

Processes of Resistance and Emancipation of the Reader-Spectator-Listener in the Fight Against Structural Racism: Conceição Evaristo's *Escrevivência* in Action / Processos de resistência e emancipação do leitor-espectador-ouvinte no combate ao racismo estrutural: a *escrevivência* de Conceição Evaristo em ato

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ABSTRACT

This study¹ examines the processes of resistance and emancipation present in the works of Brazilian writer Conceição Evaristo, specifically in her concept of *escrevivência* [writing lived experience], and how readings of her work can be important for confronting structural racism. The research starts from the premise that literature can be a powerful tool in the fight against racism and in promoting racial equality, with the reader-spectator-listener playing a fundamental role in this struggle. Through an interdisciplinary approach combining literary studies, sociology, and critical race theory, we analyze how Evaristo's *escrevivência* invites this reader-spectator-listener towards possible emancipation. Our analysis shows that Evaristo's "escrevivência" allows black readers, spectators, and listeners to see themselves authentically and valuedly represented in her Afro-diasporic literature.

KEYWORDS: Conceição Evaristo; *Escrevivência*; Orality; Emancipation; Structural Racism

RESUMO

Este estudo examina os processos de resistência e emancipação presentes nas obras da escritora brasileira Conceição Evaristo, especificamente em seu conceito de escrevivência, e como as leituras de sua obra podem ser importantes para o enfrentamento ao racismo estrutural. A pesquisa parte da premissa de que a literatura pode ser uma ferramenta poderosa na luta contra o racismo e na promoção da igualdade racial, e o leitor-espectador-ouvinte tem um papel fundamental neste combate. Por meio de uma abordagem interdisciplinar que combina estudos literários, sociologia e teoria

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crítica racial, analisamos como a escrevivência de Evaristo convida este leitor-espectador-ouvinte para uma possível emancipação. Nossa análise mostra que a escrevivência de Evaristo permite que os leitores, espectadores e ouvintes negros se vejam representados de maneira autêntica e valorizada em sua literatura afrodiaspórica.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Conceição Evaristo; Escrevivência; Oralidade; Emancipação; Racismo Estrutural

Introduction

Zilá Bernd (1988) mentions in her work *Introdução à literatura Negra* [Introduction to Black Literature] that for many years it was denied by several authors, such as Hegel, that there was history in Africa; this strengthened the colonialist movement that placed Europe as the center of the world. However, even with the colonization process, many Black people in Brazil began to place themselves in literature, which, previously, was in the hands of university and intellectual institutions, attended mostly by white people.

Aníbal Quijano (2005), when talking about the colonality of power, mentions that before the process of colonialism, what we know today as “black people” and “indigenous people” did not exist; such nomenclatures, which came to denote a social position, only came into existence after the colonization of Africa and the Americas. Previously, black people did not need to justify their color or features, but after the process of genocide, kidnapping and enslavement that they went through, saying that a man or woman was black also meant that they were not seen as human beings, but as things belonging to the white man and Europe.

The process of colonialism that ravaged several societies left its radiations of existence through the colonality of thoughts and social imaginaries, which to this day place Black people in a place of marginalization and subordination; thus, rights to writing, reading, education, and good work are taken away. Furthermore, after the abolition process, the imaginary about Black people continued to be strengthened through eugenics and racism, which is, above all, structural in society and, as Almeida (2019) explains, is reproduced by several individuals, including unconsciously.

The term Black literature, therefore, is not a consensus among Black authors, as it was understood that it would come to be seen as lesser literature. It was believed that using the term to refer to writings by Black people could hinder its reception. For many

years, the use or not of the term generated much discussion - many authors believed that it would be good form to only include literature written by black men and women in Brazilian literature, understanding that it could reinforce exclusion if it was highlighted that the texts were written by black people.

However, it is necessary to consider that mentioning that a literature is written by black people highlights the importance of these individuals who, historically, have been denied the right to write; literature, in this sense, is a way for black writers to recreate a world according to their eyes and subjectivities, in addition to inserting themselves in an important environment, but one that, for many years, was predominantly white. Furthermore, in a society structured by racism, black people – who have been stereotyped, marginalized, animalized and, often, erased from literature over time – need and must mark their spaces of enunciation in creations, elucidating the importance of their stories being told by their own hands, their own mouths and in their own way.

