

# For the aestheticization of academic writing: poems, letters, and diaries wrapped in didactic intentions

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## ABSTRACT

This essay aims to discuss academic writing perspectives related to the aesthetic production of textual genres — poem, letter, and diary — whose elaboration and importance in the production of pedagogical knowledge are often ignored. Reflecting on the possibilities of academic production beyond scientific norms, while not giving up on rigor and systematization in the scope of research, is considered urgent. This is a qualitative study, as it focuses on non-quantifiable aspects, expressed in the values and emotions explicit in writing. The analyzes show that university professors and students need to venture into the aesthetic development of poems, letters and diaries for pedagogical purposes in the academic setting.

## KEYWORDS

aesthetization of academic writing; letters; daily; poems; pedagogical intention.

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**POR UMA ESTETIZAÇÃO DA ESCRITA  
ACADÊMICA: POEMAS, CARTAS E DIÁRIOS  
ENVOLTOS EM INTENÇÕES PEDAGÓGICAS**

**RESUMO**

O ensaio objetiva discutir perspectivas de escrita acadêmica relacionadas com a produção estética de gêneros textuais — poema, carta e diário — que muitas vezes não se destina atenção à sua elaboração e importância na produção de conhecimentos pedagógicos. Considera-se urgência na reflexão sobre possibilidades de produção acadêmica para além das normatizações científicas, sem perder o rigor e a sistematização no âmbito das pesquisas. O estudo é de natureza qualitativa, pois valoriza aspectos não quantificáveis, expressos em valores e emoções explicitadas na escrita. As análises postas evidenciam que se faz necessário que professores e alunos universitários se aventurem no desenvolvimento estético de produções de poemas, cartas e diários, com fins pedagógicos, no cenário acadêmico.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE**

estetização da escrita acadêmica; cartas; diários; poemas; intenção pedagógica.

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**RESUMEN**

El ensayo objetiva discutir perspectivas de escritura académica relacionadas con la producción estética de géneros textuales — poema, carta y diario — que muchas veces no se destina atención a su elaboración e importancia en la producción de conocimientos pedagógicos. Se considera urgencia en la reflexión sobre posibilidades de producción académica más allá de las normatizaciones científicas, sin perder el rigor y la sistematización en el ámbito incluso de las investigaciones. El estudio es de naturaleza cualitativa, pues valora aspectos no cuantificables, expresados en valores y emociones explicitadas en la escritura. Los análisis puestos evidencian que se hace necesario que profesores y alumnos universitarios se aventuran en el desarrollo estético de producciones de poemas, cartas y diarios, con fines pedagógicos, en el escenario académico.

**PALABRAS CLAVE**

estetización de la escritura académica; cartas; diarios; poemas; intención pedagógica.

## INTRODUCTION

We want to discuss poetic beauty.<sup>1</sup> In the same way that we routinely hear “what a beautiful child!”, “what a beautiful day!”, we also want to be able to hear “what a beautiful academic essay!”, “what a beautiful thesis!”, out of the desire for encouraging the creation of an academic culture that values the aesthetic dimension in written production, as well as in the different expressions in a university context, as a driving force in both professional and human development, based on aesthetic principles. This production may be permeated, in form and content, with several elements or styles: poems, diaries, letters, portfolios, dialogues, chronicles, aphorisms, pictorial productions etc. This way, form is also translated into content and vice-versa.

With a view to the appreciation of the aestheticization of writing, this text also defends appropriating some literary productions as referential or historic and sociological documents relevant to studies in the humanities field. This essay thus reflects on the need for the elaboration of academic texts envisioning a more attractive, fresher and more poetic aesthetic configuration, so that this kind of text can generate greater engagement from readers, seducing them towards significant and riveting learning.

This study questions the power of some academic productions — articles, essays, research reports, books etc. — to engage people, in a call to reading, as well as to the assimilation and construction of knowledge. Besides that, we point out some writing styles that bring distinctive aesthetics, as they interface with specific literary composition methods — focusing particularly on poems, letters, and diaries.

In that sense, we question: What forms of text composition can be more interesting from the point of view of a call to reading by academic readers? What aesthetic possibilities can academic texts have, taking into account the criteria of a scientific text and academia’s delimitations concerning its elaboration? What dialogue spaces can be established between different textual genres in academia?

