

TESTIMONIAL CONTENT AND CHILDHOOD IN NUMBER THE STARS BY LOIS LOWRY

Ana Lilia Carvalho Rocha¹
Josiele Maria Nascimento e Silva²

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to analyze the work “*Number the Stars*” through the lens of the innocent eye and testimonial content. The work presents the experience of a girl who survived the Second World War with facts witnessed by a German family who lived in Denmark and began to deal with the presence of the Nazis. As a theoretical basis for this analysis, we resort to authors such as Seligmann-Silva (2002) who discusses testimony and testimonial content, Vilela (2012) who analyzes the articulations of testimony as a form of meaning and sense, Salgueiro (2012) who analyzes the strands and types of testimony. This analysis will benefit from the studies of Don Latham with an article entitled Childhood under Siege: Lois Lowry's *Number the Stars* and *The Giver*, which highlights the different types of childhood according to each society or historical context. The purpose of this analysis is to show the importance of testimonial content as a literary form of resistance as well as to analyze the presence of childhood in the work according to the author's perspective. This work is the result of the orientations received in the research project for scientific initiation CRENAC – Configurations of Resistance in Contemporary Anglophone Narratives – coordinated by professor Dr. Ana Lilia Carvalho Rocha of which I was part as a scholarship holder by FAPESP “Fundação de Apoio a Pesquisa no Pará”.

Keywords: Testimonial Content. Innocent eye. Resistance. Childhood.

TEOR TESTEMUNHAL E INFÂNCIA EM NUMBER THE STARS DE LOIS LOWRY

RESUMO

Este trabalho busca analisar a obra “*Number the Stars*” (1989) através da ótica do olhar infantil e do teor testemunhal. A obra apresenta a vivência de uma garota sobrevivente da Segunda Guerra Mundial com fatos presenciados por uma família alemã que vivia na Dinamarca e passa a lidar com a presença dos nazistas. Como base teórica desta análise, recorreremos a autores como Seligmann-Silva (2002) que aborda o testemunho e o teor testemunhal, Vilela (2012) que analisa as articulações do testemunho como forma de significação e sentido, Salgueiro (2012) que analisa as vertentes e tipos de testemunho. Esta análise se beneficiará dos estudos de Don Latham (2002) com artigo intitulado Childhood under siege: Lois Lowry's *Number the Stars* and *The Giver*, o qual evidencia os diferentes tipos de infância de acordo com cada sociedade ou contexto histórico. A proposta deste trabalho é mostrar a importância do teor testemunhal como uma forma literária como resistência, além de analisar a presença da infância na obra de acordo com a perspectiva da autora. Este trabalho é fruto das orientações recebidas no projeto de pesquisa de iniciação científica CRENAC – Configurações de Resistência em Narrativas Anglófonas Contemporâneas – coordenado pela Professora Dra. Ana Lilia Carvalho Rocha, do qual fiz parte como bolsista pela FAPESP “Fundação de Apoio a Pesquisa no Pará”

Palavras-chave: Teor testemunhal. Olhar inocente. Resistência. Infância

Data de submissão: 25. 10. 2023

Data de aprovação: 12. 06. 2024

¹ Universidade Federal do Pará, Bragança, Pará.

Professora Dra. Ana Lilia Carvalho Rocha, docente na Universidade Federal do Pará. E-mail: liliarochoaufpa@gmail.com

² Josiele Maria Nascimento e Silva, Graduada na Universidade Federal do Pará. Email: josinas90@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

This research arises from studies conducted in the CRENAC project - Configurations of Resistance in Contemporary Anglophone Narratives, coordinated and oriented by Professor Ana Lilia Carvalho Rocha. The book *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (1989) was written for a young audience and presents the narrative of a World War II and Holocaust survivor. It is a narrative that is told through the eyes of a Danish child who helps not only a Jewish friend but also other families to survive and escape the concentration camps. Throughout the plot, the narrator Annemarie is presented as the main character, besides being a child she becomes the innocent eye of the narrative. Therefore, this paper will analyze the work by the presence of the innocent eye and by the presence of the testimonial content in Lois Lowry's narrative.