It is also necessary to note that, for Afro-Brazilians to be able to read their stories being told by their peers, far from the stereotypes that foster structural racism, creating an exclusionary imaginary of society, this Black literature constitutes a great gesture and an enormous effort of recognition and legitimacy. This will be a way of reactivating their memories, which were, over the centuries, erased by the process of enslavement and epistemicide, thus making it known that their origin is not only in oppression, but in elements of ancestry, which are told by many black authors through what Conceição Evaristo calls *escrevivência* [Writing Lived Experience].

Evaristo (2011), therefore, argues that Black literature can highlight the *Afro-Brazilianness* of Black people, given that the experience of these individuals is unique, different from other Brazilians who are not Black. In this sense, when a Black individual-subject writes his own story, based on his reality, he is inscribing himself in literature, talking about himself and his peers. In Brazilian society, which was the last in Latin America to abolish slavery, these narratives are intertwined in several aspects: in forced marginalization, in epistemicide, but also in the various characteristics and ancestral legacies left by the Black people who were kidnapped here.

To say black literature is, therefore, to mark a revolution in a social body that tried to erase blackness from its roots and its identity. And, for a black reader-spectator-listener – broadening the category of what is usually understood in the figure of the reader, who

not only reads, but sees and hears these stories, participating in this process of oral literature, in the words of Leda Martins (2003), and registering themselves in their own way –, reading black literature is to recognize oneself in the face of the attempts at erasure carried out by the process of eugenics, marginalization and attempted murder of the languages, science and pluriversality of black people who passed through Brazil and left a legacy for the Afro-Brazilians who are today in this diaspora.

1 Evaristian *Escrevivência*: A Unique Way of Telling, Enchanting and Awakening

*When I bite
the word,
please,
don't rush me,
I want to chew,
tear between my teeth,
the skin, the bones, the marrow
of the verb,
so as to thus verse
the core of things [...]*
Conceição Evaristo²

The term *escrevivência* was thought and coined by Conceição Evaristo during her Master's Degree, when the author decided to use this term to name literature written by Black Brazilian authors. Considering that the writing of Black people is a form of writing is, from this perspective, understanding that their existence is entirely embedded in their stories and poems. The key point of Evaristian *escrevivência* is to understand that, although the written text is based on singular experiences that strongly permeate the author, it never ends in itself, but in the reader-spectator-listener. In view of this, Evaristo (2020) emphasizes that *escrevivência* is not just writing about oneself, precisely because it can encompass several people beyond the one who authored the text.

It is important to highlight here the importance of Black people speaking, telling and writing about themselves, when, in a structurally racist society, such as Brazil, Black people are denied the right to write, read and even have their voices properly welcomed and heard. Clóvis Moura (2019) highlights that, over the centuries, black people were not

² In Portuguese: “Quando eu morder/ a palavra,/por favor,/não me apressem,/ quero mascar, / rasgar entre/ os dentes,/ a pele, os ossos, o tutano/ do verbo,/ para assim versejar/ o âmago das coisas [...]”

even mentioned in literature and, when they were, it was in an animalized and bestialized way, unlike the indigenous people, who were portrayed according to the colonizer's desire: docile, who denied their roots and their people to defend their master.

As for Black women, the only roles left for them were cleaning ladies, cooks, servants, and the role of the mulatta, the one who serves for use. These stereotypes described by Lélia González (1984) and which shape Brazilian social thought often appear in literature as the Black woman who embodies Rita Baiana, who “steals” the white woman's husband, or Bertoleza, the Black servant who serves only for the service and enjoyment of the white man. These characters, as we know, refer to a specific period style, which reaffirms Realism/Naturalism in Brazil, and are, without any doubt, the result of a critique of Brazilian society at the time. However, it is important to say that, even in a place of social critique, Black people can and should have space to be situated in other modes of enunciation than just these.

