

ARTIGO

# H. P. Lovecraft's Ethnocentric Violence in *The Horror at Red Hook*: An analysis of paratexts

A violência etnocêntrica de H.P. Lovecraft em  
*The Horror at Red Hook*: uma análise dos paratextos

Hélio Parente de Vasconcelos Neto 

Luana Ferreira de Freitas 

Katarine Maria Linhares Calado 

Universidade Federal do Ceará, Fortaleza, CE, Brasil.

E-mail: [hpn.helio@gmail.com](mailto:hpn.helio@gmail.com); [luanafreitas.luana@gmail.com](mailto:luanafreitas.luana@gmail.com); [caladokatarine@gmail.com](mailto:caladokatarine@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT:** H. P. Lovecraft is considered one of the leading authors in weird fiction, science fiction, fantasy, and horror. His concept of cosmic horror changed genres and served as an inspiration for many modern writers. The author's xenophobic and ethnocentric ideas are present in his literary work, with an emphasis on the racist themes so intrinsic to the short story "The Horror at Red Hook" (1927). The paratexts of Marsely de Marco and Giovana Bomentre's translations of the short story, both from 2018, will be analyzed. Berman's retranslation theory (1984) and Albachten and Gürçağlar's theories (2018) will be used as bibliographic sources, as well as Genette's study on paratexts and their relation to translation (1987/2018) and Joshi's biographical work (2013), in order to contextualize our findings within the broader field of Translation Studies.

**KEYWORDS:** Translation Studies; H. P. Lovecraft; "The Horror at Red Hook"; Ethnocentric Violence; Paratexts

**RESUMO:** H. P. Lovecraft é considerado um dos principais autores de ficção *weird*, ficção científica, fantasia e horror. Seu conceito de horror cósmico mudou os gêneros e serviu de inspiração para muitos escritores modernos. As ideias xenofóbicas e etnocêntricas do autor estão presentes em sua obra literária, com destaque para os temas racistas tão intrínsecos ao conto "The Horror at Red Hook" (1927). Serão analisados os paratextos das duas traduções de 2018 do conto de Marsely de Marco e Giovana Bomentre. A teoria da retradução de Berman (1984) e as teorias de Albachten e Gürçağlar (2018) serão usadas como fontes bibliográficas, bem como o estudo de Genette sobre paratextos e a sua relação com a tradução (1987/2018) e o trabalho biográfico de Joshi (2013), a fim de contextualizar nossas descobertas dentro do campo mais amplo dos Estudos da Tradução.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Estudos da Tradução; H. P. Lovecraft; "The Horror at Red Hook"; Violência etnocêntrica; Paratexto

## COMO CITAR

VASCONCELOS NETO, Hélio Parente de; FREITAS, Luana Ferreira de; CALADO, Katarine Maria Linhares. H. P. Lovecraft's Ethnocentric Violence in *The Horror at Red Hook*: An analysis of paratexts. *Revista da Anpoll*, v.54, n.1, e1911, 2023. doi: <https://doi.org/10.18309/ranpoll.v54i1.1911>



## 1 Introduction

Howard Phillips Lovecraft was born in Providence, USA, in 1890. Although he was not successful during his lifetime, he is considered one of the most important figures in the development of *weird fiction* and horror literature. His biggest legacy is the concept of “cosmic terror”, the idea that the human being is insignificant in the cosmos (LOVECRAFT, 2018). The author's life was one of psychological strain, as both himself and his parents suffered from various forms of mental illnesses. His father, Winfield, would be committed to Butler Hospital, in Providence where he would spend five years, until his death in 1898, due to an apparent case of syphilis that caused several hallucinations and mental strain (JOSHI, 2013, p. 42).

Lovecraft would find a paternal figure in his grandfather Whipple Van Buren, a rich industrialist. He would become a very important figure in Lovecraft's life, introducing the young writer to the literature of classical English poetry and gothic novels. Whipple's death in 1904 caused great emotional and financial suffering to Lovecraft's family, as they lost both their main source of income and a close relative.

During his adult life, Lovecraft became involved in amateur journalism, which proved to be a medium wherein the author felt both captivated and encouraged. He worked in various positions for the *United Amateur Press Association* (UAPA), and his stories were then published in a variety of magazines such as *The Vagrant*, *Weird Tales*, *Homebrew*, and many others. He is now considered to be one of the most influential authors in the United States and enjoys a canonical status, as he is now represented in the highly acclaimed *Penguin Classics* imprint and the *Library of America* publisher. This fame, combined with the public domain status of his works, has led to many translations of his texts.

