Between Reality and Fantasy; A Reading of Katherine Vaz’ “My Hunt for King Sebastião”

Mário AVELAR
Universidade Aberta, CEAUL-ULICES, Lisboa, Portugal
Email: Mario.avelar@uab.pt
ORCID: 0000-0002-3149-1741

Abstract
This article ponders on the way intertextuality – the textual representations at the fabula’s level – plays a central function in the tension between reality and fantasy in the Portuguese-American writer Katherine Vaz’ short-story ‘My Hunt for King Sebastião’, from her book Fado & Other Stories. The writer’s creative use of intertextuality – e.g., the encounter with oral traditions - enhances a manipulation of time – anachronisms - without sabotaging the narrative’s flow, and the unveiling of the main character’s psychological and intellectual progress. My conceptual framework is built upon the Russian Formalists’ distinction between syuzhet and fabula. I shall also scrutinise time anachronisms such as the analepsy, the prolepsis, and the ellipsis in order to unveil their role in the textual structure, and in the protagonist’s progress that eventually leads him to the distinction between his own fantasies from a mythical past.

Keywords: Fabula, fantasy, intertextuality, myth, syuzhet.