In light of this, Evaristo will discuss the importance of self-representation for Black women during the writing process. This involves writing about their own history, so that this record does not end with them, but rather addresses so many other women whose existences are intertwined in various aspects in a structurally racist and sexist society. González (1984) states, in an extremely current way, that Black people, over time, have been spoken about and infantilized. According to the author, “*infans* is someone who does not have their own speech, it is the child who, if they speak in the third person, it is because they are spoken to by adults” (González, 1984, p. 225, our translation).³

It is worth remembering that, during the (sur)vival of black people in the diaspora, white people erased their history, tried to undermine their memory, their consciousness, speaking for black people, imposing their language and history on them, disseminating discourses in which they attributed to black people a place of subordination and dehumanization. Therefore, when a black person places themselves in their own story, which is written by their own hands and told by their own mouth, they are actually contributing to the deconstruction of imaginaries that have been nurtured over the centuries about themselves; they are doing what Zilá Bernd (1988) calls world *renaming*, and what Evaristo calls *self-representation*. In this way, Black people begin to inscribe

³ In Portuguese: “*infans* é aquele que não tem fala própria, é a criança que, se fala em terceira pessoa, é porque é falada pelos adultos.”

themselves in literature, when they literally or orally write their own narratives, with everything that is their right.

Thinking about *escrevivência*, then, is reflecting on ancestral processes that refer much more to orality than to merely alphabetic writing, and it is in this place that the listener is inserted. The concept coined by Conceição Evaristo (2020) is, therefore, an evocation of the past, which intertwines and gives meaning to the present, as it refers to the stories told by the so-called “Black mothers” during the colonial process, as the author comments. The act of telling, which was in the past, is thus reflected in the present, in various aspects highlighted by the writer during the writing of her works, making a point of making the terms of Bantu origin that are present in orality and in everyday language alive and dancing in her books.

The art of storytelling practiced by Black people, as we know, existed long before the process of kidnapping and formation of the diaspora. Abdias Nascimento (2019), in the work *O quilombismo*, points out that the griots, through speech, educated the young people of African villages, conducted commercial transactions and even advised royalty. This art of storytelling, with the process of colonialism, was forcibly embarked on the slave ship along with the Black bodies kidnapped to the places that would later become the African diasporas. Nascimento (2019) also highlights that, during the colonial period in Brazil, Black people were denied the right to write and read, and the only possible way for these people to create literature was through orality.

Another theorist who highlights the importance of orality for Ancient African communities is called Amadou Hampâté Bâ (2010), who emphasizes that the spirit of African ancestry lies in orality, in telling and narrating their stories and those of their peoples and cultures. *Escrevivência* is therefore in line with the author’s studies, because by remembering Black mothers we are also referring to our ancestors. Before, those women were in the big house to tell stories and put white people to sleep; today, however, Evaristo (2020) emphasizes that the power of telling stories, for Black women, through *escrevivência*, is fulfilled in the need to wake racist people from their unjust slumbers.

Thus, through her literature, Conceição Evaristo becomes what Sartre (1988)⁴ calls an engaged writer. With her writing, she aims to bring about change in society by

⁴ SARTRE, Jean-Paul. *What Is Literature? And Other Essays*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988.

raising awareness among individuals who feel tempted and touched by the denunciations, historical references and provocations about Brazilian society, which is bathed in structural oppression. Sartre mentions that “The ‘committed’ writer knows that words are action. He knows that to reveal is to change and that one can reveal only by planning to change” (Sartre, 1988, p. 44).⁵ In view of this, it is important to highlight that Evaristian *escrivência* not only aims to change society through criticism of the violence faced by black people in society, but that it also intended, from the beginning, a way for black people to be, in fact, included and seen in literature based on their literary work.

Sartre (1988)⁶ points out that, when writing literature, the writer decided to reveal man to another man. For Conceição Evaristo (2020), her literary work was to try to grasp and understand in the world what escaped her hands. Consequently, in a unique way, these two perceptions converge, since Conceição Evaristo’s literature reveals the being of the Black person in the world so that other Black people can understand and identify with it. These individuals often have their critical sense sharpened by the author’s emancipatory writing. The way Evaristo’s work resonates is so powerful that the writer herself reports that not only black people identify with her writing, given that other individuals, marginalized and who suffer structural oppression in Brazilian society, also cling, body, mind and soul, to her characters: this is the case of LGBTQIAPN+ people.

In this way, just as Sartre mentions that the author must think about the possibility of his work resonating with as many people as possible and the effects that his writing can have on those who have access to it, Evaristian work touches people who face different realities in society, since they are united by similar elements: dehumanization. When the author states that the writer decided to reveal man to another man, it was so that these individuals “assume full responsibility for the object which has been thus laid bare” (Sartre, 1998, p. 45).⁷ From this perspective, anyone who has access to what the author reports in his text cannot deny, in a certain sense, his lack of knowledge on a certain subject, even because, in some way, responsibility is the aptitude, the ability that an individual has to respond for himself and his surroundings.