Jiří Levý defines translation as a threefold process of interpretation: “Firstly the author formed an interpretation of reality; secondly the translator formed an interpretation of the original work and thirdly the reader formed an interpretation of the translation.” (LEVÝ, 2011, p. 30).

This concept is particularly interesting for this case study. Lovecraft, while living in New York, at the height of the Harlem Renaissance, abhors the world as he sees it, inhabited by different ethnic groups, as will be shown later. He then produces a short story that reflects his ethnocentrism. The translator appears later as a type of special reader who intercepts the message, before it reaches the target reader, and subjectively transforms it. Since each translator is a person inserted in a sociohistorical context, they will find different linguistic solutions for the same texts, taking into consideration their own experience in the field, their literary influences, and their own interpretation of the source material. The material then reaches the Brazilian reader of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where it is reinterpreted.

Regarding retranslation, we will examine Antoine Berman's retranslation theory, in which the French philosopher argues that every translation is doomed to age, its linguistic attributes becoming unsustainable in its sociohistorical context and thus beckoning a new text (BERMAN, 1984). Berman (1984) also states that: “[...] c'est le destin de toutes les traductions des 'classiques' de la littérature universelle que d'être tôt ou tard retraduites.” (BERMAN, 1984, p. 281). As argued earlier, Lovecraft can be understood as a “classic” of North American horror literature, as a participant in a supposed literary “canon”, and since the USA holds great influence

in the geopolitical sphere, it is unsurprising that canonical authors are retranslated. Allied to Berman's theorems, we will also examine contemporary retranslation theory (ALBACHTEN; GÜRÇAĞLAR, 2018).

Paratexts are texts adjacent to the main text that frame it and can change its reception or interpretation. There are many types of editorial paratexts, such as prefaces, postfaces, footnotes, titles, and many other *éléments pré-textuels* and *éléments post-textuels*, i.e., elements that precede and follow the main textual element, respectively. Genette (2018) argues that when analyzing paratexts, one must consider the following criteria: where it is located, when was it made, how it conveys its message, from whom, to whom, and its purpose (GENETTE, 2018, p. 12). These elements can change our understanding of the source text, but can also give the reader insight into the translation process, as the translation may have its own paratexts that are not present in the source text.

These can deal with many aspects of the translated text, as shown in Carneiro's thesis, such as the importance of the author or work in its culture, linguistic aspects of the translation, cultural aspects, literary references, and others (CARNEIRO, 2014, p. 157-159).

## 2 Lovecraft and race

Lovecraft's problematic views on race and immigration were present very early in his life. In July 1905, at the young age of fifteen, Lovecraft produced his first explicitly racist document. The poem, titled *De Triumpho Naturae: The Triumph of Nature over Northern Ignorance*, was dedicated to William Benjamin Smith, a white supremacist who argued for the racial inferiority of black people. In the poem, Lovecraft argues that the northern US campaign to abolish slavery was an unholy act that would ultimately be punished by death by nature itself.

Until his death, Lovecraft believed in the alleged biological inferiority of black people and would defend the need to draw a strict colour line to prevent miscegenation, one of his deepest fears. As Joshi (2013, p. 168-169) points out, this view had its fair share of supporters in both the political and the literary worlds, whose works Lovecraft had access to, in the names of: Robert Chambers, Abraham Lincoln, Voltaire, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and others<sup>1</sup>.

By the time the 1905's poem was written, a generation of African American political leaders, intellectuals and writers had emerged, such as W. E. B. Du Bois (*The Souls of the Black Folk*, 1903) and Paul Laurence Dunbar (*Lyrics of Lowly Life*, 1896). As Joshi (2013, p. 169) states, this movement of antiracism would find its height during the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural and intellectual revival of African American arts, in the 1920's, with the works of Zora Neale Hurston, Claude Mackay, and many others. Lovecraft "[...] never read any of this literature, even though he was in New York at the height of this movement." (JOSHI, 2013, p. 169).