This study is based on the academic writing experiences of its authors, as well as on theoretical and literary references such as Camin (2012), Freire (1978, 2000, 2001, 2003), Goethe (2011), Kafka (1970), and Schiller (2011), as inspiration on letter writing; Dostoiévski (2012), Frank (2012), and Jesus (1993), on diary production; and Sappho (2003), as one among many sources of inspiration on poem writing. The visibility afforded to these references also aims to highlight

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1 The concept of beauty, constructed since Ancient times, went through several transformations over time. For this essay, we adopt the (criticism to the) notion of beauty, in the perspective pointed out by Welsch (1995), placing it in the “surface aestheticization” process, which, in a way, has the power or magic to attract readers, in the case of a text being considered “beautiful”, poetic and well written. The author warns us of the importance of extending this logic from the “surface aestheticization” of objects and people to “deep aestheticization” encompassing our lifestyles — practically and morally — and taking into account cultural differences and the uniqueness of situations and people. For a historical trajectory of the concept of beauty, see: Suassuna (1996).

their content, in addition to a diverse literary production, as important historical and sociological reports.

Throughout the essay, we also highlight excerpts of our own poems, aiming to illustrate and discuss the relevance of these forms of writing, which may contribute decisively to captivate and engage readers concerning academic and scientific productions in the humanities. We delimit that area because it more properly encompasses discussions on teacher training and aesthetic education of teachers, the current focus of our studies and researches. This field, which fundamentally embraces the qualitative research approach, requires the production of discursive or narrative texts on a specific research subject.

Thus, we understand that there are important gaps to broadening the possibilities of writing in the context of humanities research, diversifying them especially with the intention to transgress supposed academic and scientific standards, making room for the appreciation of creativity and uniqueness of each researcher/writer.

### LEG-WORK RE-SEARCH

Leg-work re-search  
Legs that search again  
Legs that wander  
Which legs search?  
Where?  
Which leg knows?  
On what leg?  
Where have they been searching?  
– Wherever they want.<sup>2</sup>

The use of metaphorical language as a way to enrich the explanation of a concept or as a bridge to its understanding is also proposed in this essay, in a poetic effort to experiment with the incorporation of new languages into academic and scientific productions, without loss in the accuracy and scientific dimension of writing, bringing lightheartedness and poetic undertones in its words, retaining the authors' own style and inspiration.

After all, moments of inspiration are precious in any act of creation, whether on rainy days or on sunny days, like this one, today, that tinges the sky in yellow, here, over our city.

### ACADEMIC WRITING: STYLES AND SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

As is known, an academic and scientific text requires analytical and conceptual accuracy, a concept that was historically constructed and is rooted in linguistic

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2 Poem written by Ana Cristina de Moraes, also authors of this essay.

codes and methods that are inherent to the scientific field. Pereira (2013, p. 216, our translation) highlights that scientific writing: “[...] is fundamental to the constitution of science. Apart from a medium to the practice and relationship with the world, in the constitution of truth, science leans on a certain discursive performance that constitutes fields of truth”. Academic writing can exhibit lightheartedness and grace, in an aestheticization resembling literary productions, without losing focus on the necessary consistency in approaching the study subject.

Supplying academic productions with poetry is what we propose, apprehending poetry in its primordial meaning, as the force of *creation*, or, in Suassuna’s definition (1996, p. 287, our translation), “[...] as the creative spirit found at the root of all the Arts”.

Who is not surprised and engaged when reading a scientific text, especially one that you never want to stop reading due to its riveting boldness in form and content? There is beauty in it, in the sense of the power that this text possesses to seduce the reader and guide them down the roads of knowledge that it proposes to articulate.

Structuring scientific knowledge in an aesthetically distinctive composition does not sound like an easy job, especially to those who don’t have a diverse reading habit; in order to write, it is necessary to read, in an increasing “vicious circle” logic. The writer-researcher-teacher needs to have references of diverse textual styles and broadened cultural knowledge, in order to have enough elements to choose from in relation to a unique writing style.

