

The writing of the academic memorial: rite of passage or rite of consecration?

A escrita do memorial acadêmico: ritual de passagem ou rito de consagração?

La escritura del memorial académico: ¿rito de paso o rito de consagración?

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Highlights

The manuscript analyzes the academic memorial as a hybrid narrative genre.

The contribution of sociology to this genre of writing is highlighted here.

The autobiographical writing present in a memorial can contribute to explain our social position in the world.

Abstract

This article takes as its heuristic object the analysis of an academic memorial for the purpose of career progression, since the memorial can be considered a narrative genre that materializes in an autobiographical writing. The contribution of Sociology to this genre of writing is investigated here, by operationalizing categories such as rite of passage (Van Gennep, 2012), consecration rituals (Bourdieu, 2020) and socioanalysis (Bourdieu, 1991; Kapko & Lêmetre, 2020). It is concluded that, when writing life in a memorial, the rites of passage and consecration are transmuted into a narrative plot that undergoes a socio-analysis work and, therefore, objectifies our social position in the world.

[Resumo](#) | [Resumen](#)

Keywords

Rites. Progression in the teaching career. Academic memorial. Autobiographical writing.

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| Introduction

Ordinary people are the cement of society; they are the lived, felt and experienced society. (Denzin, 1984, p. 32)

Academic memorials have been the object of study in recent years (Silva, 2015; 2016), not only because they constitute a document of the narrative genre worthy of interest for its primary source, but also because they are the object of research that is at the confluence of several disciplinary fields. In addition, they fulfill an institutional evaluation function (for career progression purposes) and, also, a document resulting from a training and self-training process (Abrahão, 2011). Memorials can also be considered a narrative genre that does not dispense with autobiographical writing. It is possible to distinguish, in this spectrum, two types of memorials: the academic, which “combines a formalistic and institutional nature with a personal and memorialistic dimension, approaching from the choice of profession and initial training to the development of the teaching career, as well as options and practices, experiences and memories, seen as ‘experience’” (Silva, 2016, p. 47).

In this case, the academic memorial presents a subjective dimension based on objective markers present in the evaluation regarding the different requirements of a career in higher education, especially in the areas of teaching, research, extension and administration.

In turn, the formation memorial is the result of a process of remembrance that presupposes reflection, by the narrator himself, about the reported facts already lived, orally or in writing, “through a life narrative whose plot makes sense to the subject of the narration [...] composing a reflected narrative also as an essential narrative component” (Abrahão, 2011, p. 166). When recalling/remembering the situations experienced, the author questions his own actions, identifies what he has learned and reflects on the difficulties experienced throughout his career. In this way, the training memorial can also be perceived as a pedagogical device for continuing education or as a reflective evaluation instrument.

Whether as a source and object of research, memorials enjoy a very particular situation, since, while there is a consolidated tradition of their approach on the part of the History of Education, in other fields of Human Sciences, studies are quite reduced (Silva, 2016). In this way, it can be said that studies on memorials have gained legitimacy in research and constituted a fertile field of analysis of biographical and autobiographical studies.

In this article, we start from the premise that memorials are a hybrid and multidisciplinary narrative genre, which is the reason for the growing interest of various disciplines in the area of Human Sciences. However, the intention here is to analyze how Sociology has been constituting itself as a field interested in the analysis of academic memorials and what concepts this discipline can mobilize to study them.

It can be said that biographical and autobiographical studies are not a recent phenomenon in Sociology, since the then discipline created in the context of modernity, at the end of the 19th century, witnessed the flourishing of important works in the 20th century that demonstrate the vitality of biographical approaches in the dialogue with the Social Sciences, which affirms their hybrid and frontier character.

From Thomas and Znaniecki (Bertaux, 2000), in the newly created Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago, to works such as Oscar Lewis's *Sons of Sanchez* (1963), in the United States, and *33 Newport Street*, by Richard Hoggart (2013), in England, the biographical approach was present and inspired many authors and research.

