THE REFUGEE CRISIS: NARRATIVE SEQUENCES AND EMOTIONS IN OPINION ARTICLES/REPORTS OR NARRATIVES IN THE SERVICE OF PERSUASION

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ABSTRACT

We intend to show, using an *ad hoc corpus* of media texts on the refugee crisis, how several linguistic and, more specifically, enunciative-pragmatic mechanisms contribute to the construction of an empathic discourse, used for argumentative purposes. These journalistic texts, between opinion and reporting, take sides, although not through a set of logical arguments objectively arranged and assumed by the speaker, but, instead, through narratives that show refugees as a source of information either as protagonists or, sometimes, as initial narrators. Through these narratives, the speaker seeks to approach the tragic experience told by refugees and bring it to the reader, with the aim of conquering his empathy (Lencastre, 2011). The linguistic empathy (Rabatel, 2017) translates into enunciative mechanisms, such as placing yourself in someone else's place, assuming her voice, to understand her point of view. The narrative, descriptive and dialogical sequences (Adam, 2005) are at the service of this empathy, through which the speaker tries to persuade the addressee. Several mechanisms will be listed that contribute to the same discursive strategy of persuading the addressee, through discourse patemization. We conclude that emotion in discourse (Plantin, 2011) that favours empathy increases when done through the voice of people with names and stories located in spaces that can be described, using reported speeches, narratives and descriptions for the construction of the theses defended by the journalists.

A CRISE DOS REFUGIADOS: SEQUÊNCIAS NARRATIVAS E EMOÇÃO EM CRÓNICAS/REPORTAGENS OU A NARRATIVA AO SERVIÇO DA PERSUASÃO

RESUMO

Pretende mostrar-se, num *corpus ad hoc* de textos dos média centrados na crise dos refugiados, de que forma alguns mecanismos linguísticos e, mais especificamente, enunciativo-pragmáticos contribuem para a construção de um discurso empático, usado para fins argumentativos. Esses textos jornalísticos estão entre a crónica e a reportagem. Tomam partido, embora não o façam explicitamente, através de um conjunto de argumentos lógicos, objetivamente arrumados e assumidos pelo locutor, mas antes através de narrativas que têm os refugiados como fonte de informação e como protagonistas e, às vezes, como narradores primeiros. Por meio dessas narrativas, o locutor procura aproximar-se da vivência trágica relatada pelos refugiados e trazê-la para perto do leitor, cuja empatia (Lencastre, 2011) visa conquistar. A empatia linguística

(Rabatel, 2017) traduz-se em mecanismos enunciativos como pôr-se no lugar do outro, assumindo a sua voz, para compreender o seu ponto de vista. As sequências narrativas, mas também as descritivas e dialogais (Adam, 2005) estão ao serviço dessa empatia, através da qual se procura conseguir a persuasão do alocutário. Serão elencados vários mecanismos que contribuem para a mesma estratégia discursiva de convencimento do alocutário, através da patemização do discurso. Conclui-se que a emoção no discurso (Plantin, 2011), que leva à empatia, é maior se for protagonizada pela voz de pessoas com nome e histórias situadas em espaços que se podem descrever, pondo palavras relatadas, narrativas e descrições ao serviço da construção da tese que os locutores jornalistas defendem.

Palavras-chave
empatia linguística; persuasão; narração; refugiados; média

Introduction

Following the war in Syria, partly responsible for the refugee crisis that has plagued Europe in recent year[1], mainstream press and online media have used emotion to convince the reader both for and against the entry of refugees and the policies of reception or violent rejection adopted by different European countries. The construction of discourses in favour of one or the other position (acceptance *versus* rejection) employs various types of arguments, some of which are intended to be more objective, using therefore numbers, statistics and graphs, while others are more openly emotional. We will take into account arguments that are considered affective which, like others, bring us emotionally closer to or drive us away from the experience of refugees. The texts we are going to analyse employ various linguistic-discursive mechanisms such as euphemisms, metaphors, different types of elements of enhancement and mitigation, etc. They contribute to the discursive construction of empathy between the reader and the refugees, as can be seen in the corpus of newspaper columns chosen for this article. This is the type of discourse that Plantin calls "emotional communication" (Plantin, 2011, p. 141), which implies the intentional communication of emotions through words or other semiotic forms, such as photographs, for example. The use of the linguistic-discursive units mentioned testifies to the ability to adjust words to our communication intentions, that is, what Zhang (2015) calls "elastic language": "we adjust, modify, and manipulate our words to accommodate particular discursive needs" (p. 5). In the present case, the intention of the speakers is to create empathy between the readers and the refugees, to convince the readers and, thus, to make them act.