This early view of race by Lovecraft would not have been considered outlandish in his aristocratic circles, which revolved mainly around his family, and as Joshi tells us:

---

<sup>1</sup> See, in the respective order of authors: *Vestiges of Creation* (1843); *Mr. Lincoln and Negro Equality* (1860); *The Philosophy of History*, chapter II (1765), *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1776), *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race*, by Thomas G. Dyer (1980).

The scientific refutation of racism was only beginning at the turn of the century, led by the pioneering work of Franz Boas (1858-1942) and others under his direction. If it is excusable for a fifteen-year-old not to have paid much attention to this work in 1905, it would be much less excusable for a forty-year-old not to have done so in 1930 [...] (JOSHI, 2013, p. 170).

Over the next few years, the author would continue to share his racist views on ethnic groups that were not of white European descent. In April 1912, he wrote *New-England Fallen*, a poem largely concerned with an imagined colonial period in which the descendants of Anglo-Saxons were the “rightfully” dominant culture. The text clearly shows a distaste for immigration, which is often seen as an invasion and perversion of a supposedly USA culture:

[...] Oft to the village drove good Farmer John,/To stock his larder, and supply his barn./Mid shady streets he sought the village store,/And hail'd the rustics cluster'd 'round the door./—only to have “foreign boors” infiltrate the society and corrupt it from within [...] (LOVECRAFT, 1912a).

Lovecraft would be a staunch advocate of cultural assimilation, as will soon be revealed, defending that these “foreign boors” should not retain their original cultural practices, in order to be fully incorporated into white North American motifs.

In September 1913, he wrote *On a New-England Village Seen by Moonlight*, which was published in *The Trail* N°. 2, in 1915. The publication begins with the following introductory paragraph: “The peaceful old villages of New England are fast losing their original Yankee inhabitants and their agricultural atmosphere, being now the seats of manufacturing industries peopled by Southern European and Western Asiatic immigrants of low grade.” (LOVECRAFT, 1913), another example of clear antipathy toward immigration and of other ethnic groups. This era of prejudicial poetry by Lovecraft is described by Joshi as:

[...] surely close to the nadir of Lovecraft's poetic output — not only for the ignorant racism involved, but for its array of trite, hackneyed imagery and nauseating sentimentality in depicting the blissful life of the stolid yeoman farmer [...] (JOSHI, 2013, p. 206).

As mentioned above, H. P. Lovecraft would be deeply involved in the world of amateur journalism, this being the medium in which his first stories were published. He has also published several other non-poetic texts reflecting his racial beliefs, such as *The Crime of the Century* (1915), *Americanism* (1916), texts in the UAPA and others.

He would, in fact, issue his own amateur magazine, from 1915 to 1923, with a total of 13 issues, called *The Conservative*. In this medium, Lovecraft would express both his literary conservative opinions and his political views on the matter of war, race, and general politics. As he states in the first issue:

[...] *The Conservative* will ever be found an enthusiastic champion of total abstinence and prohibition; of moderate, healthy militarism as contrasted with dangerous and unpatriotic peace-preaching; Pan-saxonism, or the domination by the English and kindred races over the lesser divisions of mankind. (JOSHI, 2013, p. 260-261).

In the aforementioned *United Amateur*, in the June 1916 issue, he would comment on the abolition of neocolonial practices in the Philippines by the United States' government, arguing that "the mongrel natives, in whose blood the Malay strain predominates, are not and never will be racially capable of maintaining a civilized condition by themselves" (LOVECRAFT, 1916, p. 42)<sup>2</sup>. In the same document he comments on the slaughtering of North America's first peoples, stating that "[...] it seems the destiny of the Anglo-Saxon to sweep inferior races from his path wherever he goes" (LOVECRAFT, 1916, p. 43).

Allied to this, characters from other ethnic groups are responsible for certain motifs in many of his stories, such as: the downfall of an area, the invocation of some ancient terror, or sinful practices that lead to the astonishment of the white male protagonist. One can argue, however, that the central part of these stories is the *weird*, the cosmic horror, the encounter with some eldritch being, with dreamlands, with supernatural forces that often lead to madness in Lovecraft's story.

For Lovecraft a weird tale must contain an unexplainable fear of unknown forces, expressed with seriousness, and must deal with the concept of suspension or defeat of fixed laws of nature (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 1043).

However, there are times when the narrative is so particularly aggressive against non-whites that it becomes the central plot of the story. This is where *The Horror at Red Hook* (HRH) comes in.