The literary analysis is motivated by the studies carried out in the scientific initiation project CRENAC, by the discussions already held, and by the communication events that have already been included in the discussion. For the literature review, we will rely on authors who work not only on the historical context but the childhood and testimonial content of the literary work *Number The Stars*, such as Márcio Seligmann-Silva with the article entitled *Between Fiction and Real* (1999). He argues that testimonial literature is no longer about the imitation of reality but about the manifestation of the real. Then Sarmento-Pantoja's (2021) lens with the article entitled *Between Cracks: on the Fictional Content, the Truth Content and the Testimonial Content* (2021). Eugénia Vilela's work is used in the article *On testimony in uninhabitable bodies, wandering, philosophy and memory* (2012). The authors address the different approaches to testimony, such as Wilberth Salgueiro's (2012) and author Don Latham's (2002) article entitled *Childhood under Siege: Lois Lowry's Number the Stars and The Giver* to distinguish the different phases of childhood with the passage of time, societies and shows the context in which childhood is inserted in, as in the book *Number The Stars* in which the character Annemarie is in a situation of human catastrophe.

The study of childhood and testimonial content in Lois Lowry's work impacts society and not only the academic environment; the importance, according to Eugenia Vilela (2012), of education against forgetting, is that education should keep the memory of the victims and survivors alive so that catastrophic events like the one presented in Lowry's book do not happen again, in addition to showing the importance of testimonies being fictional, real, or testimonial in content.

1 LITERATURE REVIEW

To analyze the testimonial content and childhood in *Number the Stars*, it is important to emphasize the importance of representation in different ways in testimonial literature; each author chooses the best way to represent children and childhood in their books. In Lowry's narrative, the innocent eye narrator is the protagonist, Annemarie. Don Latham (2002), in an article entitled *Childhood under Siege: Lois Lowry's Number the Stars and The Giver* lists and exemplifies various aspects of childhood and how children are portrayed in readings and records over time, as in John Locke's theory, mentioned by Don Latham, which says that the human being is born as a blank sheet of paper and personalities, characteristics are formed.

For this research, we rely on Eugénia Vilela's (2012) article entitled *From Testimony* addressing various types of testimonies, who can be a witness, and how violence can be in code, modes of expression: direct testimony, as the experience from within the narration of a singular story. Eugénia Vilela asserts that the testimony happens according to the witness's point of view, that is, it is witnessed through the experience that stands out in the survivor.

In the testimonial content, conceptualized as the testimony that does not have total veracity, but that is very important to keep the memory of the survivors alive, we highlight

violence, that according to Márcio Seligmann-Silva (2001) is written or spoken. A violent testimony should never be like a realistic description of the event, a literal translation of the violent or traumatic scene. Because of this, bringing into the code the condition to which the survivor was subjected, should not be considered completely true, due to the trauma suffered by the survivor. Salgueiro (2012), about the testimonial content in works of literature, asserts that:

The presence of fiction in confession and testimony does not invalidate, under any circumstances, the general features of the "testimony genre" (hybrid as other genres, subgenres, and other forms can be). On the contrary, this intersection amplifies the issue. Each text, each case must propose protocols and pacts, which will certainly vary based on the reader's repertoire and reception (SALGUEIRO, 2012, p.11)³.

Testimonial content is conceptualized as testimony that contains fiction, that is, it is witnessed but not with total veracity, this testimony may arise from the person who lived the violence/condition to which he was subjected or from someone who heard and brought it into the code. Wilberth Salgueiro (2012) deals with the non-invalidation of testimony with the presence of fiction and that it becomes just another hybrid genre of English language literature, as in the work of American writer Lois Lowry, *Number the Stars*, after hearing the testimony from the family on which the work was inspired.

Finally, Sarmiento-Pantoja (2021) develops considerations about fictional content, truth content, and testimonial content, showing the differences between them, as they are presented in the arts and the concepts inherent to the testimony, in addition to presenting analyses of testimony narratives called fictional content, as part of the construction of the testimony.

In the same way, the testimony works as a possibility of mulling over the tomb images of the factual, which need to emerge. If we find the testimonial content in culture, we could say that literature, when it is built based on the relations between the content of truth and the factual content, is full of references to culture and, therefore, of the testimonial content (SARMENTO-PANTOJA, 2021, p. 117).⁴

Testimonial content, in turn, according to Sarmiento-Pantoja (2021) is the category that gives literature the condition of appropriating the form of testimony by assuming fictional strategies, that is, not questioning the border between fiction and reality. To this end, this paper will be divided into the following sections: methodology, state of the art, and a section about childhood and testimonial content in *Number the Stars*.

