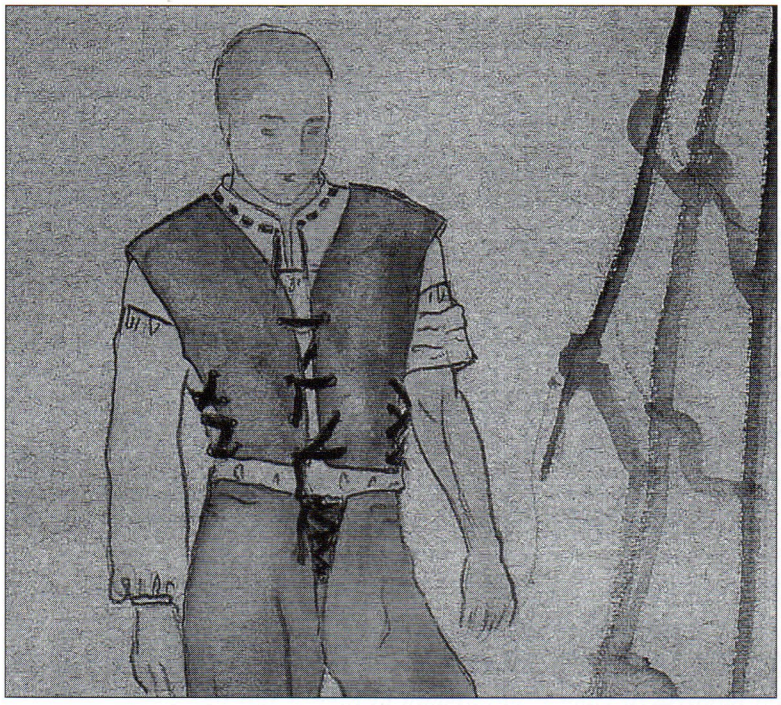
Atlantic Vocation: Manuel António Pina's *Os Piratas*



Da Silva offers an analysis of Manuel António Pina's Os Piratas [The Pirates] (1986/2003) as an example of the search for a national identity drawn from literature and legend.

by SARA REIS DA SILVA

Manuel António Pina's vast and widely-acclaimed oeuvre has been the object of studies appearing mainly in magazines and journals. His body of work ranges from chronicles to essays, poetry, drama, and short stories. Diverse in both mode and in genre, Pina's work assumes an audience that includes children, young adults, and adults who share personal and aesthetic backgrounds. His first published work dates from the 1970s, with works like *O País das Pessoas de Pernas para o Ar* [*The Country of Upsidedown People*] (1973), *Ainda não é o fim nem o princípio do mundo calma é apenas um pouco tarde* [*It Is Not Yet the End Nor the Beginning of the World Relax It's Just a Little Late*] (1974), *Gigões & Anantes* [*Giets and Midjants*] (1974), *O Têpluquê* [*The Têpluquê and other stories*] (1976), *ou Aquele Que Quer Morrer* [*He Who Wants to Die*] (1978). From early on, Pina's writing has been concerned with themes like the tension between opposites (e.g. life/death or appearance/essence), the volatile nature of the self, memory, childhood, time, the ambiguity of words, and social critique. He deals with such themes in a trademark literary style characterized by an inventiveness that revels in irreverent word and sound play along with a nonsensical and paradoxical tone that is often



Sara Reis da Silva is Professor of Children's Literature at the University of Minho (Institute of Education) in Braga, Portugal and has published *A Identidade Ibérica em Miguel Torga* (Principia, 2002) and *Dez Réis de Gente... e de Livros Notas sobre Literatura Infantil* (Caminho, 2005) and *Encontros e Reencontros: Estudos de Literatura Infantil e Juvenil* (Tropelias, September 2010). She is also a regular contributor to the children's literature magazine *Malasartes [Cadernos de Literatura para a Infância e Juventude].*

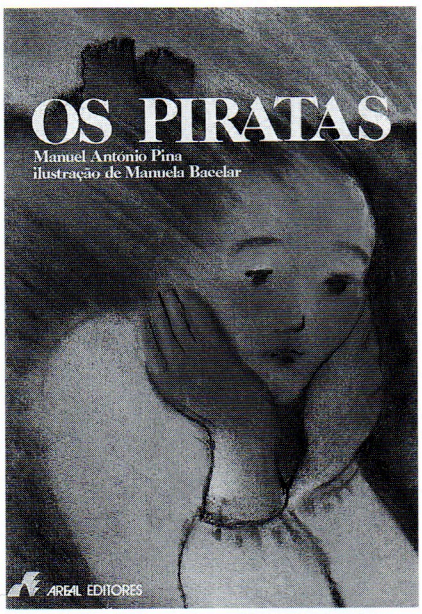
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humorous. In their mixture of a unique use of language characterized by estrangement, an aesthetic interaction of different artistic modes, and the exploration of connotative and manifold meanings, Pina's texts often echo other literary voices, such as those of T. S. Eliot, Jorge Luis Borges, Ruy Belo, and, more specifically, Fernando Pessoa, Edward Lear, and Lewis Carroll,[1] to name but a few.