### 3 The Horror at Red Hook

The short-tale tells the story of the Irish-born New York detective Thomas F. Malone and his encounter with the dark secrets that inhabit the neighbourhood of Red Hook, in Brooklyn, New York. The story was written in August 1925 and first published in *Weird Tales*, in 1927. In the introduction to the story, Joshi states that: "it may have been written on a dare: Lovecraft wrote to Frank Belknap Log that 'it represents at least an attempt to extract horror form an atmosphere to which you deny any qualities save vulgar commonplaceness.'" (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 314). It was written at a time when Lovecraft, married to Sonia Greene, a Jewish immigrant, was living in New York.

As Klose notes in a preservation document for the Red Hook Play Center, the neighbourhood was originally a Native American settlement, which was then taken over by Dutch immigrants in 1636, who named it *Roode Hoek*, from which then originated the modern name (KLOSE, 2007, p. 3). By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the neighbourhood's economy revolved around its port, which then became an international port and the busiest shipping centre in the nation. Its population had become very diverse by this time, as Klose notes:

[...] its population in the 19th and early 20th centuries was characterized by various European immigrant groups who came to the area in search of jobs as dockworkers: first Irish, German, and Norwegian, and later Italian and Puerto Rican immigrants. By the 1920s, the Columbia Street area was a recognized Little Italy. African American longshoreman began working Red Hook's docks as early as the 1890s. (KLOSE, 2007, p. 3).

---

<sup>2</sup> Available from: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/30637/30637-h/30637-h.htm>. Accessed in: 28 mar. 2023.

The tale begins with a mentally scarred Malone, who, upon encountering something that resembling the neighbourhood of Red Hook, commits astonishing lapses, such as “Staring queerly for a second at the tallest of the buildings before him, and then, with a series of terrified, hysterical shrieks, breaking into a frantic run [...]” (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 314). The detective, now on a medical leave and prohibited from doing any kind of investigative work, achieved this state of hysteria by being burdened with a “disproportionately arduous work on a gruesome local case [...]” (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 314-315).

This case is initially, a series of kidnappings in the neighbourhood, the reappearance of a Robert Suydam, of “foreigners,” and the eventual discovery of a supernatural cult within the immigrant community.

The story is set in Red Hook, an area described as: “[...] a maze of hybrid squalor near the ancient waterfront [...]”, “a babel of sound and filth” and a “[...] tangle of material and spiritual putrescence [...]” (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 316-317). Its population is a “[...] hopeless tangle and enigma: Syrian, Spanish, Italian and negro elements impinging upon one another [...]” (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 317). The largely immigrant population of Red Hook is seen throughout the tale as invaders, augurs of evil tidings and is often described in animalistic terms, their movement narrated as that of a plague or disease that is spreading through the once picturesque and perfect Red Hook, populated by “a better picture” of “clear-eyed mariners” (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 317).

This reflects the exposed Lovecraft's view of race and his fear of other ethnicities “polluting” what he understood to be white American culture. Lovecraft seems to be saying that by giving way to immigrants and allowing them to maintain their own cultures, Red Hook will fall from grace and become an inhospitable place, full of crime and horror.

Most of the story follows Malone's detective work on the “Case of Robert Suydam”, a “lettered recluse of ancient Dutch family [...]” (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 318). He was a rather shabby-looking and of unkempt man who lived in a spacious mansion built by his ancestors. According to his relatives, Robert behaved rather strangely, babbling about “unlimited powers almost within his grasp” and repeating strange mystical words (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 319). This, coupled with the fact that he seemed to avoid all relatives and acquaintances, save “delegations of mixed rowdies and foreigners” (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 319) to perform some sort of ceremony, led to his family to seek court pronouncements on his sanity, which ultimately came to nothing.

This is where Malone's work comes in, for Suydam's new associates were:

[...] among the blackest and most vicious criminals of Red Hook's devious lanes, and a least a third of them were known and repeated offenders in the matter of thievery, disorder, and the importation of illegal immigrants (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 319-320).

As the plot progresses, we see Suydam continues to meet with immigrants, all of whom are seen as “unauthorized newcomers” who were “flooding Red Hook in increasing numbers, entering through some marine conspiracy [...]” (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 320). This, eventually, leads to the reappearance of Suydam in society and the emergence of disappearances and kidnappings in New York.