Access to these types of text is indispensable. But that reading cannot be so excessive that it collapses the author’s originality and spontaneity. Schopenhauer (2012, p. 21, our translation) warns, to that end: “[...] reading and learning activities, when in excess, are harmful to individual thinking, [...] leaves men unfamiliar with clarity and depth of knowledge and understanding, once they have no time left to obtain them”. Incorporating a unique writing method is, therefore, a process and is developed with continued experimental and reflective practices, concurrent to some reading and writing efforts, as long as there is room for “rumination” of the process, enabling the creation of knowledge. An aspect to consider is that writing, academic or not, presents itself as an act of sublime personal expression, assimilating elements of intimate and subjective nature, because:

Writing is being at your own extremes,  
and those who are so, exerting that nudity, the barest there is,  
the barest there is,  
is ashamed that others might see what grimace there is,  
what quirks, what faulty gestures, what little magnificence  
in the crooked vision of a soul in the throes of creation.<sup>3</sup>

3 Poem by João Cabral de Melo Neto, cited by Bianchetti and Machado (2012, p. 12, our translation).

The act of creating an academic text — article, research report, essay etc. — is, in itself, also anthropophagic, because, after “feasting” and “ruminating” on theoretical and empirical elements, new reflections and new theoretical-practical knowledge are established. And from that “feast”, fields of knowledge are woven, like the metaphor of quilting, in which the pieces of cloth, connected to each other, make up a new object — the quilt.

Among the studies and researches we have been developing, however, we realized something that we perceive, in a way, to be keeping us prisoners: seeking or “feeding” too much — on knowledge, values, theories etc. — may lead to anguish and “obesity”, often paralyzing, because excessive information suffocates and doesn’t necessarily produce knowledge and wisdom. We felt first-hand what many people have said on this subject, such as Schopenhauer (2012, p. 41, our translation) when stating that “excessive reading takes all flexibility out of the soul”, reducing, thus, the originality and spontaneity of ideas. Bondía (2002, p. 21, our translation), in turn, warns that excess of information is not synonymous with experience: “And more, information does not leave room for experience, it is almost an anti-experience”. Thus, academic production tends to impose that anti-experience attitude on the researcher, in the sense of having to assimilate a world of information to the point that time and experiences lived are reduced.

We also feel, amidst all this, the need to empty ourselves in order to freshen up the senses. It is up to me to exercise, sometimes, the ability of emptying myself: “Researchers, stop! Turn off your own ‘battery’ for a while! Breathe!”

[  
How to write an academic text? What ideas to apprehend as relevant in its constitution? [            After all [            ], how can we compose this text within the institutional and scientific limits (im)posed?

We have the conviction that the aesthetic product dimension has to be present in academic textual preparation, as well as in the manner of appropriating the research subjects. Much has been done theoretically on aesthetics and art, but where is the aesthetic and artistic production in academia? If the humanities are actually interested in thinking/theorizing about art and aesthetic knowledge — as has been observed in the past few years, with increasing theoretical production — where is the practical reason of this knowledge field that is, *a priori*, the primordial factor for the existence of these knowledge paths?

One possible and interesting path to produce aesthetically in the academic context is exploring metaphors as thought image constructions, combining them with scientific concepts and allowing academics — professors, students, researchers — to visualize the subjects through poetic and creative lenses. In this regard, Pereira (2013, p. 227, our translation) corroborates: “[...] let us employ metaphors, vocabulary and styles with accuracy, honesty and responsibility. Let the reasonable be produced as a byproduct of a mature negotiation exercise. Negotiation of meanings, negotiation of senses, and negotiation of styles”. This writing perspective is, with notorious singularity, interrelated with writing and reading poems.

## POEMS AS A FRESH, SUCCINCT, SUBJECTIVE AND DENSE TEXTUAL FORM

One of the characteristics that attract us in poems is their ability to summarize a thought, feeling or experience. Their structure has, in the verses' objectivity and brevity, great power to say something in few words, relying also on the lyricism that surrounds many of them.<sup>4</sup> This lyricism is defined by the act of metaphorizing facts, feelings, life, grasping from them what is perceived as essential.