Already in the late 1970s, the sociologist Daniel Bertaux (1976) brought back to the scene the importance of narratives and life stories as approaches capable of analyzing what members of society do not only collectively, but individually, in their process of action, calling attention to the narratives about the practical dimension of social life.

In 1986, Pierre Bourdieu published the article "The biographical illusion", in the magazine *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*. In it, the author asserted a radical stance of epistemic suspicion in the face of arguments in defense of any cognitive value of life stories in the field of Social Sciences (Oliveira, 2017). For Bourdieu (1986), the effects of life stories would result in an illusory, rationalized writing about what was experienced.

For François Dosse (2015, p. 209), Bourdieu (1986) starts from the criticism of an alleged underlying linearity in the accounts of a life:

In his famous article, "The Biographical Illusion", Bourdieu contests the historicity of the subject ("To speak of a life story is to assume at least that life is a story, and this is false"), Bourdieu criticizes the idea of continuity, of a telos with all that this implies of underlying linearity, "[...] a path, a route, a trail, with its crossroads". Using the subway metaphor, the author values structural schemes as explanatory factors among which "agents" wander blindly.

Despite the criticism of the so-called "biographical illusion", it was Bourdieu (2020) himself who problematized the concept of socioanalysis as a knowledge constructed by the Social Sciences to mediate the reflection that the subject produces about himself, since the exercise of socio-analysis is constituted as an active listening, "a kind of assisted self-analysis, when the questioned undergoes a work of explanation, often painful and rewarding, announced with an extraordinary expressive intensity of experiences and reflections for a long time kept and repressed" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 3).

| The academic memorial and the exercise of self-socioanalysis

For Delory-Momberger (2021, p. 4), the human condition itself is a biographical condition: “we never stop biographing ourselves, that is, to inscribe our experience in oriented temporal patterns that mentally organize our gestures, our behaviors, our actions, according to a logic of narrative configuration”. This biographization activity could be defined as a dimension of human thinking and acting.

According to Breton (2020), temporality and self-report are two dimensions of biographical activity. They are part of the common characteristic of human experience, in which time figures as a fundamental element.

Constructing an account of your life is, in effect, configuring the lived experience in the form of an experience that can be retold, in writing and orally, from past events whose meanings and connections are placed under examination again. (Breton, 2020, p. 45)

The sense of time and experience are reintegrated into a narrative plot that will compose the text of the academic memorial.

This reflected writing, inscribed in a particular biographical situation, that is, the time to organize the remarkable events of a personal and professional trajectory, emulates a work of socioanalysis. The temporalization of a life is thus part of a rite of passage.

The rite of passage is also a possibility of becoming aware of the objective and subjective dimensions of life. For Berger and Luckmann (2008), subjective biography is not completely social. The individual apprehends himself as being at the same time inside and outside society. Still:

this symmetry between the objective and the subjective is never static, on the contrary, it must always be produced and reproduced in actu. In other words, the relationship between the individual and the objective social world resembles a continually oscillating act. (Berger & Luckmann, 2008, p. 180)

Sociology, as a discipline, would have the virtue of awakening a sociological conscience that would act within a frame of reference capable of keeping the inner world vigilant, which would allow the agent, gradually, to objectify his position, understand his habitus and, if necessary, “attributing their suffering to social causes” (Kakpo & Lemêtre, 2020, p. 149), because sociological awareness is inherently demystifying.

Socioanalysis can be seen as knowledge built by the Social Sciences to mediate the reflection that the subject produces about himself: the more the individual becomes aware of the social within him, ensuring a reflective exercise of his categories of thought and action, the less chance he has of acting through the exteriority that inhabits him (Bourdieu, 1991).

| Between the lines of the memorial, a socioanalysis of displacement

The memorial analyzed here is that of a professor of Sociology of Education, who went through the career promotion process at the Federal University of Viçosa (UFV)¹. Wania Maria Guimarães Lacerda's memorial has 59 pages and is structured as follows: Introduction, 1. Family and Social Origin; 2. Academic Background; 3. Professional career; 4. Surveys; 5. Future Perspectives. From pages 3 to 34, the author makes use of Sociology as a useful tool for analyzing what she experienced, by mobilizing elements of her biography that are widely studied by the discipline, such as the morphological variables of the social for the understanding of a trajectory (origin, place in the phratry, schooling, parents' level of education, socialization processes, etc.).