The crimes would lead to police action, culminating in a raid on one of Suydam's houses. The police find no evidence of kidnapping, but Malone discovers inscriptions of supernatural invocations on the walls, a foreshadowing of the evil to come.

At this point in the story, there is nothing to suggest that the immigrant population is responsible for these kidnappings, only Malone's understanding of them as being "foreigners", "ape-like", "lesser divisions of mankind" and their relationship to an old white aristocratic gentleman to be rather strange. Fueled by his own racism, Malone is eager to find something to connect the crimes to Red Hook's population.

The tale then ends when Malone, in a following raid, discovers a hidden cult of devil worshippers, chiefly composed of Suydam and his associates. This encounter leaves Malone incapacitated and mentally unstable.

## 4 Paratexts

In pursuing the aim of this paper, we will focus on the paratexts of the 2018's translation by Marsely De Marco. This translation is present in a box, containing three volumes of Lovecraftian stories entitled *H. P. Lovecraft Best Tales*. This element alone tells us that this selection is considered to be the greatest work of Lovecraft translated into the Brazilian literary system. *O Horror em Red Hook*, as the story was translated, is part of one of these volumes, along with two other stories: *A Cor que Caiu do Céu* (*The Colour from Outer Space*) and *Ele* (*He*). In fact, the collection title is *A Cor que Caiu do Céu*, whilst the other stories are present in other sections of the volume.

The book contains a variety of paratexts: a preface, a postface, and texts on both book flaps. Most of these texts discuss Lovecraft's influence on the horror genre and popular culture, a short biography, the reception of his stories, and their publication. There are no footnotes, and the only paratext that precedes the story is a preface called "Nota do Editor (Editor's Note)".

This preface has the characteristics of an editor's preface as established by Carneiro (2014, p. 158-159), that is, a paratext that was commissioned for the translation that emphasizes the importance of the author in the source culture and, in this case, does not talk about the translation process itself. There is no information about the translators or their linguistic transmutation processes.

An interesting topic in this preface is that the editor seems to be warning the reader that they may encounter examples of Lovecraft's ethnocentric violence in the stories in the volume, which coexist with this horror-inducing nature, as it reads:

No particular effort is made by the author to tone down the passages containing statements of a racist and xenophobic nature, and their explicitness is likely to provoke even greater discomfort, and the reading becomes more distant from the period in which the tales were written (LOVECRAFT, 2018, p. 8)<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Henceforth, every translation, unless stated otherwise during the essay or in the reference section, shall be our translation. Source text: "Não há um esforço particular do autor para mitigar as passagens que contêm declarações de natureza racista e xenofóbica, e sua explicitude provavelmente provoca mais desconforto quanto mais distante a leitura se torna do período em que os contos foram escritos" (LOVECRAFT, 2018, p. 8).

The preface goes on to say that how 'the reader subverts these themes is entirely their own responsibility' (LOVECRAFT, 2018, p. 8). There is no information about the subversion of the occult detective trope in the paratexts.

As Genette notes, the difference between prefaces and postfaces is usually minimal and they are treated as types of the same paratexts (2018, p. 147). However, in this case, the placement is very relevant because it comes before the text and, therefore, seems to warn the reader that they may encounter textual elements that are unacceptable to modern Brazilian readers.

As far as Bomentre's translation is concerned, there is an interesting variety of paratexts, but we can say that the dedication and the cover set the tone of the volume: "To H. P. Lovecraft, with all my conflicted feelings" and "A tribute to and a critique of Lovecraft", respectively.

The volume entitled *The Ballad of Black Tom* is divided into two parts: the first is a novella that gives the book its title, and the second is a translation of "*The Horror at Red Hook*", in Portuguese, "*O horror em Red Hook*". *The Ballad of Black Tom* is a re-textualization of the Lovecraftian tale from the point of view of Victor Lavalle, an award-winning and renowned American writer and Lovecraft enthusiast.

In *The Ballad of Black Tom*, Lavalle subverts Lovecraft's ethnocentric story and tells it through the eyes of a black man living in Red Hook. In it, the writer plays at the horror of cosmicism from a different perspective, and while the character does indeed encounter horrors beyond imagination, what is also terrifying in this story is the violence and danger of racism. As Lavalle notes in an interview, Lovecraft's characters are usually driven to madness when they discover that they are insignificant in the eyes of an eldritch being, that the universe is indifferent, but as one who is constantly challenged by racism in his home country, the author states that: "If you're Black, you don't think the universe as a whole thinks you are wonderful because all you have to do, if you're a Black American, all you have to do is walk through America, and this country teaches you [...]" (ROMANO, 2020).