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this research will benefit from the analysis performed by Tânia Franco Carvalhal, (2007) which addresses the explanation of comparative literature. According to the author, in Comparative Literature, the methods do not precede the analysis but derive from it:

³ "A presença da ficção na confissão e no testemunho não invalida, em hipótese alguma, os traços gerais do "gênero testemunho" (híbrido, aliás, como os demais gêneros, subgêneros e outras formas podem ser). Ao contrário, este cruzamento amplifica a questão. Cada texto, cada caso há de propor protocolos e pactos, que não de variar, certamente, a partir mesmo do repertório e do acolhimento do leitor." (SALGUEIRO, 2012, p.11)

⁴ Da mesma forma, o testemunho funciona como uma possibilidade de remoer as imagens tumulares do factual, que precisam emergir. Se encontramos o teor testemunhal na cultura, poderíamos dizer que a literatura, quando se constrói com base nas relações entre o teor de verdade e o teor factual, está repleta de referências da cultura e, por conseguinte, do teor testemunhal (SARMENTO-PANTOJA, 2021, p. 117).

In more recent studies, we see that the method (or methods) does not precede the analysis, as something previously manufactured, but derives from it. Gradually it becomes clearer that comparative literature cannot be understood only as a synonym for "comparison"⁵ (CARVALHAL, 2007, p. 07).

According to Carvalhal (2007), comparing is a procedure that is part of the structure of thought of man and the organization of culture. Since comparison also arises from other areas of human knowledge, we compare the objects to conclude about the nature of the elements confronted but mainly to differentiate or identify if they are the same or similar. Paul Van Tieghem, in 1931, defined the object of literature as the study of different pieces of literature and their reciprocal relationships, dividing into general literature with a more synthetic look to "embrace" various literatures and comparative literature being a preparatory analysis and for investigation of affinity. Therefore, this analysis will have comparative literature as its initial methodology so that it can compare existing affinities since comparative literature is used as a means of analyzing literary families, that is, one corrects the other one.

This research will take place in a qualitative way of the work *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry and will take place as a literary analysis so that the research presents better results. Literary analysis will be carried out in Lois Lowry's narrative based on the theoretical reference, to evaluate how testimonial content and the innocent eye appear in the narrative.

Such analysis in the narrative points out the need for remembrance as a tool to keep the memory of atrocities and their impacts on humankind and how they developed into art forms that favor human rights and ethics as important elements in culture and its manifestations, such as literature.

Since the Holocaust, many testimonies and fictional works have emerged from this catastrophic event, as a form of bringing into code the traumas the survivors have faced after the war. Many literary works bring in children as their protagonists and through their eyes, the horrors of war arise from a different perspective. In the following section, we will engage with some of them.

3 STATE OF ART

There are countless literary works with testimonial content, or narratives written for children's audiences, such as *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry written in 1989, involving sensitive subjects like the Holocaust, and which bring "fiction" into the narrative.

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, written by John Boyne (2006), also deals with themes such as the holocaust, concentration camps, and testimonial content, besides being a children's book. *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1947) is also testimonial content, with the presence of the innocent eye, and is in the same line of thinking. Another testimonial narrative with the presence of the innocent eye as a narrator is *The Diary of Mary Berg* (1942). Some other literary works that have children as their protagonists, hence as innocent eye narrators, are *Imigrantes and Mascates* (2016) by Bernardo Kucinski and *When Hitler stole the pink rabbit* (1971) by Judith Kerr.

The primary aim of this research is to demonstrate the significance of testimonial literature in youth and adolescent education. It seeks to underscore the importance of bearing witness to acts of violence and subjugation, whether factual or fictional and to preserve the memories of survivors. However, given the works listed above, the research will focus on the narrative *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry, which presents childhood, the testimonial content,

⁵ Em estudos mais recentes, vemos que o método (ou métodos) não precede a análise, como algo previamente fabricado, mas deriva dela. Gradualmente, torna-se mais claro que a literatura comparativa não pode ser entendida apenas como sinônimo de "comparação" (CARVALHAL, 2007, p. 07).

and the innocent eye as the narrator of the whole plot, in addition to clearly approaching the Holocaust as the experience of a little girl survivor.