To Suassuna (1996, p. 288), *rhythm* and *image* are essential characteristics in literary poetic production, although it is not necessarily marked by rhyme and metrics — like many contemporary literary productions.

Thus, bringing the poetic dimension, as well as appreciating poems in academic production — both written by the researcher in their own scientific meditations and by other poets, or even the subjects of a research —, is, in our point of view, fundamental to the intersection of perceptions and analyses of a given study subject.

Besides, poems are essential sources to allow a break in reading, a poetic pause, necessary to remove the focus on the text for a few moments, look aimlessly at nothing, and enter the underground of reflections. A moment of suspension from the act of reading for the search of autonomy in thinking, feeling, and poeticizing.

The perception of the necessary break in writing — and in the unfolding of life. [     ]. This was Sappho's<sup>5</sup> idea in her fragmented poems; the first female poet in recorded history. How contemporary, this woman from antiquity! In her writing, there are windows that freshen up her ideas, her feelings. And it is with that fresh atmosphere that we seek to compose the reflections in this essay.

It is night already and we continue to write. Sappho (2002, p. 34) translates our sky right now:

stars around the beautiful moon  
hide back their luminous form  
whenever all full she shines

<on the earth>

[silvery]

But, after all, what is the moment to pause in the process of writing an academic text? Are there spaces for pause in this path? If, for the body, there is

4 There are, however, many poets who create poems with different characteristics, since poetic styles are very diverse.

5 Sappho, poet who lived between 625 and 570 b.C. She was born in Lesbos, a Greek island. She is considered the first recorded writer in western literature. Several fragments of her poems are left, many of them banished and destroyed in the Middle Ages due to their erotic content. Using brackets, Sappho highlights the pauses, the breath, the feelings in the composition and recitation of her poems.

essential need for leisure, what are we doing with our body — this masculine-feminine-educator-researcher-body? Why don't we also cultivate leisurely, detached and pleasant times for it? Due to a demand of academic productivity, or guilt in the name of work culture, incorporated into us by the impositions of the *work society*?

If, on one hand, we feel the existential and professional need to write, both literary and academically, on the other hand we realize that we are used to seeing ourselves embedded into academia's high productivity logic, which is, in good measure, overwhelming to the professor-researcher's health and freedom. Spaces for pauses, within this logic, are few and far between.

Not meaning to assert that the "non-pause" is a completely negative moment; on the contrary, it may be very creative, but [ ] the "non-pause" tends to produce these pauses, [ ] in the form of forgetfulness or Freudian slips. A sort of fatigue in the whole body. A problem located in the field of physical and mental health, which may also interfere negatively with the researcher's creativity and that, sometimes, cuts through us. Something like what this poem expresses:

### NOTHING<sup>6</sup>

The silence.

The pause.

[...]

The sound.

The voice.

The word.

The communication. Of the idea.

Cursed be.

What idea?

The action.

Unprotection.

Emptiness.

[

]

It is in this direction that we draft this aesthetic essay, where we demand to configure the text in a language that is simultaneously literary, subjective, and academic [thinking about it now: why does that dichotomy still exist, anyway?]. Fortunately, some researchers also seek diverse manners of communication in academia — poetic writing, audiovisual, performances etc. —, which is of great relevance to teacher training and university aesthetic education, due to the diversity of languages to stimulate the senses. Thus, next, we weave reflections on pedagogical letters, which are a space of dialogue and reflection on many aspects of education.

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6 Poem written by Ana Cristina de Moraes, also authors of this essay.



## LETTERS (PEDAGOGICAL)

Writing letters as a method of scientific (and literary) communication is considered here as an important path in the interaction between academic and informal languages, mundane and poetic-literary, which subsidizes learning expressed even in research with the use of this textual genre.

Choosing to write and analyze them, particularly the letters we receive and send to friends and institutions, was needed to reflect about materials that we consider fundamental as a wide source of data on the theme in question, as well as the possibility to give these data an aesthetic treatment, endeavoring, therefore, to have a dimension of aesthetic production in academic text and in the methods to understand the research subjects.

Bringing the reflection on the aestheticization of writing and aesthetic education to the university setting requires the simultaneous creation of processes of experimentation and of artistic-literary production.