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Origins

Manuel António Pina's seminal work considered closely here, *Os Piratas* [*The Pirates*] (1986/2003), was published for the first time in 1986 and later adapted for the theatre. It has also been translated into Danish as *Soroverne* (1990, Copenhagen: Skovlaenge Forlaget) and is one of the most representative works in Pina's oeuvre. In this novella *Os Piratas*, elements that are part of the Portuguese historical and literary memory are fictionalized, including topics such as the Atlantic vocation of the nation, maritime adventures, the dangers of piracy, shipwrecks, male heroism, female loneliness and male absence, and the role of the voyage. The text accordingly requires a range of intertextual readings in order to deal with this intersection of history and fantasy; there are frequent references to legends and myths as well as subtle indications of Portuguese geography and history, and both aspects are integral to the construction of the narrative.



The first Portuguese edition of *Os Piratas* by Areal Publishers came out during Christmas 1986 with illustrations and cover design by Manuela Bacelar, a well-known Portuguese artist whose work has received several prizes. In 2003 the text was published again, this time by a different publisher (Edições Asa) and with illustrations by a different artist, José Emídio. The original text, however, remained unchanged. A theatrical adaptation of *Os Piratas* has also been published in the meantime (1997).

The origins of this novella can be traced back to a set of notes that Pina wrote as dialogues for a film created by the Chilean director Raul Ruiz and Paulo Branco, a Portuguese producer. Set on the island of Madeira, the film was first made for television, divided into three episodes, and called *Manuel na Ilha das Maravilhas / Manoel dans l'île des Merveilles* [*Manuel on the Island of Wonders*] (1984), and in 1985 it was turned into a full-length feature, *Les Destins de Manoel* [*Manuel and his Fate*]. Pina explains these connections in a note for the 2003 edition of the text: "*Os Piratas*, along with other texts, was the result of my involvement in a wider project (which eventually folded) related to a film by Raul Ruiz. I've kept the name of the character because it is also my name and because the story has a first person narrator, despite the fact that, as far as I know, the great wide world and myself are the only islands I've ever inhabited" (Pina, 1986: 45).

[1] Pina has said recently at an interview that "Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, and A. A. Milne, they are all friends of mine, regular guests in my place, which is to say in my heart" (Pina, 2005c: 5).

Titles and tone

The title of *Os Piratas* highlights the multiple characters that the reading of the text will reveal as oppositional forces in the endeavors of Manuel, the protagonist. That this is a novella of character is evidenced by both the title of the story and the titles of its ten chapters, a fact that is further emphasized by the characters' actions, the development of the story, and the very nature of the narrator. It is, moreover, the title[2] that first grounds this work in a particular context framed by Portuguese history and culture, symbology and literary memory.[3] It is therefore expected that the text will deal with the themes of maritime adventures, such as the perils of piracy,[4] shipwrecks,[5] the longing for female companionship, uncertainty, etc., or elements common to travel literature.[6] The story is also told in the first person:[7]

It is, moreover, the title that first grounds this work in a particular context framed by Portuguese history and culture, symbology and literary memory.

"My name is Manuel and I live on an island, or an island lives in me, I am not sure, an island surrounded by sea and fog, but not so much surrounded as filled with it. I am eight years old. Or I was 8 once. Maybe I am a grown-up now. It's been so long! All this is hard to understand. I don't understand it myself. Sometimes I think maybe this happened to someone else, somewhere else. In any case, I am the one who remembers this, so it must have happened to me. Or else it was all a dream I dreamt, or someone else did (Pina, 1986: 7)."

Uncertainty and confusion, along with ambiguous temporality, and the contrast between the real vs. dream, all introduced at such an early stage in the narrative, set the tone for the whole text. The words "a dream I dreamt, or someone else did" (ibid: 7), as well as others the narrator utters after the telling of the tragic shipwreck -- "the darkness was such that, if I breathed, or moved, it felt like I was someone else inside of me. (...) It sounded like my voice, speaking outside of me and within me, simultaneously, as if it were both me and not me" (ibid: 17) -- allow the density of the character's psychological

Uncertainty and confusion, along with ambiguous temporality, and the contrast between the real vs. dream, all introduced at such an early stage in the narrative, set the tone for the whole text.

[2] Pina's work is linked with Raul Ruiz's own work on several levels, which is particularly striking in the film *A Cidade dos Piratas* [*The City of Pirates*] (1983), produced by Paulo Branco. The shared elements include the setting for both novella and film, a male protagonist, the disturbing atmosphere, and the universe in which both works are set.