4. INNOCENT EYE AND TESTIMONIAL CONTENT IN *NUMBER THE STARS*

Figure 1: Imagem capa



Source: Google imagens

The title of the book *Number the Stars* was inspired by the writer from reading Psalm 147:4 – “He fixes the number of the stars, to each one he gives a name”, referring to the Star of David and the Jewish lives lost in the Holocaust. American writer Lois Lowry, wrote *Number the Stars* for children's audiences after hearing a testimony, thus creating a literary work that encompasses real facts and characters present in the life of the Jewish survivor who was a friend of the writer.

Annemarie, the protagonist of the narrative, tells the story through the Innocent Eye, which according to Meyer (2002), is when the narrator is a child - showing moments of courage, bravery, and intelligence. In the narrative, the main characters are Johansens, Ellen Rosen, and the narrator Annemarie Johansen. *Number the Stars* tells the story of the Johansen family who lived in Denmark and who had Jewish friends and neighbors who were at risk of being taken to the concentration camps. The Johansen sisters' lives were tranquil until their neighbors, the Rosens, needed to flee for protection and Annemarie's family helped by staying with the couple's daughter, Ellen Rosen. In her childhood, the protagonist witnessed great bravery and courage portrayed in Lowry's work.

The narrator's innocent eye emphasizes the choice of the representation of childhood established by the writer, would it be the same childhood portrayed in romantic literary works? In the narrative, we can see a child faced with harsh encounters with the horrors of a state of exception, in which human rights are suspended and a necropolitical state threatens lives. The protagonist Annemarie's encounters with the soldiers or even in the acts of courage to help the Jews, are such good examples of these difficult times, especially to a child. All of Annemarie's encounters with the SSs⁶ were moments told by the real witness that are reported in a very engaging and realistic way by the narrator:

“Halte!” the soldier ordered in a stern voice. The German Word was as familiar as it was frightening [...] There were two of them. That meant two helmets, two sets of cold eyes glaring at her, and four tall shiny boots planted firmly on the sidewalk, blocking her path to home. And it meant two rifles, gripped in the hands of the soldiers. She

⁶ the militarized organization most responsible for the genocidal slaughter of Holocaust victims.

stared at the rifles first. Then, finally, she looked into the face of the soldier who had ordered her to halt (LOWRY, 1989, p. 15).

The brave little Annemarie showed that there were moments when she had to be an innocent child who did not know what was happening and at times when she had to be smarter than the soldiers to get around them. In other words, what will childhood be like within the event of war and after that event? The maturation presented by Annemarie was visible during the plot since the story begins with the innocent child not knowing exactly how to react or behave in front of the soldier and ends with full awareness that she is going against what the soldiers preached and saving Jewish lives. However, the representation of childhood in the literary works about the holocaust raises many questions about how reading is being presented and received by children, adolescents, and youth:

Holocaust literature for children can be conceived as having a greater moral obligation to be historically accurate than historical fiction dealing with less catastrophic events. Although the basic issues and techniques involved are not different from any other kind of historical fiction, when the Holocaust is represented in literature for young readers, they are accorded a greater enormity (KOKKOLA, 2002, p. 03).

Testimony or historical context itself that discusses the theme of the Holocaust containing real facts or fictional facts should be brought to the children's audience because according to Lydia Kokkola (2002), the main obligation of the work is to expose the limited situation to which people were submitted to. Regarding that, it establishes Lois Lowry's narrative in *Number the Stars* as testimonial literature. During the narrative, Annemarie is very dedicated to getting the reader as close to reality as possible and one of these moments happens during encounters with soldiers:

The officer stared at them grimly. "Now," Mama said in a strong voice, "you have seen that we are not hiding anything. May my children go back to bed?" The officer ignored her. Suddenly he grabbed a handful of Ellen's hair. Ellen winced. He laughed scornfully. "You have a blond child sleeping in the other room. And you have this blond daughter—" He gestured toward Annemarie with his head. "Where did you get the dark-haired one?" He twisted the lock of Ellen's hair. "From a different father? From the milkman? [...] For a moment no one spoke. Then Annemarie, watching in panic, saw her father move swiftly to the small bookcase and take out a book. She's what he was holding in the family photograph album. Very quickly he searched through its pages, found what he was looking for, and tore out three pictures from three separate pages. [...] "Kirsten Elisabeth," the officer read, looking at Kirsti's baby picture. He let the photograph fall to the floor (LOWRY, 1989, p. 62-63).

