still having them free from any judgments about the same-sex relationship, which probably would not happen on the part of other fellow sailors. The color of the guest's skin didn't bother the Lusitanian lady either.

A consideration is necessary, comparing the societies of control and the disciplinary societies, which are addressed by Foucault. In his text *Post Scriptum – On Societies of Control*, Deleuze (1992) states that such societies that control everything and everyone are replacing others, the so-called disciplinary societies. This philosopher understands that in those, we would be submerged in the dominant practices from devices that would configure the modalities of exercise of power in an implicit, veiled way. Gallo (2007) realizes that, because it offers the individual an illusion of more autonomy, it is precisely much more totalitarian than the previous ones.

This work seeks to analyze the issue of racism presented in the work *Caminhiana*, from the perspective of disciplinary and control societies, understanding the manifestations of racial injury of the character Dona Carolina as an act of "doublethink" that, in turn, is a representation of the society of control. The transition between the two forms of power will be exposed next, in addition to a study on the Portuguese character in the novel, in order to verify the implications of the term Orwellian, a somewhat paradoxical expression both in Caminha's narrative and in today's society itself.

## **2 DISCIPLINARY AND CONTROL SOCIETIES AND THE CAMINHIAN NOVEL**

Among his writings, especially in the work *Watch and Punish*, Foucault (1987) proposed that we live in a society whose model presents forms of exercise of power that are framed as disciplinary, situated in a period that goes from the eighteenth century to the Second World War. This pattern is characterized by its centralization and organization of the great means of confinement, such as the school, the prison, convents, the armies, the households and others. Discipline demands the cloister, a place closed in on oneself. Thus, Deleuze also points out about the alternation of an enclosed space to the other, each with its own guidelines:

First the family, then the school ("you are no longer in your family"), then the barracks ("you are no longer in school"), then the factory, from time to time the hospital, eventually the prison, which is the means of confinement par excellence (DELEUZE, 1992, p. 219).

Based on Jeremy Bentham's architectural archetype: Bentham's Panopticon, all those who are subjected to the power of disciplinary society are under the imminence of being constantly watched in the cloister and having their behavior curtailed and punished, just as in a large prison that has in its center a tower that gives visual access to all cells. In this perspective, it would be an environment in which

[...] each one, in his place, is well locked in his cell from where he is seen from the front by the watchman; but the side walls prevent him from coming into contact with his companions. It is seen, but it does not see; object of an information, never subject in a communication (FOUCAULT, 1987, p. 224).

The most important effect of the introjection of discipline is to impress upon any individual who is subjected in this disciplinary power to a state of eternal vigilance. Still in this work, Foucault reflects on the question: "How to strengthen power so that, far from impeding this progress, far from imposing its weight and its demands on it, it can facilitate it?" (1987, p. 231). In other words, how can the exercise of power be intensified and multiplied at the same time? According to the French philosopher, Bertham asks the same, pointing out in his studies the possibility of precise and closed places evolving into a network of devices that would be everywhere and always on alert, traveling through society without gaps or interruptions. The panoptic organization provides a formula for this inquiry. The transparent and circular cage, with its high and powerful tower may have been, according to Berthamian thought, a project of perfect disciplinary institution, because it was about exercising discipline in a diffuse, multiple and multipurpose way throughout the social body.

The discipline, for Foucault, presents two images: at one extreme, the institution closed and totally focused on stopping evil, breaking communications, suspending time. At another point, we have the discipline-mechanism with panoptism – a functional device that aims at the best effectiveness and agility of the exercise of power, that is, a project of subtle coercions to encompass as much as possible of a society in constant transformation. Next, the French philosopher presents the properties of this exercise of power through the centuries:

The movement that goes from one project to another, from a scheme of the discipline of exception to that of a generalized surveillance, rests on a historical transformation: the progressive extension of the discipline devices throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, their multiplication through the entire social body, the formation of what could be roughly called the disciplinary society (FOUCAULT, 1987, p. 232).