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[1] Based on data from 2019, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) stated that "in the last six years, the number of deaths on this route exceeds 15,000" (Rota do Mediterrâneo é a mais perigosa e já matou mais de mil migrantes este ano, 2019). More recently, the figures have been corrected upwards, when the International Organization for Migration, reported that 20.014 migrants had lost their lives across the Mediterranean in the past six years. The agency said: "with no end in sight to the tragedy unfolding on the Mediterranean, IOM reiterates that improved and expanded safe, legal pathways for migrants and refugees are urgently needed, both to reduce the incentive to choose irregular channels, and to help prevent the unnecessary and avoidable loss of lives" (Mais de 20 mil migrantes morreram em travessias no Mediterrâneo desde 2014, 2020).

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According to Lencastre (2011, p. 12), empathy is "the ability to feel the emotional situation of others through their own neurological and organic representations. It is an automatic mechanism that allows us to identify with emotions and act accordingly".

The narrative sequences (Adam, 2005) embedded in the opinion columns that constitute the corpus used in this article have, in our view, the effect of increasing the degree of empathy between the reader and the refugees, as we intend to show.

The aims of our study are the following:

1. analyse the narrative sequences in a *corpus* of news columns/reports, showing that they are at the service of argumentation, through the reinforcement of emotion and the creation of empathic bonds between the reader and the migrants/refugees;

2. point out linguistic and enunciative-pragmatic elements that contribute to mark the speaker's empathic point of view.

The analysed *corpus* consists of seven texts from the Portuguese press[2], two written by Alexandra Lucas Coelho[3] (published in the *Público* newspaper, in the section Opinion Columns by Alexandra Lucas Coelho, Non-fiction), and five by André Cunha[4] (published in *Visão* magazine, with the generic title "Us and the new wall", Chronicle by André Cunha in five chapters)[5].

Author	Date	Title	Published in
André Cunha	29/08/2015	"A Hungria está a transformar-se num gueto" (Hungary is becoming a ghetto)	*Visão*
André Cunha	30/08/2015	"Da minha janela, vê-se o muro" (From my window, I can see the wall)	*Visão*
André Cunha	01/09/2015	"Se bombardeassem a minha cidade, eu também fugia" (If they bombed my city, I would also run away)	Visão
André Cunha	03/09/2015	"Nós estamos a fugir da guerra, não queremos mais violência" (We are fleeing the war, we do not want more violence)	*Visão*
André Cunha	07/09/2015	"Não tenho pai, não tenho mãe. Pum pum! Taliban" (I don't have a father, I don't have a mother. Bang bang! Taliban)	*Visão*
Alexandra Lucas Coelho	13/09/2015	"Refugiados 1: o filho que nasceu azul e a prima que não pode ver luz" (Refugees 1: the son who was born blue and the cousin who cannot see the light)	*Público*
Alexandra Lucas Coelho	20/09/2015	"Refugiados 2: adeus e duas guitarras" (Refugees 2: goodbye and two guitars)	*Público*

Table 1: Presentation and identification of *corpus* texts

[2] These texts were also suggested for assignments with students in Portuguese schools (Duarte, 2015).

[3] Retrieved from http://www.publico.pt/mundo/noticia/refugiados-1-o-filho-que-nasceu-azul-e-a-prima-que-nao-pode-ver-luz-1707514 e http://www.publico.pt/mundo/noticia/refugiados-2-adeus-eduas-guitarras-1708114

[4] Retrieved from http://visao.sapo.pt/actualidade/mundo/a-hungriaesta-a-transformar-se-num gueto=f829038; http://visao.sapo.pt/actualidade/mundo/da-minha-janela-ve-seo-muro=f829138; http://visao.sapo.pt/actualidade/mundo/se-bombardeassem-a-minha-cidade-eu-tambem-fugia=f829298; http://visao.sapo.pt/actualidade/mundo/nos-estamos-a-fugir-da-guerra-nao-queremos-mais-violencia=f829421 e https://visao.sapo.pt/atualidade/mundo/2015-09-07-nao-tenho-pai-nao-tenho-mae-pum-pum-talibanf829779/

[5] "Us and the new wall" is a project originally developed for the Italian Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso, published exclusively in Portugal by *Visão* magazine.

These texts, although imbued with strong views, are not opinion texts as such in which the speaker-journalists markedly assume certain positions, nor are they predominantly argumentative. The main ideas that both journalists defend, albeit not explicitly, can be summarised in the following topics: i) refugees deserve our solidarity and welcome because they have fled from war, violence and atrocities; ii) they are ordinary people like us, with dreams, professions, families and affections; iii) in addition to victims of war, they are also victims of mafias, European extremist groups, the insensitivity of leaders; iv) Europe has not been able to deal with this crisis; v) the Hungarians have forgotten their own past; vi) not all Hungarians are indifferent to the suffering of refugees. In order to achieve the readers' agreement with the points of view the authors defend, the texts are constructed with specific enunciative and linguistic mechanisms capable of provoking empathy between those they speak of and the reader.