Whenever Annemarie describes the scene of violence or the encounters with the soldiers, as the one quoted above, approximates fiction with reality. Seligmann-Silva (1999, p. 375) states that "the relationship between texts and facts depends on the reading, and, incidentally, arguments also exist in the literature, and the image it embraces is by no means indifferent to the truth"⁷ making the testimonial literature not invalidated, as it should not be considered total truth in post-traumatic testimonies. Because of that, still following the line between fact and fiction, Seligmann-Silva (1999, p. 375) reinforces that "the truth is that this limit between fiction and "reality" cannot be delimited. And the testimony precisely wants to rescue what is most terrible in the "real" to present it. Even if for that it needs literature"⁸

⁷ Seligmann (1999, p. 375), "A relação entre os textos e os fatos depende da leitura e, de resto, também existem argumentos na literatura, e a imagem que ela abarca não é de modo algum indiferente à verdade"

⁸ Seligmann (1999, p. 375), "A verdade é que esse limite entre a ficção e a "realidade" não pode ser delimitado. E o testemunho justamente quer resgatar o que existe de mais terrível no "real" para apresentá-lo. Mesmo que para isso ele precise da literatura."

To try and help some more Jewish people, Annemarie and her family went to the family farm where her uncle lived to mourn a beloved aunt who had passed away, but who was unknown to Annemarie because her mother had never told her about her existence. When she got there, the protagonist insisted on questioning the relatives about the reason why they had never told her that her aunt lived there, and her uncle Henrik convinced her that people cannot and should not know everything and that many times this could be harmful and could lead people to many problems. It was time for the wake, people were gathered in the living room, people Annemarie did not know either of them, the coffin was also there and as usual, the little girl observed and described each one of them, even the baby who was curled up on her mother's lap and could not stop crying. Then there was another grim contact with the expected but unwelcome visitors.

The car doors slammed. Everyone in the room tensed, but no one spoke. She heard—as if a curring nightmare—the pounding on the door, and then the heavy, frighteningly familiar staccato of boots on the kitchen floor. The woman with the baby gasped and began, suddenly, to weep. The male, accented voice from the kitchen was loud. “We have observed”, he said, “that an unusual number of people have gathered at this house tonight. What is the explanation?” “There has been a death”, Mama's voice replied calmly. “It is always our custom to gather and pay our respects when a family member dies. I am sure you are familiar with our customs” (LOWRY, 1989, p. 99).

The arrival of the soldiers broadened the fear of being caught. The innocent eye focuses on the agglomeration at the residence. The soldiers inquired about the customs of others regardless of any respect or disrespect, even asked to open the coffin and see who was being mourned. The innocent eye point of view focuses on violence, but not so explicitly as other kinds of narrators. It sees reality, but it does not deepen it.

“Who died?” he asked harshly. No one answered. [...]. “My Great-aunt Birte”, she lied, in a firm voice. The officer moved forward suddenly, across the room, to the casket. He placed one gloved hand on its lid. “Poor Great-aunt Birte”, he said, in a condescending voice. “I do know your customs”, he said, turning his gaze toward Mama, who still stood in the doorway. [...] “Why is it not open?” he demanded. “Let us open it up and take one last look at Great-aunt Birte!” Annemarie saw Peter, across the room, stiffen in his chair, lift his chin, and reach slowly with one hand to ward his side. Mama walked quickly across the room, directly to the casket, directly to the officer. “You're right”, she said. “The doctor said it should be closed, because Aunt Birte died of typhus, and he said that there was a chance the germs would still be there and would still be dangerous. But what does he know—only a country doctor and an old man at that? Surely typhus germs wouldn't linger in a dead person! And dear Aunt Birte; I have been longing to see her face, to kiss her goodbye. Of course, we will open the casket! I am glad you suggested”— With a swift motion the Nazi officer slapped Mama across her face. She staggered backward, and a white mark on her cheek darkened. “You foolish woman”, he patted. “To think that we have any interest in seeing the body of your deceased aunt! Open it after we leave”, he said. (LOWRY, 189, p. 101).

When bringing the trauma experienced to code and the harm the survivors were submitted to, the testimony will bring together the culture established in each individual's reality, as happens in the fake wake of Annemarie's aunt, using culture to fake a wake and go unnoticed by the soldiers, after all, what was inside the coffin were clothes, sheets, coats, and supplements that would help the Jews who were in the room to escape and protect themselves against the cold because they would leave in the night right after the wake. However, Sarmento-Pantoja (2021) in his article *Between Cracks: considerations about the Fictional Content, the Truth Content, and the Testimonial Content*, stipulates the presence of cultural aspects in testimonial literature.