Turning to the narrative of the Caminhian work, which takes place in the nineteenth century, a historical moment a little before the Revolt of the Armada, Amaro enters the Navy corps in order to escape the scourges of his former landlord. Convinced that discipline on the high seas could not be worse than slave labor on the farm – irony! –, Bom-Crioulo presents a conniving behavior and relative consent in relation to the instance of power to which he began to be submitted. Over time, he got used to the routine on board, as stated in the excerpt of the work:

Amaro soon won the affection of the officers. They could not, at first, contain their laughter at that figure of a recruit oblivious to military praxis, rude as a savage, eliciting at every step irresistible laughter with his naïve manners of tabaréu; But at the end of a few months, everyone seemed to "the Negro gave it to us." Amaro already knew how to handle a shotgun according to the rules of the trade, and there was no botocudo in artillery; he had created a reputation as a "patesca" (CAMINHA, 1985, p. 9).

Quite entangled with the directives of the Navy and its numerous disciplinary processes, the protagonist finds himself in a constant imposition, but this subjection presents itself differently, as Foucault points out, when explaining about such disciplinary regimes:

But the disciplines became in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries general formulas of domination. Different from slavery, because they are not based on a relationship of appropriation of bodies; it is even the elegance of the discipline to dispense with this costly and violent relationship obtaining at least equally great effects of utility (FOUCAULT, 1987, p.164).

The philosopher understands the relationship between the soldier's body and the institution of power as meekness, a "docility." The robust bearing of Amaro is recognized, within the work, as a coat of arms of strength and bravery, therefore this soldier's body, equipped with a series of behaviors that incorporate the conditionality and the usual obligations – right and raised head; to be erect, without bending the back, to make the belly shrink and to emphasize the chest – it is an object and target of power of the societies of discipline, illustrated, below, by the Navy, as seen in the philosopher's quote:

Second half of the eighteenth century: the soldier has become something that is manufactured; from an unfit mass, from an unfit body, the machine that is needed has been made; the postures have gradually been corrected; slowly a calculated coercion runs through every part of the body, takes possession of it, folds the whole, makes it perpetually available, and prolongs, in silence, in the automatism of habits; in short, he was "expelled the peasant" and given the "countenance of a soldier [...]" (FOUCAULT, 1987, p. 173).

However, what Foucault also knew was the brevity of this model. In another text already cited, Deleuze points out that we now find ourselves "in a generalized crisis of all means of confinement, prison, hospital, factory, school, family. The family is an 'interior', in crisis like any other interior, school, professional, etc." (1992, p. 219). The author presents that new forces were installed progressively, especially after the Second World War.

Referred to as the Societies of Control, these forces are replacing those disciplinary societies of yore. The modes of domination and manipulation exercised by this new model manifest themselves in inseparable ways, that is, they are different from confinements, since they are a self-deforming molding that undergoes constant variations. In the society of discipline there was always a new beginning, while now, nothing is ever finished.

Deleuze further states that, more than a technological evolution, a mutation of capitalism has occurred. This is because, according to the author, it is perhaps money that best expresses the transition between the two societies, since, in the past, coins minted in gold were used – a standard measure, in which their possession indicated the value of the individual within a mass – and, more recently, money refers to fluctuating exchanges, different samples of capital, The figure for each monetary type is

becoming more important. The thinker recognizes human relations as one of the signs of understanding this change, which is reported below:

The old monetary mole is the animal of the means of confinement, but the serpent is the animal of the societies of control. We pass from one animal to another, from the mole to the serpent, in the regime in which we live, but also in our way of living and in our relations with others. The man of discipline was a discontinuous producer of energy, but the man of control is rather undulating, functioning in orbit, in a continuous beam (DELEUZE, 1992, p. 223).