In this sense, we question: Which aesthetic-educational processes will the university analyze theoretically, if it does not possess its own analysis subject? On what empirical foundation — since art and aesthetics, as we mentioned, exist because of a practical reason — will this university depend? Until when will this institution analyze, evaluate and judge “the other” — schools, for example — with turning to self-analysis and, especially, to the creative elaboration of interdisciplinary pedagogical practices that lead to the unfolding of an aesthetic educational process, essential to global human development? Based on these questions, we strive in the direction of composing a more literary writing, at once trying to make it more attractive and entertaining, without losing its density and criticism.

Letters are documents, instruments to dialogue, prose, communication that is more straightforward, colloquial, directed to a specific interlocutor. In them, there is a meaning that is simultaneously objective and subjective, colloquial and formal, prosaic and poetic. In the context of trading information and knowledge, a letter presumes a more direct relationship between the self and the other. It seems to us that this resource encourages reading, because it gives the idea of peering into the sender’s “secrets”; a given letter, addressed to a specific recipient, but in a virtual environment, for example, starts to become public, intentionally general domain, with a certain configuration of “pedagogical letter”. This is precisely the intention of the reference to letters in the writing of this text:

[...] a letter only has pedagogical character if its content can interact with the human being, communicate the human within the self to the human within the other, provoking this pedagogical dialogue. To be a little more precise in this reflection, we would say that a Pedagogical Letter necessarily, needs to be pregnant with pedagogy. Bearing pedagogy blood, flesh and bone. (Camin, 2012, p. 35, our translation)

Before reading the above excerpt, we questioned: Wouldn’t all letters have pedagogical character? Can a message brought by correspondence be apprehended as an educational message? Upon reflection on the educational meaning of this

instrument of communication, we say that, *a priori*, every message can have an educational dimension; however, not every message has it intentionality. A pedagogical letter does.

Let's look, for example, at the many letters written by Paulo Freire — *Letter to teachers (Carta de Paulo Freire aos professores)* (2001), the ones in the books *Letters to Cristina (Cartas a Cristina)* (2003) and *Pedagogy of indignation (Pedagogia da indignação)* (2000), *Letters to Guinea-Bissau (Cartas a Guiné Bissau)* (1978) etc. — as relevant instruments of communication and teacher training, to mention only some of his pedagogical letters that have been consecrated.

Other interesting letters that have been circulating as philosophical treatises are those between Goethe and Schiller (2010).

Our passion for letters goes back to adolescence, when we exchanged correspondence continuously between friends and cousins, primarily due to the lack of internet in our daily lives, around the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s. In addition to that, back then, many children had the habit of collecting stationery, which was also a factor that stimulated the writing and exchange of letters on unassuming handwritten paper.

However, encountering letters in research processes in post-graduation (doctorate course) is related to the search for theoretical references that deal with teacher training and teacher knowledge, as well as the access to philosophical and historical content. Thus, we realized that many of these references take the form of letters, like the aforementioned authors and many others, which brought us great satisfaction due to the convergence of interests and identification with this form of writing.

It is in this sense that we apprehend the idea of letter writing both with the intention of exposing its pedagogical character and with the notion that there is an aesthetic in the composition of this kind of document that is different from an academic text, although the discussions in these letters can present several scientific, philosophical and political debates.

Among other literary references that influenced our professional and personal development, we highlight: *Letters upon the aesthetic education of man (A educação estética do homem)* (Schiller, 2011); *Letter to the father (Carta a meu pai)* (Kafka, 1970); Goethe's letters in the book *The sorrows of young Werther (Os sofrimentos do jovem Werther)* (2011); the correspondence between Schiller and Goethe (2010).

In relation to pedagogical propositions, Schiller, in his classic *Letters upon the aesthetic education of man* (2011, p. 46, our translation), teaches us that there needs to be balance between the rational and sensitive dimensions for the global development of a human being:

[...] the path to the intellect needs to be opened by the heart. The development of sensitivity is, therefore, the most pressing need of this age, not only because it is a way to improve knowledge, effective in life, but also because it awakens to the knowledge improvement itself.

