

Literature for a Non-dystopian Digital Future: A Brazilian Example

*Cristine Fickelscherer de Mattos, Center of Language, Literature and Communication,
Mackenzie Presbyterian University, Brazil*

Abstract

The end of the 20th century introduced the digital into our lives quickly and unequivocally. In just three decades, the personal computer, the internet and the mobile phone, at first perceived as technical media, gave rise to qualified media (ELLESTRÖM, 2017; 2020) without which it is no longer possible to live. The presence of these media affects our manner of living and all our affections, changing the way we feel about the others and the way we feel concerned with environment. Within the perspective of these considerations, this work aims to reflect on the role of digital technologies for a future whose roots are found in a present of identity questions (such as alterity) and a growing environmental crisis. Bearing in mind the critical reading proposed by Martin Puchner in *Literature for a Changing Planet* (2022), the work undertakes this reflection by analysing the novel *O som do rugido da onça* (*The Sound of the Jaguar's Roar*), by the Brazilian writer Micheliny Verunschik (2021). In this novel, digital communication plays a fundamental role, in connecting the present of an acculturated indigenous character, immersed in an urban reality, to the historical past of colonization, in which German expeditioners took two children as souvenirs or “samples” of Brazilian nature, along with plants and animals of various kinds. Technology, thus encompassing everything from the galleon to the smartphone in the novel, propitiates discoveries, adventures, feelings and questions about the future of both the indigenous protagonist and the civilizing ideal that has appeased her culture and dominated the planet. In contrast to predominantly dystopian readings of the contemporary world or the so-called “climate fiction” (ANDERSEN, 2019), as well as ecocriticism (BRUHN, 2021), this work sees in Verunschik’s novel a glimpse of a possible future world in which current digital communication does not appear as a villain to the natural world but articulates affections that enable a new relationship with it.

Keywords

Non-dystopian Literature, Brazilian Literature, Intermediality

Bio

Cristine Fickeslcherer de Mattos is an Associate Professor at Mackenzie Presbyterian University in São Paulo, Brazil. She has a PhD in Modern Languages and Literature from the University of São Paulo. She is now a postdoctoral researcher in Intermediality at the University of the State of Rio de Janeiro and a member of the government-validated research groups: “Intermedia: studies on intermediality” and “Media comparative readings”. She takes part on the Brazilian Comparative Literature Association (ABRALIC), the National Postgraduate Association in Linguistics and Literature (ANPOLL) and the International Association of Word and Image Studies (IAWIS/AIERTI). She collaborates in the Science Outreach Project NUPELLI (State University of Rio de Janeiro). Her research interests include intermedial relations between literature and other arts; mediatic narratology; theory of literature; brazilian and hispanic contemporary literature. She has published several academic papers and the books: *La otra realidad* (*The Other Reality* - about Argentinian literature); *Conceitos e práticas de literatura comparada* (*Comparative literature -concepts and practices*).

ORCID-ID/Websites

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2011-4614>

ResearchGate: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Cristine-Mattos>

Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=j3S8c88AAAAJ&hl=sv&oi=ao_cristinemattos@gmail.com
cristine.mattos@mackenzie.br