[3] Within the context of Portuguese literature for children and young adults, there are innumerable references and allusions to pirates. Some examples where this figure appears either as a main character or simply as a veiled reference are *A Nau Mentireta* (Civilização, 1991) by Luísa Ducla Soares, the play "Serafim e Malacueco na Corte do Rei Escama" in *Teatro às Três Pancadas* (Civilização, 1995) by António Torrado, and *As Naus de Verde Pinho* by Manuel Alegre (Caminho, 1996), *Promontório da Lua* by Alice Vieira (Caminho, 1991), *Os Bons Piratas* by Maria Isabel Mendonça Soares (Desabrochar, 1990), *Canção dos Piratas* by João Pedro Mésseder (Caminho, 2006). Associated to pirates is the space of the island, to be found in works like *A Ilha do Rei Sono* by Norberto Ávila (Plátano, 1977), "A Ilha Amarela" in *Contos do Tapete Voador* by José Jorge Letria (Asa, 1987), *A Ilha Mágica* by José Vaz (Asa, 1988), *A Ilha do Menino Poeta* by José Jorge Letria (Vega, 1994), *A Ilha dos Pássaros Doidos* by Clara Pinto Correia (Relógio d'Água, 1994), "A Ambição das Luas" in *Lendas do Mar* by José Jorge Letria (Terramar, 1998), and "A Ilha do Tesouro" in *O Limpa-Palavras e outros poemas* by Álvaro Magalhães (2000, Asa). In a completely different register from the works previously mentioned stands *Piratas e Corsários* by Ana Maria Magalhães and Isabel Alçada (Caminho, 1995), a collected volume of stories and biographies of famous seafarers. For a detailed study of pirates in literature see Calleja, 2000.

state to be revealed. As the story progresses, Manuel is revealed as a lonely, fearful figure -- "I felt very lonely, and filled with fear" (ibid: 8). He is immersed in indecision, doomed to being unable to tell the difference between what he lived and what he dreamt,[8] the ultimate example of what Arnaldo Saraiva has termed "the inconsistency of the self" (Saraiva, 1993: 14) and of what Álvaro Manuel Machado believes to be the most recurrent themes in Pina's writing, the "indeterminacy of the self" (Machado, 1996: 382).

It is thus that in The Pirates, the symbology of the island, a space usually associated with isolation and adventure,is partly subverted, for in this text it cannot be read as a place of "refuge where consciousness and will come together to escape the assaults of the unconscious"

Space and place

As far as the sense of place in *The Pirates* is concerned, a space that in Manuel's mind is blurred,[9] there is an island whose precise location is uncertain and it is the setting for several significant events. It is Manuel's formative space where connections with the self are manifold.[10] It is the place where his father leaves from and a place of waiting for many, not the least his mother. It is the place where tragedy occurs, particularly the shipwreck that will eventually lead to the arrival of Ana and Lady Elizabeth. And it is the place where the two youngsters meet and cement their relationship. It is thus that in *The Pirates*, the symbology of the island, a space usually associated with isolation and adventure[11] is partly subverted, for in this text it cannot be read as a place of "refuge where consciousness and will come together to escape the assaults of the unconscious" (Chevalier e Gheerbrant, 1994: 374).

On the contrary, the island stands highlighted as a privileged space for the discovery of the self, a place "turned onto itself," where the characteristics described early on by Manuel reinforce this role. It is on this island of fog and silence and darkness, a mysterious setting, that Manuel listens to the echo of his own self (Ramón Diaz, 2004) and struggles within himself, with that which is intimate, confusing, disturbing, and perplexing. In this case, the island space is prone to an "anthropomorphic treatment" (Reis e

[4] See, for example, "Tratado das batalhas e sucessos do galeão "Santiago" com os holandeses na ilha de Santa Helena e da nau "chagas," com os ingleses entre as ilhas dos Açores; ambas capitanias da carreira da Índia; e da causa e desastres por que em vinte anos se perderam trinta e oito naus dela. Escrita por Melchiro Estácio do Amaral". This treatise mentions the attack of a Moorish corsair, the Cunhale, which operated in India and became a famous enemy of Portuguese ships (Brito, s/d: 232), as well as the actions of Francis Drake (idem, *ibidem*: 257). About this subject see Lanciani, 1997. Lanciani calls the stories that follow the sequence corsair attack – capture – impiety of enemies "alternative series" (Lanciani, 1997: 137).

[5] See, for instance, Bernardo Gomes de Brito's account of shipwrecks, *História Trágico-Marítima* [*Tragic Maritime History*] (1735 and 1736).

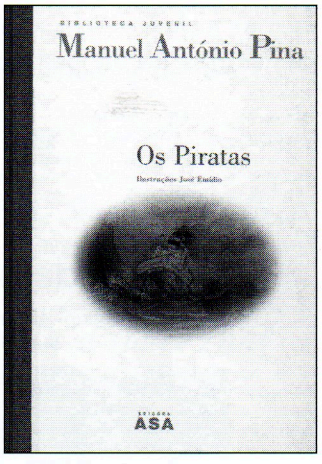
[6] About this theme, see Cristóvão, 1999. See also, connected to the pirate attack episode, *Peregrinação* [*Pilgrimage*], by Fernão Mendes Pinto (1614) for a description of Portuguese corsairs' attacks led by António de Faria.