In *Letter to the father*, Kafka (1970) writes bitterly, realistic and fierce at the same time, a letter addressed to his father, in which he manifests an avalanche of

dichotomous feelings — love vs. hate, for example, exposing an interpretative look on his context, heavy with subjectivity. He said, bitterly, to his father (Kafka, 1970, p. 28, our translation): “Your especially efficient rhetorical processes in education, and which at least in my case never failed, were: insult, threat, irony, evil laughter, and (weirdest thing) self-pity”.

All the aforementioned books in the form of letters were very significant to us, due to the intensity of feeling and intention with which they are surrounded. The subjective dimension combined with a clear intention to reach its goal — be it educational, revealing, offensive — creates a force in the text that makes it extremely riveting. The kind of reading that you have no desire to stop before the text is over.

Thus, we specifically question the academia: Why don't we bring this engaging aura to academic texts? What can we learn or what inspirations can we nurture by reading texts such as those?

## PERSONAL AND RESEARCH DIARY: INSTRUMENT OF (SELF) DEVELOPMENT

The diary usually presents itself as an instrument to capture reality as perceived by the writer. It opens the possibility to record visceral writing, in which feelings and perceptions of daily and subjective events are exalted.

In the educational field, the diary can constitute a device to activate and record people's educational memory, focusing on their knowledge and their professional practice in different pedagogical spaces. The diary is also an instrument that can promote reflections in research processes, for example, as an extra element in data production, being subjected to individual and collective analysis. In a research diary, this “silent friend”, daily, “[...] we can place our perceptions, anguish, questions and information that are not obtained through the use of other techniques” (Neto, 1994, p. 63, our translation). All of the elements mentioned and contained in the field diary can be diluted in a research report, substantiating it, providing empirical consistency and showing, thus, the relevance of this data production instrument. In this sense, we have that:

The field diary is personal and non-transferable. The researcher turns to it in order to build up details that in their summation will assemble the different moments of the research. It demands a systematic use that extends from the first moment on the field until the final phase of the investigation. (Neto, 1994, p. 63-64, our translation)

We highlight, therefore, the importance of the diary as a way to elicit the implications, impressions and feelings of the individuals with their professionalization and production of aesthetic knowledge, perceiving this resource as a formative element in subjects, since, with that written narrative, “[...] the subject also constitutes themselves; thus is the formative pertinence of the field diary, which, in some institutions, takes on characteristics that transcend research, becoming a significant device of self-training” (Macedo, 2006, p. 134, our translation). Combine that with

with the knowledge that the diary has great potential to capture the subject's meanings, reasons, aspirations, beliefs, values, and attitudes relative to their production and use of the knowledge, emphasizing the practical-reflective dimension.

Macedo also reinforces that "the diary is a device of great relevance to access the imagery involved in, due to its subjective character, the intimate investigation" (Macedo, 2006, p. 134, our translation).

Reading published diaries has been making us broaden our gaze on the power of biographies in the understanding of a broader social-historical reality. Hence, diaries function as a photograph of a determined period or social context.

The famous *Anne Frank: the diary of a young girl*, written between June 12 1942 and August 1<sup>st</sup> 1944, that deeply moved us, depicts the horrors of the Holocaust through the analytical lenses of a 13-year-old German girl (of Jewish heritage) who had to go into hiding with her family and other people for over two years, in order to try to escape the cruelty of Nazism in World War II. As a way to escape her reality, she wrote. With her writing, she created an important historical record — her diary.

After May 1940, the good times were few and far between: first, there was the war, then the capitulation, and then the arrival of the Germans, which is when the trouble started for the Jews. Our freedom was severely restricted by a series of anti-Jewish decrees: Jews were required to wear a yellow star; Jews were required to turn in their bicycles; Jews were forbidden to use trams; Jews were forbidden to ride in cars, even their own; Jews were required to do their shopping between 3.00 and 5.00 p.m.; Jews were required to frequent only Jewish-owned barbershops and beauty salons; Jews were forbidden to be out on the streets between 8.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m.; Jews were forbidden to go to theatres, cinemas or any other forms of entertainment; [...]. You couldn't do this and you couldn't do that, but life went on. Jacque always said to me, "I don't dare do anything anymore, cause I'm afraid it's not allowed". (Frank, 2012, p. 8)

Anne Frank's report became a movie, showing facts about the routine of a family in hiding, trying to survive the horrors and deprivations of World War II, which makes this diary a valuable historical document, allowing much academic research.