Theoretical framework

This study is located in the area of discourse analysis and enunciation linguistics. We will try to understand how narrative sequences are at the service of argumentation and testify to the position of the speakers/journalists. They support some opinions but distance themselves from others, transmitted in the different voices that are heard in the news pieces analysed, as well as the choices the speaker makes about what to narrate and describe. Based on the way their discourse is produced, that is, on what they say, the topics they focus on, the lexicon selected, the point of view adopted, the stereotypes used, the forms of referencing, and the enunciative value of the connectors employed, the writers lead the reader preferentially to take sides in the controversy that has gripped Europe for years, for or against the humanitarian reception of refugees.

The existence of abundant subjectivity markers (the *subjectivemes* coined by Kerbrat-Orecchioni [1980]) lets the journalists' point of view through like porous terrain. The adopted deictic centre is often that of the refugees themselves, with regard, for example, to the grammatical category of person and space. This leads journalists and readers to adopt points of view similar to the refugees', through whose subjectivity and experience they learn of the events. We will see, then, how the narrative sequences in the texts are at the service of argumentation, through the reinforcement of emotion and the creation of empathic bonds between the reader and the refugees who are fleeing mostly from Iraq and Syria. This is the central theme of the selected columns, with *pathos*[6] as an element of proximity between the two entities.

The analysis is also theoretically grounded in the notion of linguistic empathy (Rabatel, 2017), which "from an enunciative perspective, consists of putting oneself in someone else's shoes (interlocutor or third person), a speaker who lends his voice to another, to face an event, a situation from the other's point of view" (Rabatel, 2017, p. 300). Rabatel considers linguistic empathy mainly taking into account "the referencing of

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[6] *Pathos* is used here in the rhetorical sense of the type of "argument, or evidence, designed to produce persuasion", as noted in Charaudeau and Maingeneau (2004, p. 371).

the speech objects", i.e., referencing that takes account of the point of view of the sender, or "enunciating source": "the choices of qualification, modalisation, quantification, the order of the components, etc., denote the point of view of the second sender" (Rabatel, 2017, p. 301). The author further says, "empathically, the first addresser (S1/A1) does not directly express his emotions, he evokes, in a mediatised way the emotions that he imputes to someone other than himself, a second sender (s2 = X, [...])" (Rabatel, 2013, p. 66). In fact, the first speaker (S1) uses these emotions summoned from others in his textual expression as a resource to persuade the reader. It has the performative intention of leading the reader to act.

The use of the concept of "reportativity", a subcategory of evidentiality, serves to better understand the discursive construction of empathy: S organises the text, not with "their own cognitive material" (Hattnher, 2018, p. 101), but based on the words that narrate the experience of others.

For the purposes of this analysis, the texts need to be placed at a specific moment in the recent history of migration to Europe, namely, August and September 2015. At the time, the massive arrivals of refugees on the old continent and the tragedies they suffered were the prime focus of media attention. Fully understanding the news pieces requires knowledge of the historical context in which they appeared and on which they operate.

Furthermore, the genre to which the texts belong is also important because specific features mark the linguistic-discursive organisation of textual products. The texts may be considered columns or news reports, and this classification deserves to be questioned shortly. Officially, such texts are columns, at least in the understanding of the two media outlets that publish them. Alexandra Lucas Coelho's texts in *Público* newspaper are part of a section called "Non-fiction". This generic label can include both columns and news reports, but it places them within the journalistic type of text, as opposed to the fiction the author also writes[7]. André Cunha proposes a chronicle in chapters (or instalments), as he says at the beginning of the first one on 29/08/2015:

> column of a trip, taken earlier this summer, through the plains where Hungary and Serbia meet, days before the construction of the largest border blockade in Europe since the fall of the Berlin wall. The new barbed wire construction is the Hungarian government's response to the biggest migration crisis on the Old Continent after World War II. First instalment.