⁵ See footnote 3.

⁶ See footnote 3.

⁷ See footnote 3.

According to the French philosopher, man is not predefined. He is defined by his actions and by what he does with his life. Therefore, man is nothing more than his project; he exists to the extent that he realizes himself; he is, therefore, the sum of his actions, which constitutes him (Sartre, 1956).⁸ As can be seen, it is worth adding a word about freedom, given that it is a fundamental condition for human beings, constituting one of their conditions of possibility: freedom as a presupposition, not as conditioning; freedom as a life project, a goal, an intentionality. In this sense, the human being lives *in situation*: they have a body, a past, a history, they belong to a certain time, in a certain place. Thus, if on the one hand the situation in which we live does not always determine our existence, on the other hand, even if we do not always do what we want, we are always responsible for what we do. Freedom therefore implies complete responsibility on the part of the subject, and it is realized in the commitment that it allows: either a rupture or an opening to a field of possibilities.

Apparently, being free seems to concern only the individual concretely; however, later on, Sartre (1956, p. 6)⁹ warns:

it is true that existence is prior to essence, man is responsible for what he is. Thus, the first effect of existentialism is that it puts every man in possession of himself as he is, and places the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his own shoulders. And, when we say that man is responsible for himself, we do not mean that he is responsible only for his own individuality, but that he is responsible for all men. [...] When we say that man chooses himself, we do mean that every one of us must choose himself; but by that we also mean that in choosing for himself he chooses for all men. For in effect, of all the actions a man may take in order to create himself as he wills to be, there is not one which is not creative, at the same time, of an image of man such as he believes he ought to be.

Regarding Conceição Evaristo's works, it cannot be said that there is no knowledge about slavery, racism, gender and class violence. All of these elements are portrayed in her works, in a way that makes explicit the challenges present in society. Thus, according to Sartre (1988, p. 45)¹⁰: "the function of the writer is to act in such a way that nobody can be ignorant of the world and that nobody may say that he is innocent

⁸ SARTRE, Jean-Paul. *Existentialism Is a Humanism*. Transl.: Philip Mairet. New York: World Publishing Company, 1956.

⁹ See footnote 7.

¹⁰ See footnote 3.

of what it's all about.” From there, it is understood that, upon having access to Evaristian works, those who read them can no longer consider themselves innocent before the society in which they are inserted, mainly because the author herself is an engaged person, proclaiming, from her literary writing, the reader-spectator-listener to action. *Escrevivência*, therefore, is an action.

If *escrevivência* is an action, we understand what Conceição Evaristo means when she argues that it is not just a combination of two words “writing” and “living,” but an action that is embodied in a singular form of writing, made by black hands-minds-bodies. In this sense, it is an invitation addressed to readers-viewers-listeners for their emancipation, which comes from their awareness, questions and action in the world in which they are inserted. Thus, authors who conduct writing, like Conceição Evaristo, are not writers “for having chosen to say certain things, but for having chosen to say them in a certain way.” (Sartre, 1988, p. 46).¹¹

2 The Place of the Reader-Spectator-Listener in *Escrevivência*

In the work *The Emancipated Spectator*, Rancière (2009)¹² weaves a panorama of how the spectator is observed in society, starting from his role in the theatrical sphere to the way he feels engaged as an individual. And it is in this study, which is also strongly linked to orality and reading, that *escrevivência* can invite the reader-spectator-listener to emancipate themselves. Rancière’s studies (2009)¹³ are extremely important for the development of this work, as they pose a challenge to understanding the role of the spectator in society, raising questions about their passivity and their action in the face of the spectacle: of what they watch and hear. Thus, thinking about the spectator who has Evaristian work before him is thinking about emancipation and its role in the Brazilian social body based on the incorporation of these works, which is not restricted in any way to the author in question, since the spectrum of what we observe can be greatly expanded.

In his text, Rancière mentions that the spectator was thought and seen with a certain passivity before the spectacle and that certain authors, such as Bertolt Brecht, came to think of a form of theater in which the spectator could be inserted, could be in

¹¹ See footnote 3.

¹² RANCIÈRE, Jacques. *The Emancipated Spectator*. Transl.: Gregory Elliot. London: Verso Books, 2009.

¹³ See footnote 11.

action. Brecht was thinking of a theatrical action that would remove the author from the “illusion” of the actor’s interpretation on stage, to call him back to reality, often making him participate in the play, if possible – this is what we can call breaking the fourth wall. Therefore, there is a certain urgency for the spectator to take action.