[7] M. Nikolajeva (2005) defines this type of narration as personal, and goes on to say that «[i]n contemporary children's and especially young adult fiction, personal narration has become very common» (Nikolajeva, 2005: 174) and that such a narrator possesses «the advantage of a deeper penetration into thoughts and feelings, but the disadvantage is a restricted access to knowledge.» (idem, *ibidem*: 177).

[8] This ideological and thematical line structures the short story «História com os olhos fechados» ["History with eyes shut"] (1985/1999, 2003), de MAP.

Lopes, 1996: 138). All the vagueness, the fog, the smoky and crepuscular landscape evoked by the use of words such as "mist," "fog," and "haze," lend a strongly symbolic meaning to the story, which includes ideas of uncertainty and indistinction (Chevalier e Gheerbrant, 1994: 470) as well as an "intermediate zone between reality and unreality" (Biedermann, 1994: 258).

Despite the scarcity of references to place, it is possible to gather information about both the island and the small village where Manuel lives. Here the physical and the semantic intersect in the description of movement -- like going up vs. going down -- and the potentially symbolic elements of the house[12] and the window are operative. Further examples of movement are to be found towards the end of chapter seven: "(...) slowly along the beach, or (...) from high up the cliffs" (Pina, 1986: 30) and in the carrying of the wooden chest by Ana and Manuel from "the bottom of the Penha cliff" (ibid: 32) to the topmost part of the village. While up there "on the cliff" Manuel and his friends first see and then hear[13] the shipwreck of the *Denver* (Chap. 2) and on the beach Manuel finds solitude and finds himself (Chap. 8). Whereas the space for interior settings mostly coincides with Manuel's house, and particularly his bedroom, the space for exterior settings includes several elements related to nature, such as cliffs, rocks, and the beach. These act as settings for encounters between Manuel and the Other. Such is the example of the first encounter between Manuel and Ana on the Penha cliff (Pina, 1986: 32) and that of the return of the old fisherman and his meeting with Manuel on the beach (ibid: 40). Manuel's home, on the other hand, is constructed as a microcosm of protection,[14] providing refuge, isolation, intimacy, and often escape from reality -- a space he returns to constantly.[15] The semantic and symbolic value of the window -- open in the first and ninth chapters but closed in the fourth -- evokes the connection with the outside world and "openness to air and light" (Chevalier e Gheerbrant, 1994: 382).



Role of time

Time in *The Pirates* is a retrospective process that runs through the whole narrative. The discourse establishes a certain distancing that relies on the memory of the narrator, which inevitably results in a recollection of the

[9] This is one of the characteristics that Reis and Lopes highlight within the narrative genre (Reis e Lopes: 1996, 303).

[10] See "Ciertamente, la isla remite a realidades que devuelven al hombre a lo primario, a lo esencial, a la verdad de la persona. La isla se convierte en refugio-espejo donde poder recuperar y reflejar el propio "yo"." (Ramón Díaz, 2004: 190).

[11] Mª del Carmen Ramón Díaz, after Mario Tomé in *La Isla: Utopía, inconsciente y aventura. Hermenéutica simbólica de un tema literario* (1987), points out that insularity is directly related to things like the creation of utopias, the crystallization of symbols of intimacy, and the development of human adventure (Ramón Díaz, 2004: 189).

[12] About the house in Pina's work, *see* Santos, 2005: 78-89.

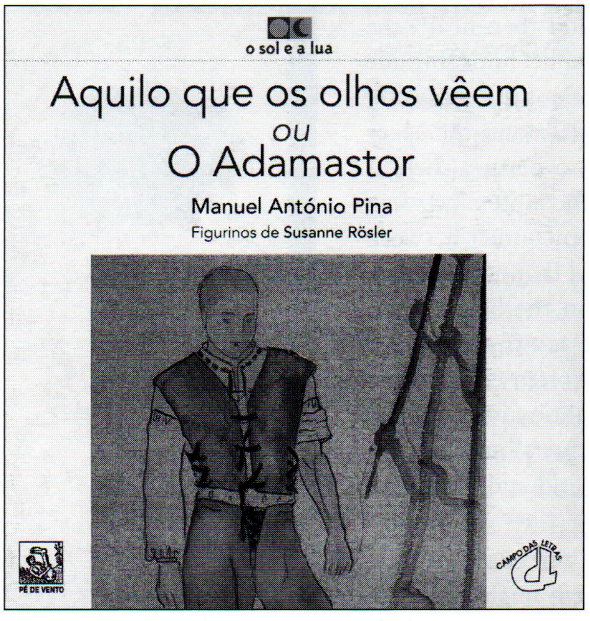
[13] Adam e Revaz (1997) have theorised seeing and hearing, as relating to narrative perspective and point of view.