The fact that the writer himself speaks of "chapters" announces that the different texts have unity and coherence, despite being published on different (but close) dates. Also, there is an assumed narrative bias. Despite being labelled column, the texts have hybrid features in terms of genre between column and news report. As in the case of news reporting, they tell facts, most often based on the words or the summary of previous narrations by the protagonists of the events themselves. They are texts built primarily from

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[7] In addition to being a journalist and having published books of opinion columns, Alexandra Lucas Coelho is also a writer. Her novel *E a noite roda*, published in 2012, won the APE/DGLB (Portuguese Writers Association/Directorate-General for Books and Libraries) Novel and Short Story Grand Prix.

the narratives of other speakers, in which the evidentiality, that is, the source of information is either the personal and subjective perception of the speaker/journalist or the discourse narrated by the participants in the events described. The sender subject lets his point of view pass through, like a column, but he narrates, collects opinions, and gives voice to others, like a news report. Alexandra Lucas Coelho's texts are even accompanied by photographs of some of the protagonists who speak in them and whose story the journalist reports. These photographs contribute, in fact, to reinforce what is being said and the respective argumentative trend. André Cunha's presents photos from Reuters, which do not refer specifically to the people he writes about, but illustrate the generic theme of the march of the refugees, as well as infographics that assist the reader in understanding the complexity of the topic, providing information with maps and numbers. Such documents aim to inform but also give credibility to the discourse, giving it a greater degree of reliability in the eyes of the reader.

Taking into account the *Público* newspaper's style guide, we could say the texts share many of the characteristics of news reports:

> the news report must include all contradictory versions, based on a multiplicity of data, interviews and documentation sources. Adapting a concrete story to the general context of a report is an especially recommended technique: centring the subject on a concrete personal case, instead of getting lost in an anonymous generalisation. (*Público*, 2005, p. 176)

The texts in question are articulated, precisely, around concrete personal cases with subjects who narrate their painful experiences. The words of the individual narrators are strategically selected by the journalists, because no one better than the protagonists who have experienced tragic situations to narrate them and more effectively touch those who read. In our view, the short narrative sequences in these texts fulfil a persuasive function: to move the reader, bringing him/her closer to the suffering of refugees, presented as normal people, identical to the reader, highly relatable and, therefore, capable of triggering empathy (they are teachers, musicians, students, for example).

Other sequences in the columns/news reports that intrinsically cooperate with the narratives will be analysed in the same way: 1) the descriptive sequences that show inhospitable spaces and suffering human beings, or, on the contrary, idyllic spaces contrasting with this human suffering; 2) the dialogical sequences, in which the discourse of the various actors is reported, mainly through direct speech, which gives the narrative vivacity, authenticity, drama and therefore emotion, translatable into argumentative efficiency. The presence of direct speech, moreover, gives credibility to the journalists' discourse, due to the apparently reliable testimony they transmit. And also because, as Kronning says about reported speech,

> reported speech has an invariably positive modal orientation. (...) This modal orientation is explained by a general pragmatic principle, a topos, derived from Grice's maxim of quality, according to which the speaker must

> try to act so that his speech is true. According to this topos (cf. Kronning, 2005, p. 304, 2010, p. 26); Ducrot 1984, p. 157), if someone says something, the fact of saying it is an argument that what he says is indeed true. (Kronning, 2012, pp. 87-88)

The choice of discourse attributed to refugees, to those who help them or to the European leaders and citizens who are hostile to them is also at the service of creating different, more or less empathetic images. The employment of several speakers (Ducrot, 1985) and points of view contributes to creating an *ethos*[8] of objectivity and impartiality that the discursive construction of the texts, in fact, contradicts, but which the presence of infographics, in turn, confirms. The more or less explicit manner in which Speaker assumes the voices and points of view of the s2 speakers means we can consider this discourse as strongly dialogical. Finally, we will see how the speaker assumes, explicitly or implicitly, certain positions in relation to the different objects of his/her discourse, namely in relation to the various actors concerned, especially the main actors, the refugees.

Corpus analysis

Narrative sequences at the service of emotion

The characters are central to any narrative sequence because they are the ones who act (being agents) or suffer the effects of the action of others (being patients). In any case, it is around the character that the action is organised. It is because of them and their fate that we suffer or rejoice in reading or listening to the narrative. The characters presented by the authors of the texts under consideration here are both fragile and friendly. The diminutives and lexicon of children's language contribute to increasing the empathy of the protagonists, often children, young people and women. That is, they contribute to the construction of discursive objects who are weak and at risk, in need of protection: "little cousins", "the blond little cousin with pigtails and bangs, and whose eyes are always squinting" (Coelho, 13/09/2015). The use of qualifying adjectives is at the service of the positive evaluative construction of the characters, especially when they gain relevance by being placed before the noun, like in the two following excerpts: "tiny feet", "little Fatma and her also little brother Ahmed" (Cunha, 07/09/2015). The use of children to move and captivate the reader is an expected resource, as the protection of childhood is an indisputable, widely shared human value and, therefore, forms part of the *doxa*[9].

The narrative is conducted mainly in the first person, often by means of quotes in quotation marks, which increases the drama and subjectivity of the news story:

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[8] According to Charaudeau e Maingueneau's dictionnaire (2004, p. 220), *ethos* is "the image of self the speaker builds in his speech to influence his receiver".

[9] By a symmetrical mechanism, André Cunha testifies that President Orban's Hungarian television censors images of refugee children. In this case, images of children are avoided so that the viewer is not moved by their suffering.