The idea was that the spectator was not necessarily seen in a positive way. Rancière (2009)¹⁴ states that, for a long time, the spectator was seen as someone who was oblivious to reality. This position, therefore, was always conceived as passive in the face of the action on stage, and this issue of passivity was transferred to society, as the author explains that politics holds an important part of the debate about theater, performance and the spectator himself. In fact, for him, fictional storytelling itself contains rationality, sometimes making clear what can and should be narrated and what has no place in the narration, which are the people’s lives.

With regard to *escrivência*, then, it can be understood that it not only invites the reader-spectator-listener to action, but also makes him reflect, question society, all this through the characteristics present in Evaristian writing if we take it as an example and starting point. In Evaristo’s works, orality is very present, because, as already mentioned, there is a strong presence of the ancestral element. In *Ponciá Vicêncio*, for example, listening to the elderly was extremely important for acting in the world, since the elderly told stories, knew ancient languages, and gave advice. For instance, the elderly Nêgua Kainda, who was always using her wisdom to make the people of the village act in a prudent and correct manner, as happened with Luandi, the brother of the protagonist of the plot, a man who worked on the farm with his father since he was a child, even after the abolition process.

This means that, even after 1888, many Black people continued to work for their masters on their farms, as there was no possibility or opportunity for them to have a different life, given that they were in a society based on the process of slavery. Abdias Nascimento (2019) states that the Golden Law only served to free white men from their heinous crimes against slaves, given that none of these individuals received assistance to build a dignified life, have access to work and education.

The character in Evarist’s work lived, as can be seen, the entire process mentioned above and, upon leaving his village for the city, he thought he could have a new existence.

¹⁴ See footnote 11.

Luandi, upon arriving in the city, was approached by the police, for being a black man, at the bus station, but when he realized who was taking him, he came across a black soldier, the first he had ever seen in his life, because, where he came from, black people only had space in the village or on the farms of the masters, they had no schooling, and their beginning, middle and end were determined by exploitation.

It was from then on that he began to believe that slavery no longer existed, that, in the city, Black and white people could have the same possibility of existence, respect, as the following excerpt indicates: “Luandi [...] believed that the time of slavery had passed. There was suffering only in the countryside. In the city, everyone was equal. There were even black soldiers!” (Evaristo, 2018, p. 60, our translation).¹⁵ From this perspective, Luandi decided that he would like to be a soldier, to have a voice of command like the white people, to beat the people who, according to him, deserved it. What he did not understand is that, faced with a society full of racial and social inequality, the marginalized people, forcibly treated like criminals and having to be arrested, were, just like him, Black people, poor and without the opportunity to live with material and psychological dignity.

It was from this perspective that the village elder made him return to his origins and think critically in order to understand how the stance of the soldier, who performs a task as a State machine, in a society where institutions never saw black people as people and individuals with rights, mistreated their own. Therefore, if Luandi acted like this, he would also be doing the same thing as the soldier, as highlighted in the excerpt from Evaristo’s work (2018, p. 77, our translation):

[...] Nêgua Kainda looked at Luandi’s clothes and laughed, mostly with her eyes. She laughed, saying that the young man was on a path that was not his [...]. If Luandi’s voice were not the long echo of other suffering sister-voices, his speech would not even fall in the desert. It could indeed be a beating, sand in his eyes, a whip that he would raise against the bodies of his people.¹⁶

¹⁵ In Portuguese: “Luandi [...] acreditava que o tempo da escravidão tinha passado. Existia sofrimento só na roça. Na cidade, todos eram iguais. Havia até negros soldados!”

¹⁶ In Portuguese: “Nêgua Kainda olhou os trajes de Luandi e deu de rir, mais com os olhos. Ria dizendo que o moço estava num caminho que não era o dele [...]. Se a voz de Luandi não fosse o eco encomprado de outras vozes-irmãs sofridas, a fala dele nem no deserto cairia. Poderia sim, ser peia, areia nos olhos dele, chicote que ele levantaria contra os corpos dos seus.”

Therefore, the reader-spectator-listener of Evarist's work has a strong place in listening, observing and understanding the plot, which is presented in a poetic and critical way by the author. Reading, broadly understood here, therefore concentrates an important place in the performance and it is through reading that one has access to feelings of pain and identification, when one sees the fictionalized denunciations by the author.