[14] This theme can be equated with safety if one takes into account the references to the storm "outside," the wind (Pina, 1986: 8), the "dreadful sound of thunder and storm at sea" (idem, *ibidem*: 10) and the silence, partly reassuring, in Manuel's bedroom.

[15] Chevalier and Gheerbrant say that "the house stands for its interior, according to Bachelard" and that it "is also a feminine symbol, as in refuge, as in motherly, protective, as in the maternal embrace" (Chevalier and Gheerbrant, 1994: 166).

past that is often diffuse and highly emotive. The events told by Manuel take place in a relatively short period of time that ranges from sometime in a distant past, "a night in June," (Pina, 1986: 8), develops "a few weeks before Christmas" (ibid: 10), "on Christmas Eve" (ibid: 29) and "the morning after" (ibid: 30), and finishes on a day towards the "end of Christmas holidays" (ibid: 32).

Ellipses are used at certain stages in the telling of the story to abbreviate the narration, as in the seventh chapter: "During the whole week..." (ibid: 29). At other times, the narrator takes special care to include brief narrative segments -- often taking place in the past and including things he



didn't actually witness but heard about -- to help clarify the story. Such is the case with the episode told in the first chapter about an old neighbor who left for America and never returned, an episode that is revealing of Manuel's feelings about his own father's departure. In the third chapter, Manuel says, "I remembered hearing about other shipwrecks and of riches washed ashore," and adds, "I had heard people saying that it was a big ship, bound to come back with big load. I remembered being told that, many years ago, the islanders and

Night thus becomes a privileged time for questioning and searching for truth as well as for searching for his inner self, an encounter with his loneliness.

the inhabitants of neighboring islands would light fires and lighthouses at night to delude approaching ships, leading them to smaller islands and shallow waters, so they would get wrecked, and later people could collect their cargo and wrecks on the beach" (ibid: 14). While not contributing directly to the action of this story, this episode adds factual information about procedures that can be attested to by historical documents.

The alternating references to day and night create a succession of light and darkness that is reflected in psychological terms. As a rule, daylight and dawn coincide with moments of epiphany and of encounters between Manuel and the Other, whereas nighttime, with its suggestion of silence and solitude, coincides with sleep or vigil, dreams, and encounters with himself. Night thus becomes a privileged time for questioning and searching for truth as well as for searching for his inner self, an encounter with his loneliness.

The subtle confluence of present and a past that is recalled in bracketed asides,[16] along with the ongoing ambiguity as far as time is concerned (e.g., "on a night," "a few weeks," "one day," "one afternoon,") emphasize the enigmatic nature of Manuel's story and highlight the psychological aspect of the narrative.

Characterization

The highly economical treatment given to the identity of characters also supports the ambiguous nature of the story and emphasizes the aura of

[16] See "(But all this was so long ago!)" (Pina, 1986: 8); "(All this happened so many years ago!)" (idem, ibidem: 32).

[17] Sections such as this are somewhat disruptive insofar as they cast doubt upon the narrator's autodiegetic status.

[18] See Reis e Lopes, 1996: 261-ss.

[19] *Os Piratas* [*The Pirates*] is one of the most impressive stories about the theme of the Double that I've ever read in Portuguese." (Gomes, 1987: 4)

mystery to be found throughout. Who is Manuel really? Who is the old fisherman? And Robert? Not only is Manuel uncertain about his age, but the story he tells – apparently he lived by himself – often carries the shadow of doubt: "A long time ago (...), I – I think it was me (....), They were talking about me, they seemed to be talking about me." (Pina, 1986: 8)[17] All of this places the discourse in a highly subjective register,[18] attested by the fluidity of memory and the narrator's struggle to reconstruct events objectively. In *The Pirates* reality and fiction, history and imagination are always framed by memory in their perpetual interchanges.

The concept of the double, as pointed out, for example, by Manuel João Gomes (1987)[19] and José António Gomes (2000), runs through the whole

Memory, an ideological and thematical axis dealt with exhaustively in Pina's writing for adults (e.g. K's Papers and The Books), is the ultimate subject of the story in The Pirates...

story, from the essence of the main character to the action itself. From the opening lines of the story, Manuel is split into Manuel and Robert, the English boy who disappears in the shipwreck. For Manuel, they may be two sides of the same person. In addition, the old fisherman is the double of his neighbor who emigrated to the US and never returned.