If we find the testimonial content in culture, we could say that literature, when it is built based on relations between truth content and factual content, is full of references from culture and, therefore, of testimonial content (SARMENTO-PANTOJA, 2021, p. 6)⁹.

Sarmiento-Pantoja (2021) determines testimonial content as part of the cultural premise that is "born" culturally and factually, thus being able to limit the actions present in the testimonial tenor as close as possible to the real. An approximation presented once again in Annemarie's narrative is that historically some people used drugs to evade the soldiers' watchdogs and manage to escape or save and hide Jews. This strategy was also used by Annemarie's mother. Uncle Henrik was going to transport the Jews in the boat and ended up forgetting the handkerchief inside the picnic basket that Annemarie coincidentally went to deliver.

Then his eyes locked on the basket. He handed the cheese and napkin to the soldier beside him. "What's that? There, in the bottom?" he asked in a different, tenser voice. What would Kirsti do? Annemarie stamped her foot. Suddenly, to her surprise, she began to cry. "I don't know!" she said, her voice choked. "My mother's going to be angry that you stopped me and made me late. And you've completely ruined Uncle Henrik's lunch, so now he'll be mad at me, too!" The dogs whined and struggled against the leashes, nosing forward to the basket. [...] "Why was this so carefully hidden?" he napped. Annemarie wiped her eyes on the sleeve of her sweater. "It wasn't hidden, any more than the napkin was. I don't know what it is". That, she realized, was true. She had no idea what was in the packet. The soldier tore the paper open while below him, on the ground, the dogs strained and snarled, pulling against their leashes. [...] "Stop crying, you idiot girl", he said harshly. "Your stupid mother has sent your uncle a handkerchief. In Germany, the women have better things to do. They don't stay at home hemming handkerchiefs for their men". "[...] At least she didn't stitch flowers on it". He flung it to the ground, still half wrapped in the paper, beside the apple. The dogs lunged, sniffed at it eagerly, then subsided, disappointed again. "Go on", the soldier said. He dropped the cheese and the napkin back into her basket. "Go on to your uncle and tell him the German dogs enjoyed his bread". All of the soldiers pushed past her (LOWRY, 1989, p. 134).

Annemarie, from the beginning to the end of the narrative, keeps the same purpose, to understand what is happening around her, to understand the risk she, her family, her friends, and other people are subjected to, as in the encounter with the soldiers and dogs in the forest. However, the intelligent little protagonist is always attentive to the way she wants and should behave in unwanted encounters, and always attentive to protect and care for her sister, parents, friends, and neighbors that she loved so much, showing once again that her childhood was not the same as that of ordinary children, and that she was a little adult.

Another important aspect of the narrative is the presence of resistance groups. Annemarie's parents rarely talked about her older sister who had passed away. The deceased girl used to be part of a resistance movement and got caught by the Nazis. The innocent eye narrator acknowledges the truth about her sister long after that and faces the sad truth about people who were murdered during the Second World War and a testimony report that even dead there was no dignity and once again fiction "imitates" real life by bringing a fact to the narrative.

Later, Annemarie had gone to the place with her parents and said they had laid flowers there, on the bleak, numbered ground. That night, Annemarie's parents told her the

⁹ Se encontramos o teor testemunhal na cultura, poderíamos dizer que a literatura, quando se constrói com base nas relações entre o teor de verdade e o teor factual, está repleta de referências da cultura e, por conseguinte, do teor testemunhal (SARMENTO-PANTOJA, 2021, p.6).

truth about Lise's death at the beginning of the war. "She was part of the Resistance, too", [...]. "Part of the group that fought for our country in whatever ways they could". "We didn't know", Mama added. "She didn't tell us. Peter told us after she died". "Oh, Papa!" Annemarie cried. "Mama! They didn't shoot Lise, did they? The way they did Peter, in the public square, with people watching?" [...] But Papa shook his head. "She was with Peter and others in a cellar where they held secret meetings to make plans". Somehow the Nazis found out, and they raided the place that evening. [...]. "Peter was shot in the arm. Do you remember that Peter's arm was bandaged, and in a ring at Lise's funeral? He wore a coat over it so that no one would notice. And a hat, to hide his red hair. The Nazis were looking for him" (LOWRY, 1989, p.14).