The central character of Adolfo Caminha can be framed within what Gilles Deleuze points out as an animal in a reserve, because, in the words of this French philosopher, when he makes a prophetic quote from Félix Guattari, control is exercised through sanctions imposed on the individual:

Guattari envisioned a city where everyone could leave their apartment, their street, their neighborhood, thanks to an electronic (dividual) card that would open the barriers; but the card could also be refused on such a day, or between such and such an hour; what counts is not the barrier, but the computer that detects the position of each one, licit or illicit, and operates a universal modulation (DELEUZE, 1992, p. 224, 225).

As for the "card", understood here as the numerical language of the control, it is not limited only to electronic devices that grant entry permissions in physical locations or in virtual spaces. It refers, first of all, to the behaviors that can be accepted or denied according to some conditions dictated by the different instances of control, the "controlatos", which perpetuate a regime of progressive and dispersed domination. This mode of domination will be exemplified through the analysis of comments made by a Caminhian character in the following topic.

### **3 THE TERM "DOUBLETHINK" AND THE CHARACTER DONA CAROLINA**

The character Dona Carolina can be interpreted as someone who perpetuates the wishes of these "controlatos", while his racist stance, which will be revealed in the course of the literary work, can be understood as a negative sanction when the protagonist's behavior somehow presents itself in a deviant way from the perspective of the one who controls him. As far as the society of control is concerned, there are many tools used by the "drivers" in order to subjugate the individual to his wills, and these artifices will adapt according to what one wishes to impose.

In the case of racism, among others, the *doublethink* or "doublethink" in Portuguese – being part of "newspeak", which distorted the original meaning of the words – presents itself as one of these artifices. This term was formulated in the work *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, by George Orwell, and within this narrative we are offered the following definition:

*Doublethink* means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them. The Party intellectual knows in which direction his memories must be altered; he therefore knows that he is playing tricks with reality; but by the exercise of *doublethink* he also satisfies himself that reality is not violated. The process has to be conscious, or it would not be carried out with sufficient precision, but it also has to be unconscious, or it would bring with it a feeling of falsity and hence of guilt. *Doublethink* lies at the very heart of Ingsoc, since the essential act of the Party is to use conscious deception



while retaining the firmness of purpose that goes with complete honesty. (ORWELL, 2013, p. 244)

Starting from this definition, Homi Bhabha (2005) asserts that doublethink *or doublethink destroys the event of the individual's memory and the ability to verify history by trapping the tongue and consciousness in an endless "frozen" present:*

A "gift" that is constituted by the act of maintaining at the same time two contradictory beliefs in the mind of the individual. At a given moment, Party intellectuals need to be aware of the contradiction in order to manipulate reality with strategic precision and control the process of "doublethink"; In the immediately following moment, the use of the word "doublethink" suggests that reality has been tampered with and it is necessary to subject doublethink to doublethink, in order to erase the consciousness of holding contradictory beliefs. The effect, as Orwell describes it, is an infinite process (BHABHA, 2005, p. 31).

Dona Carolina, an old acquaintance of the sailor Amaro, thus accepts two contradictory and conflicting thoughts. At first, the Portuguese does not express any concern with the color of the sailor's skin and the narrative corroborates the understandable inclination of the character, stating that, for her, a black man is a human like any other:

D. Carolina was a Portuguese woman who rented rooms in Rua da Misericórdia only to people of "a certain order", people who did not make themselves very honorable and very good, that's right, reliable boys, good tenants, patricians, old friends... He didn't care about color, nor did he care about the subject's class or profession. Sailor, soldier, ship, sales clerk, everything was the same thing: the treatment that was possible to give to a tenant, gave it in the same way to others (CAMINHA, 1985, p. 25).

However, when falling in love with Amaro's sexual partner, the beautiful grumete Aleixo, Dona Carolina begins to feed jealousy against the protagonist, letting this negative feeling reveal her prejudiced side, even attacking Bom-Crioulo verbally with curses that would configure today in racial slur, as stated in the work:

The little black bill that she had torn apart did not leave her mind. - And it's not that the Good-Creole still remembered Alexios! Great pederast! He had never supposed that a loving passion from man to man was so enduring, so persistent! And then a black, Lord Good Jesus, then an immoral and disgusting creole of that! (CAMINHA, 1985, p. 55).