Dreams, themes and motifs

Memory, an ideological and thematical axis dealt with exhaustively in Pina's writing for adults (e.g. *K's Papers* and *The Books*), is the ultimate subject of the story in *The Pirates* and in *That Which the Eyes Can See* or *Adamastor* (a play that works as a part of a diptych along with the theatre version of *The Pirates*). But in *The Pirates*, as in *That Which the Eyes Can See* or *Adamastor*, memory is always connected with the oneiric. For Manuel, memory seems to emerge like "a field of psychological ruins, a pile of memories" (Bachelard, 2001: 94), surrounded by fog, dipped in fear, mixed with dreams. It is a materialization of the expression "the memory of the dream" (Seixo, 2004: 18), the title of the essay that Maria Alzira Seixo published in 2004, in *JL – Jornal de Letras, Artes e Ideias*, about *Os Livros* [*The Books*] and *Os Papéis de K* [*K's Papers*]. Manuel dreams "on the limit of history and legend" (Bachelard, 2001: 95), living in a corset, his

In that vast and fluid space that is memory, Manuel recalls a shipwreck, the leitmotiv of the story, an event that is closely connected to Portuguese history, and that in its telling is also a mixture of fact and fiction.

head suffocating with history, certain myths, many fears, anxieties, and stories for which he can't find the solution. For Manuel, nothing appears clear

[20] In this work, as Jean Perrot puts it in the introduction to *Histoire, Mémoire et Paysage*, "la paysage est, lui-même, le jouet de l'Histoire et de la représentation" (Perrot, 2002: 9).

[21] Teófilo Braga, for example, in Part II, of «História e Exemplos de Tema Tradicional e Forma Literária», in *Contos Tradicionais do Povo Português [Traditional Stories of the Portuguese People]*, includes "the loves of Machim and Ana de Harfet", a text from *Insulana*, Livro II (1635) by Manuel Tomás, and refers to the several literary adaptations of this myth throughout the times. Braga also includes in his work "Da história mais verdadeira e particular como o inglês Machim achou a Ilha da Madeira" ["The true and peculiar history of how the Englishman Machim found Madeira"], chapter IV of *História das Ilhas Porto Santo, Madeiras, Desertas e Selvagem*, by Gaspar Frutuoso (Braga, 2002: 273-302). The name "Machico" is said to derive from a corruption of "Machim." In *365 Histórias* (Asa, 2002), José Viale Moutinho tells a version of this story for children: "In England, a young poor horseman named Machim was in love with a girl called Ana de Arfet, the daughter of a wealthy nobleman. Their romance didn't meet the nobleman's approval, for he wanted his daughter to marry someone else. Machim and Ana got on a boat, with the intention to escape to France. However, a storm took them somewhere far away. They came to an uninhabited island that was covered in trees and flowers, where they landed before the sea tore up their boat. Ana became ill and died of despair and sadness. Machim buried her and put a cross on her tomb. Her sat by it and, after a few days he also died from heartbreak. According to this myth, these were the first inhabitants of Madeira." (Moutinho, 2002: s/p).

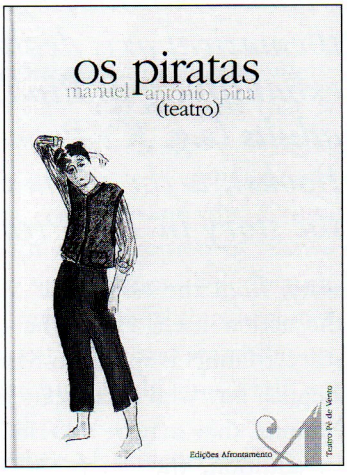
in that fluid and slippery place of memory, in the same way as Pina wrote in *K's Papers*: "The matter of memory is undefined and insecure, and in it, as in life (and life is probably just memory), events and emotions, images and projections are blurred, and its origin isn't always possible to recognize clearly, and its purpose most of the time escapes us. And yet, it is all we have, memory" (Pina, 2003: 7).

The hypothesis ventured by Maria Alzira Seixo in the essay mentioned above can be applied to *The Pirates*, particularly as far as the connections between dreams and memory are concerned. Here it is also true that "the dream (or the nightmare) separates memory from its unequivocal, historicizing, and chronological qualities and opposes the homogenous body of a tidy and stable past, provoking the confluence of different times, the confusion of the senses, and the encounter with difference" (Seixo, 2004: 19).

The theme of the voyage carries the inevitable associations with lonely male journeys, female longing and mourning, maritime ambivalence, shipwrecks, piracy and the figure of the old fisherman reminiscent of Camões's Old Man from Restelo.

Bachelard's words, "We dream while we remember. We remember while we dream" (Bachelard, 2001: 96), also reflect the way in which dreams and memory intersect in *The Pirates*, or in a wider context, how Pina experiences them. Evidence for this can be found in Pina's statement about his involvement with the Pé de Vento Theatre Company: "In the mystery of memory dream and reality, the experienced and the not experienced are blurred. What we remember (...) is a second reality, a second life, done and undone by an interior and absolute matter that desire easily moulds." (Pina, 1997).