That said, Rancière (2009) goes against the idea that the spectator is simply passive. For the author, the spectator's action is also in the observation of something, in the way one lives life, learning or teaching something. Thus, transforming a spectator into an actor like those on stage, for Rancière, is not necessary; it is enough for the spectator to be and feel like the actor of his own existence. The work *Ponciá Vicêncio* demonstrates how the protagonist watched her mother stirring clay, singing while she carried out her manual work and, from observation, the little girl began to carry out the same activities as her mother; upon hearing the songs, she learned and began to sing with her mother, on the riverbank.

If we take this perspective to *escrevivência* and its impacts on the lives of readers, we cannot deny that the observation and incorporation of a work can give the reader an emancipated attitude, making him/her go from being a mere spectator and listener to an active reading process, if we so wish. In this way, when a reader becomes emotional, understands the ills of society, feels curious about researching the history of Black people, they are, in some way, engaging in their critical thinking, being an actor in their own story, signing up and writing their own work.

The reader-spectator-listener can be emancipated, as can be seen, from his reading, from his listening and from his understanding and observation of a work, especially when, from the experience of Conceição Evaristo's characters, evoked here, he also begins to identify with or question his *escrevivência*. At that moment, you will also realize that, even though other individuals also have their own experiences, there is an intersubjectivity when you perceive the experiences described in a work, in order to challenge so many black people who, in society, face similar problems, thus causing the understanding of a whole, of a collective, without erasing subjectivities. On the contrary, there will be an even greater connection between them.

Escrevivência makes the reader-spectator-listener, in the act of reading, increasingly amplified in its contexts, perceptions and meanings, encounter the

performance provoked by the sensation caused by reading. This context in which the concept is inserted was developed by Paul Zumthor (2018) and applies very much to what is intended in this reflection. In this vein, the intention is not to corrupt the concept of performance, which is very present in theater, but to extract from the word everything possible to conduct its study. Zumthor explains and defends the importance of the body's commitment and orality, so that performance can take place, especially by emphasizing that it is through perception, vision and listening that performance manifests and emerges, as in the case of ancient peoples, already mentioned in this text, in whom orality is strongly linked to education, negotiation and experience.

The scholar also points out that the importance of orality for performance does not exclude the perspective of reading. The point he makes is that there are intensities in which performance occurs, unlike the act of reading. It manifests itself, then, from the sensations that reading causes in the reader, through the level of emotion, breathing, the presence of punctuation, laughter, crying, etc. All these elements caused by reading, for Zumthor (2018), engage the performance, which always accompanies the act of reading.

In *escrivência*, therefore, the place of the reader-spectator-listener is in the process of awareness generated by information, poetics and criticism, to which the Evaristian work in question draws our attention. Thus, as an Afro-diasporic reading, *escrivência* is a gateway for Black people to know and recognize their experiences, as not being merely unique, but uniting them in a strong intersubjectivity. Conceição Evaristo's writing is, therefore, like a portal that invites readers to a great awareness, based on the African diaspora, which constitutes and reveals the face of Brazil.

This reader-spectator-listener then becomes emancipated from the moment he begins to question – through his observation, arising from reading, raised to its maximum level of perception and involvement, affections and determinations – the society in which he is inserted. This is, without a doubt, an affective and effective politicization, because affectivity is transformed into action, given that the reader is also a listener and begins to understand, historically, the importance of orality for black people and their presence in Afro-Brazilian culture, expanding this understanding beyond what we present here. In fact, oral poetics are strongly linked to Evaristian work, as the marks of orality are present, constantly calling the reader-spectator-listener not only to emancipate themselves, but to understand that the place of enunciation of listening is essential for action in society.

Final Remarks

Conceição Evaristo's writings, especially through the concept of *escrevivência*, make a significant contribution to Afro-diasporic literature and to the fight against structural racism. This is because, based on the denunciation and ancestral elements carefully addressed in each work, having an interdisciplinary basis that incorporates literary studies, sociology and critical racial theory, she is able to call the reader-spectator-listener to an emancipation and awareness of their experience in society. From this, it is possible to highlight the essential role of literature as an element of resistance, emancipation and fight against structural racism, which also acts through the erasure of memory in society.