Despite the manifestation of the racist act from the mouth of the character, it is worth pointing out that she does it, somehow, unconsciously, because this is one of the assumptions of double thinking. In the studies of Discourse Analysis, for example, regarding the notion of ideology, Althusser (1980) states that this consists of the imaginary representation that challenges the subjects to take a certain place in society, but that creates the "illusion" of freedom of the subject.

This phenomenon results from the decentralization of the notion in the discursive scope, which makes it distance itself from the conscious subject, master of its acts and with control over the

language. This theme dialogues with the supposed "transparency" of the "controlatos", one of the main characteristics of control societies, as stated by Rogério da Costa (2004) about recent technologies:

Power today would be increasingly untraceable, because it is disseminated among the nodes of the networks. His action would no longer be vertical, as before, but horizontal and impersonal. It is true that verticality has always been associated with the image of someone: it is the icon that fills the place of power. But in a fully axiomatized society, the instances of power are dissolved among individuals, power no longer has a face (COSTA, 2004, p. 162).

The character who perpetuates this power does so, therefore, in a fluid and unconscious way, incorporating discourses of others and applying them to their reality. Dona Carolina is not aware of the duality present in her speeches, apparently paradoxical, after all, is the woman racist or not? She acts as a perpetuator of the cycle of power of the society of control, because, upon noticing that the protagonist is breaking certain barriers imposed on him, the character punishes him with racist slurs. While the Portuguese woman relinquishes, in principle, any form of discrimination, she commits a discriminatory act on the basis of certain conditions.

#### **4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Orwellian doublethink goes beyond dystopian fiction or reminiscences of a distant time, since its exercise still brings us back to the reality of everyday life. The Brazilian writer's novel weaves, bluntly, the representation of the complex relations about the racial thought of the nineteenth century, presenting to the reader the journey of a homosexual ex-slave and his conflicts with the economic and social control that subjugates him, crushing him in the midst of the constant displacement between an institutionalized control and another flexible in relation to the color of his skin.

First, the Navy, an institution that is too rigorous, with its different modes of surveillance, standardization, appropriation of bodies and imposition of conduct, within a power structure equipped with panoptic technology as a fundamental element for its functioning. Then, the main character finds himself in what would be the harbinger of a discontinuous but equally controlling power, represented by Dona Carolina, the ambiguous Portuguese when it comes to prejudices. The racist position of the character is revealed while a condition is created for her appearance.

This circumstance is the insistence of the protagonist Amaro in relating to the person for whom Dona Carolina also has great interest. The hostess presents a two-sided speech. The first of them demonstrates that the color of the skin would never influence the treatment she gives to the romantic couple for whom the Portuguese wants to rent a room in her house. The second face, in turn, makes explicit the inequality inherent in the observable characteristics of an individual, since the character suggests that, because he is a black, his competitor has less importance than she in the dispute for the heart of Aleixo.

It can be inferred, in the actions of the character, a similarity to the "card" that grants the individual of the societies of control access to certain places, mentioned in the Deleuzian work (1992), with regard to its detecting character of illicit behaviors and the great disposition to reprimand them. Considering the notes of the French philosopher on the changes that have occurred in society and how these nuances point to the dominance of a new configuration of dominance, it is pertinent to conclude that racism continues to be imbricated in the popular discourse of the twenty-first century, but with new modes of manifestation.

In this way, racism, in the book of the realist-naturalist writer, is perpetuated by the character as a result of a double-thinking activity, a process that is linked to the social relations that occur especially within a disciplinary and control society. At times, the Good Creole flirts with the long-awaited freedom to touch life free of prejudice, however, although the character has a robust body, the arms of those who control him are infinitely larger, and countless remain the faces of the power that society exercises in the man of then and now.

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