> there were "thousands of people fleeing, leaving everything, cars and trucks
> full of people". They took a day and a half on the road to Erbil, the Kurd-
> ish capital. "But they didn't receive *us* very well, there were already a lot of
> people, they left *us* sleeping in gardens". (...) Vian wants to tell us his ver-
> sion of the trip. "*We* ran away by car, a car with ten people, and *I* was in the
> front, with my two children on my lap, 36 hours like that, *I* passed out twice.
> (Coelho, 13/09/2015)

This prevalence of the first person is visible, like an advertisement, in the head-lines of André Cunha's journalistic pieces. The speakers are the participants in the short stories narrated, and the personal deictic is preferably referenced to the refugees themselves. Thus, the first person marks, right from the paratext, the testimonial tone of the articles published under the title "*Us* and the new wall", André Cunha's column in five chapters: "Hungary is becoming a ghetto"; "From *my* window, I can see the wall"; "If they bombed *my* city, *I* would also run away"; "*We are* fleeing the war, *we do not want* more violence"; "*I don't have* a father, *I don't have* a mother. Bang bang! Taliban".

Alexandra Lucas Coelho's second text begins with the words of a refugee in direct speech, therefore in the first person, before the journalist even describes the space or introduces the speaker:

> "You can call me Ivan", he said. We were sitting in a garden in northern
> Iraq, so peaceful at the end of the afternoon that two guitars playing in the
> centre sounded everywhere. But in that corner what was happening was a
> separation. Ivan was the name he chose if I told the story in the newspaper.
> (Coelho, 20/09/2015)

This space that frames the narrating characters is alien and distant from us, the space of the other: "it was one of *those* camps that you find *there* in Africa, *there* in the Middle East, in this case, *there* in Northern Iraq". The demonstrative and adverb of place, whose effect of distance is amplified by the fact that they occur three times, have in this example, in addition to a value of deixis, a clear modal value. It highlights an affective place that is distant from the speaker-journalist and from her readers: the camps are far away from us, not only in terms of distance, but above all from the concerns and emotions of us Europeans, preoccupied with our small or big problems.

Descriptive sequences and speaker positioning

The direct speech of the refugees is framed by the so-called "attributive speech"[10], small descriptive notes on gestures, and other elements that accompany the words in direct speech, "tears start to run down her face, she continues to sob, but wants to

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[10] The term coined by Prince (1978), "attributive discourse", is considered limiting by Salvan (2005). According to this author, it seems that these segments have only the function of "assigning the word, indicating the identity of the speaker and the way the words are pronounced" (n. p.). However, the examples we have selected testify, in effect, to the richness of functions of these statements.

continue". We feel this is a clear contamination of nonfiction by fiction that Alexandra Lucas Coelho also writes:

> "At some point we started to hear bullets above us, I didn't know what it was, the 'Islamic State' was chasing us, and we needed to cross a checkpoint ..." Tears start to run down her face, she continues to sob, but wants to continue: "a tank came and smashed cars. There were thousands of people, thousands. We didn't eat for 36 hours. We were there at the checkpoint for a whole day, we only drank water from the bathroom, which nobody drinks. I was dead when I arrived". (Coelho, 13/09/2015)

The reference to the immense suffering is built by the use of superlative forms such as hyperbole and repetition ("there were thousands of people, thousands"; and, in the other text: "there were thousands of people fleeing, leaving everything, cars and trucks full of people") and hyperbolic metaphors ("smashed cars"; "millions are fleeing wars") or just dysphoric metaphors, indicating poverty and restriction: "the living container is that rectangle".

In descriptive sequences, *subjectivemes* (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1980) are very frequent. The use of adjectives contributes to exacerbate the emotion, because the sender thus marks his/her position of compassion towards the refugees. They also contribute to referencing, since they add details, qualifications, descriptive elements to the objects of the world to which the names refer, making them more informative and more accurate. Such dysphoric adjectives draw a scenario of urgency and human catastrophe, since the roads are "dirt", the children "barefoot", the heat "suffocating", the feet "tiny": "dirt roads, containers, plastic covers, barefoot children. (...) the heat inside the container is suffocating, which is the only home he knows, the heat irritates his skin with his tiny feet" (Coelho, 13/09/2015). Metaphors ("container (...) only home"), noun complements ("plastic covers") and expressive verbs ("irritates [him]") contribute to the discursive construction of a dysphoric environment.