The intense *Child of the dark: the diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus (Quarto de despejo: diário de uma favelada)*, written between 1955 and 1959 by Carolina Maria de Jesus, a waste collector from Minas Gerais who lived in the Canindé slum in São Paulo, depicts the hardships of poverty and the struggle of this woman, with three children, who had a huge passion: reading and writing. But the author also reveals socioeconomic and political aspects of that period, such as the neglect and the patronizing practices of the political representatives, co-opting and outright buying votes, the miserable and violent situations in which people lived in that slum, cold, hunger, unemployment, addiction. All of these aspects are narratively shown by Carolina de Jesus, in what we might call a sociological treatise. In our point of view, this diary is an important ethnographic record of the everyday life

in a São Paulo slum, which attributes great social relevance to the book. In her whistleblowing rebellion, she writes:

[...] At half past eight at night I was already at the slum breathing the smell of the excrement that mixes with the rotting mud. When I'm in the city I feel like I'm in the living room with the crystal *chandelier*, the velvet carpets, *satten* pillows. And when I'm at the slum I feel like I'm an outdated thing that should be in a garbage room. [...] I'm trash. I'm in the garbage room, and what is in a garbage room is either burned or thrown out.<sup>7</sup> (Jesus, 1993, p. 33, our translation)

*Notes from underground (Diário do subsolo)*, by Dostoiévski (2012, p. 62, our translation), brings the striking revelations of a young man, simultaneously tormented and realistic, whose lucidity often intermingles with fits of rage and impatience towards the world:

[...] I searched for movement and, suddenly, dived into a dark, underground, abject... not properly debauch, but into a little debauch. My crushes were acute, ardent, due to my eternal and sick irritability. The bursts came hysterical, with tears and seizures. Besides reading, there was nothing to do, that is, there was nothing I could respect in my environment and that attracted me.

Diaries, in general, since they are permeated by the vivacity of the writer's objective and subjective experiences, tend to be interesting to the reader, evoking the primordial curiosity to acquire knowledge by reading a record that is, at the same time, personal and social.

## FINAL REMARKS

We believe that it is essential to highlight the importance of different manners of creative writing in the context of academic production as a way to stimulate autonomous, original and “naive” elaboration — to refer to Schopenhauer's (2012, p. 84, our translation) perspective — that happens when an author, in their spontaneity of thought, writes showing who they really are: “Generally, naivety attracts, while artificiality causes rejection. We also see every authentic thinker strive to give their thoughts the purest, clearest and most concise expression possible”.

Therefore, we highlighted text in form of letters, with its colloquial, direct, accessible expression. Also, the diary — this mystery box that begs to be published, or this historical document that is a memory exercise of significant experiences and an exercise in capturing everyday life. A poem, in turn, provides writing with a kind of play on words and styles, in a dance between reverie and reason, an integrated action between the subjective and objective dimensions, which manifests in a poetic-literary gesture.

<sup>7</sup> We tried to maintain the grammatical errors in order to show one of the characteristics of Jesus's work, as a woman who lived in a slum, had little schooling, but still loved writing.

Academic writing requires a series of abilities from authors, which are also associated with reading and, in turn, are not simply the decoding of words. It is something that needs attention in the university context, since it has been demonstrated that many students have difficulty understanding texts and books studied in classes, due to historical and personal problems in exercise and practice of incipient reading along their life history.

Writing takes the spotlight in the production of knowledge in university, considering all the points and discussions presented, concerning different practices and perspectives of production to the academic development of students, who are situated as the significant subjects in this knowledge constitution.

It is pertinent, for example, that professors in teaching courses pay attention to such aspects related to writing, so that they can effectively contribute to the constitution of knowledge in their work space. Writing, supported by these reflections, expresses itself as a dialectical, dialogic, aesthetic, investigative and reflective act in a whole social, political and ideological context, which must be encouraged in the academic sphere, due to its formative significance to students, envisioning, then, a significant teacher training defined by poetry, this creative dimension that highlights our presence in the world.

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