Evaristo thus challenges dominant literary norms and structures by offering narratives that not only document but also celebrate the lived experiences of Black people in Brazil. Her writing is an act of claiming space and voice, allowing Black readers, viewers, and listeners to see themselves presented authentically, referencing the experiences of other Black writers. Such elements present in the author's literature make it a potential literary text, which goes against a historically constituted hegemony that erases Black people from literature or grants them only a place of subordination.

Evaristo's work, therefore, invites reflection and action, encouraging the public to question and challenge social and racial injustices. And all of this, we could say, occurs through observation resulting from reading, but leading us to understand that the reader-spectator-listener also has great power, even if through a supposed and simple reading observation. Observing and acting, in this regard, are deeply in tune. By offering a critical view of Brazilian society, Conceição Evaristo, with her stories and her work, encourages an in-depth analysis and questioning of power structures and a search for social transformations, provoking self-recognition in her Black spectators, readers and listeners.

Therefore, his contribution not only transcends the literary sphere, but also shows how the role of literature is multiple and can even influence social activism and the construction of a collective consciousness about racial issues in the country. It is thus possible to expand discussions and views that are still outdated in a structurally racist society like Brazil, in order to contribute to the formation of individuals in various social

and cultural spheres. By recognizing and valuing the diversity of voices in literature, Conceição Evaristo's work not only recognizes, but also enriches understanding and disseminates the vast cultural heritage that lies before her, by making these collections accessible to more people, highlighting the need for a society with greater justice and equity. Reading education mobilizes and emancipates readers, viewers and listeners.

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Statement of Authors' Contribution

We hereby declare that this text was prepared fairly and with substantial contributions from all involved. The writing was based primarily on the Master's Dissertation by Adrielly da Silva Gomes, supervised by André Luís de Araújo and Maria de Fátima Vilar de Melo. Contributions to the expansion of the proposed theme occurred through conversations and critical readings; consequently, the writing was conducted by all co-authors, with in-depth discussions taking place to prepare the complete text and to achieve a greater understanding of the concept of reader and the resulting performance.

Research Data and Other Materials Availability

The contents underlying the research text are contained in the manuscript.

Reviews

Due to the commitment assumed by *Bakhtiniana*. Revista de Estudos do Discurso [*Bakhtiniana*. Journal of Discourse Studies] to Open Science, this journal only publishes reviews that have been authorized by all involved.

Review I

The article is relevant to both the academic community and society, as it argues and critically examines the issue of Black literature in Brazil. The proposal is creative and

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essential in addressing and mitigating the effects of structural and systemic racism in Brazilian society. However, some paragraphs lack clarity and require reorganization; these have been identified in the attached Word document. APPROVED

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Reviewed on August 26, 2024.

Review II

1.Alignment of the Title with the Article. The article’s title corresponds well to its proposed content and is appropriately chosen. 2.Clarity of Objectives and Coherence in Development. The objectives are clearly defined and effectively addressed throughout the article. 3.Adherence to the Proposed Theory and Awareness of Relevant Literature. The article develops the articulation of the term *escrevivência* and its relevance using established concepts in the literary field from a Eurocentric perspective, drawing on thinkers such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Rancière, and Paul Zumthor. However, given the origins of the term *escrevivência*, the inclusion of further contributions from Afro-referenced intellectuals mentioned, such as Hampâté Bâ, Leda Maria Martins, and others, including Amarino de Oliveira Queiroz (*As Inscrituras do Verbo: Dizibilidades Performáticas da Palavra Poética Africana*), could further enrich the discussion. These additions could deepen the dialogue on issues pertinent to the Afro-descendant community, such as orality, the role of the *griot*, and the ancestral framework within the performative transmission of these unique collective narratives. Additionally, a more in-depth theoretical discussion on structural racism (Silvio de Almeida), the genocide of Black Brazilians (Abdias Nascimento), and racism and sexism (Sueli Carneiro alongside the previously mentioned Lélia Gonzalez) could enhance the analysis. Exploring these themes in relation to post-colonialism and coloniality (Aníbal Quijano and others) would provide a more robust framework. 4.Originality of the Reflection and Contribution to the Field of Knowledge. The article makes a valuable contribution by proposing alternative perspectives on Afro-descendant literary and intellectual projects that have been marginalized for centuries. These projects are critical due to their endogenous nature and the representation they promote. 5.Clarity, Precision, and Appropriateness of Language for a Scientific Work. The language is appropriate for a scientific work. However, I recommend revising the word “ouvinte,” which contains a spelling error in the abstract. APPROVED

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