There are also strong antithetical formulations that suggest the absurdity of the situation, through crystallised metaphors that have become formulas, in the sense of Krieg-Planque (2009): "a new 175-kilometre *iron curtain* rises in the *heart* of Europe" (Cunha, 29/08/2015). The use of evaluative metaphors also expresses subjectivity – "Hungary is becoming a ghetto" – as well as the unexpected use of certain lexemes. Both metaphors, "iron curtain" and "ghetto" contribute to characterising the situation as catastrophic, as they clearly evoke World War II and its consequences. About a border, though, one does not usually say that it is more or less a border, because the noun "border" is non-gradable, uncountable. By using it in a grammatically anomalous manner, the journalist reinforces the negative connotation allied to the Hungarian wall: "an archaeological symbol of an ancient line that never stopped being a border and that will now be even more of a border" (Cunha, 29/08/2015). The second time it was used, the noun metaphorically acquires the meaning of an insurmountable barrier, a wall that prevents passage.

The metaphor, which contributes to the referencing, helps to build this antithetical and polarised view of reality: the refugees are referred to as "the herd of refugees", while the construction of the referent "traffickers" uses the metaphor "angry dogs that bite at their pockets (and lives)". Thus, the defenceless meekness of sheep ready to be sacrificed, with identifiable religious connotations, is opposed to the furious rage of dogs.

Conversely, the antithetical descriptions of scenarios relative to the narrated facts contribute to building a representation of a torn world, divided in two: those who suffer the war and all its violence and the others, who live in peace. For this reason, the descriptive notes of Alexandra Lucas Coelho's first column operate in counterpoint to what the narrative sequences tell us. In an idyllic background, briefly suggested in descriptive sequences, the protagonists speak of the worst violence: "such a peaceful afternoon", "behind him, there's the sun, roses, carts full of sweets", "includes the afternoon birds singing overhead". Again we have the diminutive, the nouns, the verb "to sing" and the adjective that point to pleasant realities (sun, roses, sweets, birds, tranquillity), composing this peaceful scenario and, therefore, contrasting with the violence of the narratives produced. This divided world is effectively built in a descriptive sequence by André Cunha, summed up in the metaphor "torn horizon", or in this exclamatory appreciation: "How beautiful!", he says and repeats, whenever they cross a crowd of flowering sunflowers. "It's the last time, João, that you'll see this landscape like this, virgin, without barbed wire". "It will *tear* his heart, perhaps it will also tear a poem from him". The metaphors refer to the division and the horror that seem to be contradicted by the peaceful scene, accentuated by other metaphors of opposite evaluative, connotative value ("an *islet* of peace", "*speckled* with sheep"), or by these other terms "island", "pearl", "corals"). They contribute to descriptive sequences of positive polarity, of which this other phrase is a superlative example: "the most flowery gardens, full of roses of all colours".

> It was the most peaceful place we visited on the entire trip, an islet of peace. From the hatches of these houses, the infinite green-blond plains, which are white in winter, will continue to extend to the north, speckled with the sheep of Rigó and József, but to the south the horizon will be torn. (...) Tiszasziget is one of the main islands, perhaps the one that would dispute Kübekh.za as the pearl of Pannonia. In everyone's land, between the house and the street, the most flowery gardens, full of roses of all colours, are like corals at the bottom of the sea. (Cunha, 30/08/2015)

The abundance of expressive evaluative acts constitutes a mark of a strongly emotional discourse, which seeks to touch the reader, that is, etymologically, to move, to go along with.

The voices of the protagonists and persuasion

Alexandra Lucas Coelho writes in the first-person singular, thus clearly assuming her positions of empathy towards the refugees, whereas André Cunha's texts oscillate

between the singular and the first-person plural, diluting the speaker in a wider set of unidentified witnesses[11]. Therefore, the first-person singular can refer to the individually committed self: "there is no them and us because there is only us. We are among us", says Alexandra Lucas Coelho, in a quote that André Cunha includes in one of his columns. As for the first-person plural, we are faced with the "creative dynamism" of the "we/us" mentioned by Dahlet (2016, p. 218), referring to Benveniste (1966), since "we/us" is "a reality of discourse", with configurations that include the "I", but are variable. The collective "we/us", for example, can also include the reader, who is now a witness to the drama of the refugees. This "we/us", as André Cunha says in the excerpt quoted below, is everyone. The comprehensive first person includes all human beings involved in the tragic story of these migrations: the name of the Hungarian radio "*mi* means us, in Hungarian and in Serbo-Croatian". In the sequence transcribed below, this grammatical person sets up Rabatel's notion of empathy presented previously. The inclusive "we/us" is the same as me + you, readers, "we", humans:

> *we are* those refugees who had no idea where they were after the police dropped them off at the Szeged train station: "where *are we*?". *We are* Robert at the *Triplex Confinium* where this journey began, but *we are* also Orbán, *we are* the farmer who protests against the refugee who stole some tomatoes and *we are* that refugee himself, *we are* the owners of the *koscmas* and their guests in those Hungarian Lowland taverns where the world moves in slow motion, *we are* József and Rigó among the sheep, *we are* Sharbat, Márk, Rita, Zoltán, Mohammed, Balázs, *we are* even those railway officials who wanted little Fatma and her little brother Ahmed to sleep in the open and *we will be* Rafiq, a little latter, when *we reach* Subotica, in the north of Serbia, but for now, still in Szeged, *we are* Péter. (Cunha, 07/09/2015)

The solidarity in this inclusive "we" is also noted among the protagonists: "'I would go to pick up injured friends and would see 'Islamic State' flags along the way', says Mohammed" (Coelho, 13/09/2015). If sometimes, as we will see, there are voices expressing solidarity with the suffering of others, other times there are those, like at the walkers' checkpoints, who are hostile, mistrusting the different, already closed in their ghetto:

> Gábor Vona defends, like Viktor Orbán – (…) – that an "illegal migrant" is a "criminal" and, therefore, they have to go to prison, instead of to a shelter. (…) "They are strange because they have darker skin", the owner of one of the local koscmas, a lady in her 50s, tells us while she's busy at work. (Cunha, 07/09/2015)

As mentioned previously, there are dissonant voices that contradict the hostility of governments and many citizens, solidarity voices that disagree with power, such as those of some Hungarian protagonists who rebel against historical forgetfulness:

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[11] Interestingly, in one of his texts, the author quotes Alexandra Lucas Coelho, which reveals a certain degree of professional complicity between the two journalists.

> "History repeats itself in such a short time that the generation who experi-
> enced its worst episodes is still alive, but some of them seem to no longer
> remember", says Móni resignedly. He thus laments this partial amnesia of
> many fellow countrymen of their eternal status as migrants and refugees,
> if not first, second or third generation, needing to go back only a century to
> the Treaty of Trianon, at the end of the First World War. (Cunha, 29/08/2015)

These dissonant voices, of sympathetic Hungarians going against the current, belong to clearly identified speakers, individualised by their first name and surname, which makes them unique and closer to us, so they are not just anonymous people, an indistinct part of faceless collectives (as opposed to plurals, such as Hungarians, refugees, Roma, Jews, migrants, others). Róbert Molnár makes a point of declaring he is a practicing Christian to evoke that "it is necessary to take care of outsiders", the message of Stephen I, Hungarian king, later Saint Stephen of Hungary for believers.

> "It's in the Bible: do unto others as you would have them do unto you",
> he recalls, prophesising immediately after "evil will be returned to us. If
> we don't want to be mistreated, we cannot mistreat others". (...) Nearby, a
> child lifted by his father's arms picks cherries. An almost mirrored image
> will be described to us, in another kocsma, in another village, by the owner
> on duty. She had witnessed "the joy of a group of refugees, harvesting fruit
> from a tree". (...) A refugee had stolen some tomatoes from a farmer who
> complained about what happened in the television report, as if it were the
> end of the world. "Poor people", someone says in a deep, sympathetic tone,
> "they were hungry, in the same situation, any of us would do the same".
> (Cunha, 29/08/2015)

We see Hungarians closed in their own ghetto and the semantics of the metaphor "plague", the noun "ghettoization" and the verb "circumclose", which is a neologism, as is the verb "gypsify", which means being racist towards gypsies, all contribute to the imagery: "'knowing history', he says, 'when a country decided to build a fence or a wall, like in Auschwitz-Birkenau, Berlin or the rest of the communist bloc's border, this became a plague for those who built it'" (Cunha, 29/08/2015). The interdiscursive memory initiates a dialogue in which, in this Hungarian's discourse, other previous discourses resonate, which re-semanticise the word "wall". It is no longer just "a long, narrow vertical structure made of stone or brick that surrounds or divides an area of land"[12], as the Collins Dictionary says, but rather, due to the walls that have been built in history, it has now gained the sense of "a thing regarded as a protective or restrictive barrier", the second entry in the Oxford English Dictionary. Protection of some in the face of the threat that, in their belief, the others represent, violent separation, exclusion of the other who is different from us. The other is a symbol of threat ("a refugee had stolen some tomatoes from a farmer"), whose behaviour is worthy of police punishment according to some.

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[12] Collins Online English Dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/wall.

Conversely, though, they do deserve the understanding of part of the threatened, whose direct discourse expresses, after all, compassion and solidarity: "they were hungry, in the same situation, any of us would do the same".