In that vast and fluid space that is memory, Manuel recalls a shipwreck, the *leitmotiv* of the story, an event that is closely connected to Portuguese history, and that in its telling is also a mixture of fact and fiction. In *The Pirates* there are several allusions to Portuguese myths and legends, recognizable landscapes that are seminal for the functioning of the story. There are also descriptions of the landscape, which partly creates associations between a fictional space and a physical space, an empirical or even historic geography,[20] despite the absence of *topoi* of time and place. To this complex web of intertexts belong the myth of the discovery of the island of Madeira and the unfulfilled love story between Robert Machim and Ana de Harfet.[21] This is also an important theme in Jaime Cortesão's *O Romance das Ilhas Encantadas* [*The Romance of the Enchanted Islands*] (1926) which is mirrored in Pina's text, both in the English characters that arrive on the island where Manuel lives and in the words of the old fisherman uttered towards the end of the story:



"- How do you know? Do you know Ana? And Lady Elizabeth?

[22] In short, this legend tells that during a storm caused by diabolical being Cavalum, the crucifix of the Machico church blew over to the sea. Divine intervention, however, had a boat finding the cross. In *365 Stories* (2002), an anthology for children where José Viale Moutinho gathered a great amount of traditional Portuguese popular texts (short stories, proverbs, tongue twisters, riddles, songs, etc.) the following version of the legend can be read: "In a hill near Machico (Madeira) there are caves nobody goes into. Nobody goes near them. Folks say that from those dark mouths only the devil, in the shape of a black horse, goes in and out. They call it Cavalum. In stormy nights, you can hear the horse everywhere. And people, in fear of the devil, pray. Legend has it that one day – 8 October 1803 – Cavalum ran free all day, and that it brought about great floodings that nearly wiped out Machico. In the process, a cross was taken from the altar of a church. Three days after the catastrophe, a boat brought back the small stolen cross. So a chapel was built for the cross, and it came to be known as the Chapel of Miracles. And it still exists, and anybody can see it." (Moutinho, 2002: s/p).

- Ana? Oh, I've known her for a long time! You can't imagine how long! And her fiancé, what's his name? Robert... I know them well! So young! The first time... Oh, but that was so long ago...
- You know Robert also? – I was surprised.
- Robert? I'd rather not talk about it... It was so long ago! She was pale! Robert carried her for she hardly had the strength to walk! So young, both of them, so unhappy..." (Pina, 1986: 40).

Also, in the reference to a cross kept in a wooden chest, an object Ana and Manuel recover from the Penha rocks, there seems to be a connection to the legend of the Cavalum.[22] And it is still possible to spot another hypotext in the episode concerning the pirates' attacks: the Azorean legend of the Coroa Real de Cedros [Royal Crown of Cedar], a story about a pirate attack on Faial island.

The theme of the voyage carries the inevitable associations with lonely male journeys, female longing and mourning, maritime ambivalence, shipwrecks, piracy and the figure of the old fisherman reminiscent of Camões's *Old Man from Restelo.* These are approached through Manuel's father's leaving where aspects of Portuguese emigration are rehearsed. These elements are the basis for a reading of this text within a Portuguese historical and cultural frame. Moreover, the elements further suggest a specific geographical location, such as references to a trout nursery[24] and the levadas (irrigation channels on Madeira)[25] which also add local color to the text.

Another important aspect of this novella is its delving into the realm of the fantastic which according to Francesca Blockeel (2001)[26] is a unique aspect of Pina's work. This particular genre, along with science fiction, has been very uncommon in Portuguese children's literature since 1974. In an article in *JL – Jornal de Letras, Artes e Ideias in 1987*, Manuel João Gomes notes a certain critical silence about this work and states that "the text alone is a faithful illustration of the great ideas of the Portuguese fantastic. It has mist, islands and boats, men and doubles" (Gomes, 1987: 4).

Mystery, enigma, and the unknown accordingly dominate the text, and are present, for instance, in the heavy wooden chest found by Ana and Lady Elizabeth on the rocks. This is an object that is symbolic of a treasure chest" (Chevalier e Gheerbrant, 1994: 81). If initially it is something that the characters deposit some hope in, it soon becomes a disappointment, for inside there was only "a wooden cross, like the ones you put on tombs" (Pina, 1986: 35). The effort put into carrying it from the rocks to the village, however, becomes significant in the relationship between Ana and Manuel. The union and the effort they share in this task, along with the later revelation of the contents of the chest, represent the initial step in their closeness.