In the very first paragraph, he reflects on the difficulty of narrating his own life:

Writing a memorial is not an easy task. In front of a blank computer screen, the same question arises as Annie Ernaux, epigraphed: where to start? Writing about deeds feels arrogant and goes against my modesty and discretion, blocking my writing. Despite the difficulties in triggering and chaining writing, reflections on the reasons and foundations of my academic-professional trajectory and on how the constraints of my origin have affected me, come from a long time ago. I constantly find myself impelled to re-memorize my path in the social world, in search of myself, with a strong need to understand what happened to me. (Lacerda, 2023, p. 1)

As Didier Eribon (2021) says in the book *Return to Reims*, a return never ends. Because there is no return without reflexivity. The two combine and merge. When looking for the words to biograph her own life, Wania starts a process of exploring both the physical and mental structures of the social world.

I start from my personal history because I considered that the moments of my life that, in the process of rationalizing the past, proved to be important for the sociological explanation of my decision-making or inaction, would only be understandable if I first described their genesis. Therefore, it is in the entanglement experienced since childhood, but thought about in the present, that I consider it possible to understand the meaning that I attribute to my choices and practices. (Lacerda, 2023, p. 3)

Wania's writing genre refers to an expressive literature in the last decade, present in the voices of sociologists such as Didier Eribon (2021) and Rose Marie Lagrave (2021), for whom the keys to reading her writings converge to a marked reflection for a moment of in-between active life and the approach of retirement. It also finds resonance in the work of sociologist José Henrique Bortoluci (2023), in his biographical essay *O que é meu*, in which he retraces the memory of a father and his 50 years of work as a truck driver. It is still an individual story that is also

¹ The teacher authorized the use of her memorial for the writing of this article, as well as the disclosure of her identity whenever necessary, therefore, she opted for non-anonymity.

collective. In addition, the three works testify to the trajectory of individuals considered to be class breakouts, in the Bourdieusian sense².

These works help to find the format capable of restoring one of the multiple possible versions of each trajectory. The underlines of the analyzed memorial provide elements to understand both Wania's personal and professional life, always keeping her social origin in perspective, since her trajectory does not fully obey the law of reproduction of social classes. It can be said that the author's narrative hints at a relative uniqueness, which is why it is interesting to analyze her personal and professional path sociologically.

My family's situation of economic vulnerability and my father's alcoholism made me assume a prominent position in the family configuration despite being the third child – or perhaps because of that – leading me to self-create responsibilities in relation to my brothers, in the sense of protecting them and guaranteeing them opportunities. Thus, with the feeling of being alone and having to assume a moral burden, I did not cling to “imaginary hopes or miracles that could occur” (apud Elias, 1998, p. 166) and I began to see in dedication to studies how to create conditions to save myself and my brothers. (Lacerda, 2023, p. 7)

Reflection on social origin is recurrently present in the memorial's author's text and provides an indication of how the dimension of social class is reflected in the desertion process, such as a class transferee, insofar as she goes through the consecration rituals at the academy.

I recognize my self-created commitment to improving my family's living conditions, my repeated drawings of houses during childhood, my interest in the Architecture course and my dedication to studies from the first years of schooling to the attempt to face the discrimination that results the type and location of housing. As a “good” student in terms of performance and behavior, she received “proofs of recognition, consideration or admiration” from teachers and other people at school (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 202), clouding the wooden house, her home. location, my social belonging and the stigmatizing judgment. [...] Reflecting on my past, I believe that my personal experiences of injustice as a result of my social origin – lived without social resentment –, my revolutionary ideological formation, according to Therborn (1996), as well as my formation in values added to the situations experienced in a small town, contributing to build a spirit of struggle against inequalities – so that “everyone's life would rise to light” (Camus, 1999, pp. 17-18) – and affected my personal and professional interests. (Lacerda, 2023, pp. 12-14)

Giving meaning or symbolizing the things that present themselves to us, be it a chair or a book, means, in some instance, naming them. The meaning attributed to things is generated in society itself. Thus, “sociology contributes to the debate by showing that society is a fundamental part of the process of learning to use words, sharing the meanings attributed to them [...] if meaning has a force, certainly it has material and symbolic bases well founded in society itself” (Miceli, 2022, p. 17).