In a paratextual analysis, the fact that this translation of *HRH* is contained within its own rewriting by a Black American, can be interpreted as a way of mitigating its ethnocentric violence, since it is not presented as the main focus of the work, but as an extra element. In addition, the story is accompanied by a postface, signed by the publisher, which explicitly warns the reader of its content, and we also find information about the translation process, a brief history of the story, its author, and its rewriting.

According to the editor's afterword:

Your contact with the tale will be integral and, when translating it, we did not mitigate the terms chosen by Lovecraft, seeking its equivalents in impact and intolerance. Therefore, your experience will be similar to Victor Lavalle, which led him to rewrite the text (LAVALLE, 2018, p. 146)<sup>4</sup>.

The postface also criticizes that Lovecraft's xenophobic views are present not only in the description of non-whites, but in the immediate delegation of this group as the responsible

---

<sup>4</sup> Source text: "O seu contato com o conto será integral e, ao traduzi-lo, não amenizamos os termos escolhidos por Lovecraft, buscando seus equivalentes em impacto e intolerância. Assim, a sua experiência será similar à que levou Victor Lavalle a escrever sua releitura" (LAVALLE, 2018, p. 146).



for the evils that plague the neighbourhood. Furthermore, the company distances itself from Lovecraft's ideas by stating that, while he may be a product of his time the company "does not believe that this justifies his narratives [...]" and that "It is the contemporary reader's responsibility to interpret texts under a critical perspective" (LAVALLE, 2018, p. 146)<sup>5</sup>.

The other paratextual element present in this edition is that there are five footnotes; three of them explain to the reader which author Lovecraft is referring to in the story, such as Doré and Democritus. One deals with a linguistic aspect; it explains that Lovecraft's phrase "sin-pitted faces" (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 317) is a reference to syphilis, and the other offers a translation of a Latin excerpt used in the source text: "An sint unquam daemones incubi et succubae, et an ex tali congressu proles nasci queat" (LOVECRAFT, 2011, p. 330).

As Levý notes, a translation is only functional when it is read by the public (2011, p. 30), and these paratexts seem to take that into consideration by warning the reader of potential tensions in the text. According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), 55,8% of the Brazilian population identifies itself as black<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, it is possible that such an ethnocentric text would be criticized by modern Brazilian readers and that those who belong to the ethnic groups described may feel offended. This reflects modern retranslation theories, which state that:

[...] the passage of time may not necessarily "age" translations (as demonstrated by the resilience and popularity of many older translations) but transform audiences and producers, creating new segments of readers and new translational needs (ALBACHTEN; GÜRÇAGLAR, 2018, p. 2).

The issue of retranslation is not always the result of the aging of a text, as stated by Berman, in a purely linguistic perspective, but the sociohistorical context in which the translation is inserted provokes a change in cultural norms, which can create new translational needs for a modern reader.

We see a confirmation of Berman's theory that canonical works are more likely to be retranslated. These may be understood as highly profitable and secure business strategies by the publisher, as the translation may be motivated by the book's critical acclaim in other literary contexts. Likewise, the case shows that the translator is not the only agent in the retranslation, as can be perceived from the paratexts presented here and from the particular position of Giovana Bomentre as both translator of *HRH*, and editor of *A Balada de Black Tom* (2018), which further complements the retranslation theory.

## 5 Conclusion

With the data analysed, we see that Lovecraft's story *The Horror at Red Hook* is full of ethnocentric violence, in the form of racist views and xenophobia. Its writing is consistent

<sup>5</sup> Source text: "Não acreditamos que isso justifique suas escolhas narrativas ou as torne aceitáveis. A responsabilidade do leitor contemporâneo é interpretar textos sob um olhar crítico" (LAVALLE, 2018, p. 146).

<sup>6</sup> Check: <https://www.dieese.org.br/infografico/2022/populacaoNegra2022/index.html?page=1> and <https://www.ibge.gov.br/pt/inicio.html>. Accessed in: 28 mar. 2023.

with the author's own ideals of 'Pan-saxonism', which was not an uncommon view of race at the time, but, as we have seen before, there were people who acted against such views.