According to Molnár,

> Hungary is already an isolated country on an intellectual and psychological level. This will result in the ghettoization of the country. Hungary is land-locked [circumclosed], which means that there is no way out and no way in, neither outward nor inward. We are in the middle of Europe, if we are unable to sail in peaceful waters, this will determine that the Hungarians' room for action will be reduced" until "people lose hope and start fleeing the country. (Cunha, 29/08/2015)

The names are not innocent and therefore one of the protagonists of Alexandra Lucas Coelho's columns assumes that his name, "Ivan", serves as a protective mask. It does not identify him in his entirety as a human being, but only as a persecuted refugee: "Ivan was the name he chose if I told the story in the newspaper". This protective name hides Ivan's true identity, which, ultimately, the journalist unveils: "the two guitar boys were Kurdish, so they were at home, they had documents and no one after them, so I could use their real names: Niaz, 21, Hunar, 28, music students at Sulaymaniyah University" (Coelho, 20/09/2015). Indeed, Ivan seems to be a name that protects. Regarding another speaker, the author writes: "the son, let us call him Ivan, came to Iraqi Kurdistan two years ago". The names of the protagonists renamed as refugees follow one another in the texts: "the father, let us call him Aziz", "the mother, let us call her Jian". Also for the protagonists of André Cunha's columns, names are sometimes a mask: "and finally Sharbat gives us the biggest smile in the world (but even so he didn't give us his name)", "our Afghan girl from today (whose real name we will probably never know)". Assigning another name to several speakers multiplies the number of speakers: S1 with his/her real name does not coincide with S1', with the false name that protects him/her. The non-right to the name bears witness to these refugees' non-right to exist as persons.

The dialogue between journalists and protagonists is summarised in the texts, and they select their most convincing words for the discursive purposes of denunciation. However, this dialogue goes on beyond physical face-to-face interaction, it may continue after the meetings. André Cunha addresses directly one of his interviewees in the text, for example, in a long parenthesis, "dear Péter, allow me just one aside, two months after our meeting: until the date we published this text, there is not a single known case of serious diseases" (Cunha, 2015). Or in a question in the same "column", which is an accusation of Hungarian indifference: "and how do you say rafiq in Hungarian, Péter Tóth?"; or when he addresses the poet Vasko Popa: "no, Vasko Popa, the story doesn't let Rita be a daughter without memory".

The use of various voices in the texts contributes to the creation of an *ethos* of objectivity which is needed to counter the evident subjectivity of the discourse. These voices are partly responsible for the narrative sequences that Alexandra Lucas Coelho and

André Cunha include in their texts. The theses the journalists implicitly or more explicitly defend are, most of the time, transmitted and supported through the direct speech of refugees and those who help them and, in contrast, the speech of those who fight them. Thus, there is a linguistic empathy, because "a speaker lends his voice to another (...) to face an event, a situation, in his place" (Rabatel, 2013, p. 68). Listening to the voice of the other is essential to create empathy: "it is always urgent to try to listen without borders to all 'others', to better understand this moment" (Cunha, 07/09/2015).

The dialogues between the reporter and the protagonists of the story are not the only ones that are part of the columns. As we have seen, André Cunha, for example, directly addresses those with whom he had spoken in person and whose words he had already transcribed.

But there are also intertextual dialogues: with the Bible, with George Steiner and Walter Benjamin, with Saramago, with the writings of Kapuscinski. André Cunha quotes Alexandra Lucas Coelho, José Gil in *Portugal, hoje – o medo de existir* [*Portugal, today – fear of existing*], Claudio Magris and his *Danube*, etc. The title of the column "From my window, I see the wall" paraphrases, in counterpoint, Vergílio Ferreira's "From my language I see the sea". In one of his texts, the author further mentions, summoning our collective memory and our shared knowledge of the world, while establishing relationships between past facts and the present of writing, "that cover of the National Geographic edition that became the jewel in the crown the world saw 30 years ago, in June 1985" (Cunha, 30/08/2015). It is as if the journalists intend to indicate the path of dialogue, showing, in their texts, that which is missing in the world. But they also want to do this through the cultural references that are intertextually summoned, as if they want to increase the number of those who, in their discourse, would share points of view similar to theirs.

Conclusions

In these articles from the Portuguese written press, there is, in fact, a performative dimension, of a directive nature. It is as if the narrative sequences, descriptive and reported words have contributed, through the journalists' point of view and their complicity with the refugees and migrants, to bringing the readers closer to their cause, that is, these texts aim to convince the readers and to make them do, or rather, to make them act: "it is always urgent to try to listen without borders to all the 'others', to better understand this moment, or to feel more lost in this 'history of the present' in which there is one more wall in our midst" (Cunha, 07/09/2015).

As is often the case when it comes to natural disasters, we are, in this case, faced with what is called "emergency information" (Manuel, 2011). If this is not a natural catastrophe, it is certainly a human catastrophe. It is not the victims who film, photograph or write to give an account of the events. But the stories and the words are theirs. And that is the point of view the journalists have adopted.

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Translation: Carla Augusto

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