² In Bourdieu's work, there are different keys to understanding the concept of class flight. Commonly, the transfuga is understood as the deserter, the one who abandons his origin to move between different social strata, a source of enormous suffering for those who transgress their original social condition.

Speech is, therefore, a central element for thinking about the symbolic world. If we learn the meaning of things in society, that meaning is always loaded with power. For Bourdieu (2008), language has the power to establish the world, because, by naming it, it contributes to structuring the perception of the world.

The place in the family assumed by Wania, author of the memorial, contradicted the causality of the probable (something that seems unlikely for her social group) and served as a kind of mirror for her siblings, by showing the value of a diploma and study. It is the daughter who returns to the house erected by her parents, both in a practical and symbolic sense:

The text produced so far about my family and social origin, at the same time that it presents the reasons and foundations of my academic-professional trajectory, contextualizing it, since the determinations of the social and family environment were decisive in the configuration of my multiple identities, shows the genesis of a strong need I have to understand what happened to me. [...] In primary education, the global storytelling method and the book *Os Três Porquinhos* were used for literacy. This book was also presented on posters, whose contents were the episodes of the story. In this story, among the houses built, the little pig Palito, built his house of wood, easily knocked down by the wolf. As I lived in a plank house, it was common for my classmates to allude to my house, making fun of the fact that it was made of planks. In the story of the Three Little Pigs, Palito's construction of the wooden house was attributed to his laziness or interest in completing the work quickly, as Clown had done, building a straw house. Thus, my colleagues subliminally referred to my clapboard house as the product of my family's laziness. (Lacerda, 2023, pp. 10-12)

As Memmi (1996) reminds us, every displacement is accompanied by a production of affections, re-presentations, anticipations, that is, a specific reflexivity that can take the form, in the case of ascension trajectories, of a true work on yes. Thus, Wania's autobiographical writing can be perceived as the expression of what she owes to herself and what she owes to the community.

Maybe that's why, in writing her memorial, Wania also presents herself as the one who keeps the family's memory and understands it as a constitutive part of the woman, mother, teacher and researcher that she built herself.

Since Richard Hoggart (2013), with his famous autobiographical book *33º Newport Street*, we know that poor, working-class families do not have the right to memory (through photos, writings and images). It is this reconstruction work that must be followed and it is through this path that Wania weaves these memories, these memories and, with them, making a kind of inventory of her past history and her family memory.

Upon returning to my hometown, for example, after having a high income, I was treated very differently compared to the time when I lived and worked in that city. Local stores, for example, now called me to show their wares and I was treated very well. Before, when I still lived in the city, I had to prove that I had the money to make a purchase, in some cases even showing it – it was a time of suffering unforgettable offenses because of my social origin. Another disruption experienced due to the condition of social displacement occurred, as in the short story *A Terceira Margem do Rio* by Guimarães Rosa: “We imagined

ourselves in it [referring to the father, alone on the river], when we ate a tastier food". I imagined myself in my brothers, when I ate tastier food and felt sad. (Lacerda, 2023, p. 26)

The question that emerges from your reflection may be this: what kind of adhesion, tacit or explicit, does each one of us have in relation to the social and mental structures we inherit, whose history is engraved in the depths of our body and our subjectivity, by making and predetermining us as social agents? (Eribon, 2022, p. 12)

Wania seeks to answer this question using what we can call "sociological introspection"³, when the underground and more literary voices of her text make explicit the exploration of her mental structures, which are the incorporated social structures. It is through the trip to the memory of the body that Wania weaves the narrative plot, from the memory of the places, constructions, environments and institutions that she has known:

Since entering teaching in higher education, I oscillated between considering that I had the necessary skills and competences for this function and not having them, but my willingness to be exposed predisposed me to accept the invitation, where I became a teacher. (Lacerda, 2023, p. 27)

In these terms, it can be said that Wania establishes her memorial writing as a flat writing, without incurring the risk of reproducing a kind of "dolorismo"⁴. In his narrative, it is possible to perceive the concern with the reporting of facts and the description of reality as a kind of commitment to the truth.