[23] As an example, *vide* MONTEIRO, Jacinto (1961). "Incursões de piratas argelinos em 1616 e 1675 nos mares açorianos" ["Incursions by Algerian pirates in 1616 and 1675 through Azorean seas"], *in Ocidente*, vol. 61, nº 283, pp. 197-203; GUERRA, Jorge Valdemar (1991). "O Saque dos argelinos à ilha do Porto Santo em 1617" [The sack of the island of Porto Santo by Algerians in 1617] *in Islenha*, nº 8, 57-78; PEREIRA, Eduardo Clemente Nunes (1995). *Lenda Histórica: piratas e corsários nas ilhas [Historical Legend: pirates and corsairs in the islands].* Separata das Artes e da História da Madeira 1951-1955. Funchal: [s.n] VERÍSSIMO, Nelson (2001). "Piratas e corsários nos mares do arquipélago da Madeira na segunda metade do século XVI" ["Pirates and corsairs on the sea around the Madeira archipelago in the second half of the 16th century"] *in Portos, escalas e ilhéus no relacionamento entre o Ocidente e o Oriente: actas do congresso internacional comemorativo do regresso de Vasco da Gama e Portugal*, 2.º vol., [s.l.]: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses e Universidade dos Açores, pp. 9-19. Also, at the top of the Pico do Castelo, in Porto Santo island, a small fortress was built in the 16th century as a response to the frequent pirate invasions. Another important fact was the Algerian pirates' attack in 1617, when some 900 people were captured. These pirates were mostly interested in women and children, whom they would often kidnapp and later abandon in other islands.

[24] See "One day, in my clothes and shoes, I got into a nursery to get her a trout and saw her laughing aloud for the first time. She returned the trout to the water and we went back home holding hands." (Pina, 1986: 36).

[25] In Madeira, in the Florestal do Ribeiro Frio Park, there are several trout nurseries, as well as "levadas".

[26] See "From 1974 onwards there has been a great widening of the genres dealt with (...) It is worth mentioning that science fiction and the fantastic are two genres that find little expression in Portuguese literature (...) As far as fantasy for young adults is concerned, Manuel António Pina is the exception. As of late, Álvaro Magalhães has also taken this path (Blockeel, 2001: 81-82).

Many fears are voiced by Manuel along with feelings associated with an omnipresent *pathos*. The fear of the kidnapping[27] of the mother by the pirates (an aspect that is also inscribed in historical memory[28]), the absence of the father, the repetition of the catastrophe of the shipwreck during his voyage, and the fear of death itself run through the text: "I felt very lonely, and full of fear" (Pina, 1986: 8); "above the fearful noise of thunder and storm at sea (...) I asked my mother to let me sleep in her room (....) (ibid: 10); " I went to bed in fear that the sea would swallow the beach and get to the houses" (ibid: 16); "I got up full of fear" (ibid: 22); "And I was afraid" (ibid: 40); "(...) I ran home full of fear" (ibid: 42). Indeed, death, in its different figurations, haunts the whole narrative.

Along with the absence of the patriarchal element in The Pirates, (a common situation in the history of the Portuguese relationship with the sea) the leitmotiv of the shipwreck appears repeatedly in Portuguese history, both in fictional and factual accounts.

In the ninth chapter, the reference to the "wooden cross, like the ones you put on tombs" (Pina, 1986: 35), Ana's desire to go to the cemetery, and the existentialist reflection she shares with Manuel mirror an announced *topos*:

"We walked among graves, looking at the photos of the dead and reading their names and the inscriptions. Ana said 'It is so awkward! All these people have existed, they were like us, grew up and then died. They lived in the village, walked the streets we walked. Maybe they were also here, looking at photos of other dead people, and thought things like this... Have you imagined that your things, your house, your books, everything, has belonged to other people and one day they will stop being yours and will belong to other people you don't know and who will never know you? And that many years from now nobody will know you ever existed?" (Pina, 1986: 36).

Lastly, the very ending of the text is an open ending, leaving everything suspended, signalled by the three dots that close the novella. This ending reinforces the openness and the "fluidity of the limits" of the diegesis. The setting and the characters have been alluded to throughout the text with constant expressions of doubt and references to mist, silence, and the night.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in *The Pirates* (1986), the sea, the fog, the islands, the boats, along with an atmosphere dominated by fear and uncertainty, come together in the construction of a narrative where the theme of the double is also dealt with (Gomes, 2000: 2), framed by a fantasy of a particular Portuguese type. Along with the absence of the patriarchal element in *The Pirates*, (a common situation in the history of the Portuguese relationship with the sea) the *leitmotiv* of the shipwreck appears repeatedly in Portuguese history, both in fictional and factual accounts.

In this novella, Manuel António Pina deviates from his other works, an aspect noted by Miguel Vázquez Freire: "In his last work—*The Pirates*—a brief and beautiful tale barely forty pages long, Pina moves in a somewhat different direction from that of his previous work. Humor and verbal byplay give way to a dense narrative poem about the power of dreams and the power of love" (Vázquez Freire, 1987: s/p). One could add that it also says something about the Portuguese soul and its history.

[27] The theme of kidnapping is also seminal to *Peter Pan*, by J. M. Barrie (1860-1937).

[28] See "Keep quiet. It's a pirate ship. (...) They will attack the village and steal everything. But the worst thing is they kidnap the women and take them with them. We must save the island!" (Pina, 1986: 21). Historical accounts tell of this *modus operandi* on the part of pirates. Another interesting reference to this practice is to be found in Natália Correia's 1961 long poem "Cântico do País Emerso" ["Song of the Submersed Country"] "I, all the brides kidnapped by pirates..." (Correia, 1975: 45-65).

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