This approximation to the real is verified by Márcio Seligmann-Silva in his article entitled *The Testimony: between fiction and the real*. He reassures that:

In testimony literature, it is no longer a matter of imitation of reality, but a kind of "manifestation" of the "real". It is clear that there is no immediate transposition of the "real" to literature: but the passage to the literary, the work of style and with the delicate weave of sound and meaning of words that constitutes literature is marked by the "real" that resists symbolization (SELIGMANN-SILVA, 1999, p.383)¹⁰.

The fictional narrative presented in *Number the Stars* presents an overview of war through the eyes of a child and when we compare it to other testimonies, it is noticeable that the cruel reality and inhospitable acts are not the focus as it is in survivors' testimonies. In the narrative, virtues like solidarity, empathy, respect, love, and helping people, among others are those who take the lead in events that favor saving Jews' lives. The innocent eye narrates these events always believing that they will turn out positively and hope prevails and overcome the evil of war.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The content of testimony and the presence of childhood in Lowry's book is of extreme importance for the education of children and adolescents, since it clearly and simply addresses contents that should be treated with caution and respect, such as the testimony of a survivor of that the writer brought into the code and kept alive the memory of the victim. Vilela (2012) reinforces the theme of education against forgetting, highlighting the importance of keeping alive the memory of survivors, of bringing to code the violence suffered and the condition to which they were subjected. Such topics need to reach younger audiences, so they learn the importance of sustaining human rights, especially in times when lives are endangered by necropolitical events. This paper concludes that regardless of the narrative, fictional or real, keeping the memory alive is the most important thing, because when there is education against forgetting, humanity will not reproduce once again what was horrible for a certain people or a certain race. After all, we are all equal regardless of creed, color, or race.

REFERENCES

BERG, Mary. *El Gueto de Varsovia: Diario, 1939-1944*. Espanha, Sefarad Editores, 2010

BOYNE, John. *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. London: Vintage, 2012.

¹⁰ Na literatura de testemunho não se trata mais de imitação da realidade, mas sim de uma espécie de "manifestação" do "real". É evidente que não existe uma transposição imediata do "real" para a literatura: mas a passagem para o literário, o trabalho do estilo e com a delicada trama de som e sentido das palavras que constitui a literatura é marcada pelo "real" que resiste à simbolização (SELIGMANN-SILVA, 1999, p.383)

CARVALHAL, Tânia Franco. **Literatura comparada**. 4.ed. rev. e ampliada. - São Paulo: Ática, 2006

FRANK, Anne. **Anne Frank**: The diary of a young girl. New York, 2006.

KERR, Judith. **When Hitler stole pink rabbit**. Reino Unido, Collins, 1971.

KOKKOLA, L. **Representing the holocaust in children's literature**. Taylor & Francis Group, 2002.

UCINSKI, Bernardo. **Imigrantes e mascates**. Brasil, Companhia das Letrinhas, 2016.

LATHAM, Don. **Childhood under siege**: Lois Lowry's Number the Stars and The Giver. The Lion and the Unicorn, v. 26, n. 1, p. 1-15, 2002.

LOWRY, Lois; BROWN, Blair. **Number the Stars**. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989.

MEYER, Michael. **The Bedford Compact Introduction to Literature**. 2002.

SARMENTO-PANTOJA, Augusto Nascimento. Entre frestas: considerações sobre o teor ficcional, o teor de verdade e o teor testemunhal. **MOARA**–Revista Eletrônica do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras ISSN: 0104-0944, v. 2, n. 56, p. 112-139, 2021.

SALGUEIRO, Wilberth. **O que é literatura de testemunho** (e considerações em torno de Graciliano Ramos, Alex Polari e André du Rap). Matraga-Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras da UERJ, v. 19, n. 31, 2012.

SELIGMANN-Silva, Márcio. **O testemunho**: entre a ficção e o real, Rio de Janeiro, 1999

SILVA, Márcio Seligmann. **Zeugnis e Testimonio**: um caso de intraduzibilidade entre conceitos. Letras, n. 22, p. 121-130, 2001.

VAN TIEGHEM, Paul. **La Littérature Comparée** [1931]. 1946.

VILELA, Eugénia. Do testemunho. Princípios: **Revista de Filosofia** (UFRN), v. 19, n. 31, p. 141-179, 2012

VILELA, Eugénia. **Corpos Inabitáveis. Errância, Filosofia e Memória**. Enrahonar, v. 31, p. 35-52, 2000.