Lovecraft is a product of his time, but newer editions of his work, their translations, and their readers, are not. They are contemporary, and as such, these forms of violence are questioned and often rejected by the critical reader.

Both translations of *HRH* provided a competent translation of the story that reflected its violence and horrific atmosphere, and both texts relied on their paratexts to warn the reader that they would encounter some words and fragments that might cause discomfort. Of particular note was the decision to combine a translation with a rewriting of the story in the novella *The Ballad of Black Tom*, which deals with the subversion of Lovecraft's prejudices. The cases examined here help us reflect on the ethical and social aspect of translation, as one translates a xenophobic text, paratexts can be used as a form of mitigating discomfort. The study also opens a new perspective for studying other translations of the work and their own strategies for re-textualizing H. P. Lovecraft's racism.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article is made possible by the financing support of Fundação Cearense de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (FUNCAP) and Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq), by the faculty and other members of the Postgraduate Programme in Translation Studies (PPG-POET), and by the infrastructure provided by the Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC).

## REFERENCES

- ALBACHTEN, Özlem Berk; GÜRÇAĞLAR, Sehnaz Tahir. *Perspectives on retranslation: ideology, paratexts, methods*. New York: Routledge, 2018.
- BERMAN, Antoine. *L'épreuve de L'étranger: Culture et Traduction dans L'Allemagne Romantique*, Herder, Goethe, Schlegel, Novalis, Humboldt, Schleiermacher, Hordelin. Paris: Gallimard, 1984.
- CARNEIRO, Teresa Dias. *Contribuições para uma Teoria do Paratexto do Livro Traduzido: caso das traduções de obras literárias francesas no Brasil a partir de meados do século XX*. 2014. 399 f. Tese (Doutorado em Letras e Estudos da Linguagem) – Programa de Pós-Graduação em Estudos da Linguagem, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2014.
- GENETTE, Gérard. *Paratextos editoriais*. Translated by Álvaro Faleiros. Cotia: Ateliê Editorial, 2018.
- JOSHI, Sunand Tryambak. *I Am providence: the life and times of H. P. Lovecraft*. New York: Hippocampus Press, 2013.
- KLOSE, Olivia. *New York City Landmarks Preservation. Red Hook Play Center (Sol Goldman Pool)*. New York: The Official Website of the City of New York, 2007. 47 p. Available from: <http://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/lp/2241.pdf>. Accessed in: 28 mar. 2023.
- LAVALLE, Victor. *A balada de Black Tom*. Translated by Petê Rissati and Giovana Bomentre. São Paulo: Editora MorroBranco, 2018.
- LEVÝ, Jiří. *The art of translation*. Translated by Patrick Corness. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2011.
- LOVECRAFT, Howard Phillips. *New-England Fallen*. Providence: Brown University Digital Repository, 1912a. Available from: <https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:ysszgekv/>. Accessed in: 28 mar. 2023.

LOVECRAFT, Howard Phillips. *On a New-England Village seen by Moonlight*. Providence: Brown University Digital Repository, 1913. Available from: <https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:425386/>”<https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:425386/>. Accessed in: 28 mar. 2023.

LOVECRAFT, Howard Phillips. *Writings in The United Amateur: 1915-1922 by Howard Phillips Lovecraft*. [S. l.]: The Project Gutenberg, 1916. Available from: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/30637/30637-h/30637-h.htm>. Accessed in: 28 mar. 2023.

LOVECRAFT, Howard Phillips. *The complete fiction*. New York: Barnes&Noble, 2011.

LOVECRAFT, Howard Phillips. *A Cor que Caiu do Céu*. Translated by Bárbara Lima, Fátima Pinho and Marsely de Marco. São Paulo: Pandorga, 2018.

ROMANO, Aja. Lovecraftian Horror: and the Racism at its Core Explained. *Vox*, 18 aug. 2020. Available from: <https://www.vox.com/culture/21363945/hp-lovecraft-racism-examples-explained-what-is-lovecraftian-weird-fiction>. Accessed in: 28 mar. 2023.

## **AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION**

**HPVN:** Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing – original draft; **LFF:** Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing – original draft; **KMLC:** Writing – review and editing.