Wania narrates situations in which the feeling of shame, to use the meaning attributed by Gaulejac (2006), is perceived as a moral feeling, but also an existential and social one.

In general, shame is a term with many prohibitions, because it is almost never talked about. It is not named, nor can it take care of the wounds, which are a symptom. Therefore, it can be defined as a meta-feeling. But it is necessary to explore the layers of "shame", especially those that are crossed by processes of annulment that permeate social relations, as well as feelings of superiority and inferiority.

My maternal uncles supported me, my brothers and my mother with food when necessary. When my father was drunk, they were also present, protecting me, my brothers and my mother from my father's violent outbursts. The help of my uncles, at a time when there were no public policies to protect children from domestic violence and to support poor families, with income transfer programs, for example, was fundamental for the constitution of my school career. [...] The perception of my social belonging and its effects took place very early, around the age of seven, because the offenses and humiliations due to this social origin were premature. I believe that the precocity of my perceptions about my

³ Bernard Lahire (2018), in his work *The sociological interpretation of dreams*, uses the expression "sociological introspection" to say that the analysis of psychic states can also be carried out by the sociologist. For the author, *Psychoanalysis and Sociology* can be articulated in a fruitful way.

⁴ This concept has been worked on by sociologist Gérald Bronner (2023), who has proposed a more nuanced view of the weight of social origin on individuals. Against excessive suffering or pain, the individual who crosses "different social worlds" can also experience a rich, stimulating and much more complex experience of his or her social environment.

social belonging and its effects was related to my place of residence, the type of construction of my house, my father's alcoholism, very well known in the small town where I lived and, especially, my presence in spaces where I did not belong, such as, for example, the class I was part of in the School Group and in the Attached Classes; circulating through different spaces in the city, with the aim of delivering the seams made by my mother and participating in coronations of Our Lady, in the month of May at school. (Lacerda, 2023, pp. 7-9)

It is this feeling of indignation, which is born with shame, which often moves and reorients Wania's narrative.

In this way, we understand that reflecting on this meta-feeling is important because, many times, humiliation leads to silencing the violence suffered, to cultivating a feeling of illegitimacy. In some excerpts of her memoir, the author explains, albeit subtly, this feeling experienced and which is related to the tensions posed by social class. This feeling of illegitimacy appears in her speech when, for example, she describes the beginning of her professionalization process, when she entered the academic master's degree in Education:

In the Master, I initially experienced the feeling that I had not read anything I should have. Colleagues, many of whom had graduated from UFMG, quoted authors and works that I did not know. I wrote down all of them to read, as quickly as possible, believing that with this I would approach the intellectual condition of my colleagues. Such an approximation was a vain attempt. What made me more comfortable in the class was my professional experience, which allowed me to reflect on important issues discussed in the classroom. Few had that same experience in the school class. (Lacerda, 2023, pp. 19-20)

Measuring the distance between the home world and what we have become is what makes it possible to end the feeling of exile among those who conquered a new social position, far from their original condition, transgressing the limits of the line, because today consecrated by the institution.

However, when analytically traversing the past, through the writing of the memorial, Wania can be described as a "transfuga", as transfugas are all those who, one day, crossed a border: social, national, cultural.

The feeling of shame that the social order inscribes on the body of deviants is one of the most fundamental dimensions of the relationship with the world and with others. The inner world is nothing more than the product, inscribed in us, sedimented, layer by layer, resulting from our long coexistence with the outside world.

Therefore, our body is a body marked by social belonging:

In the classroom, differences in social belonging were evident in different situations, for example, when birthday parties took place and most of the children took cakes and soft drinks to celebrate and I couldn't do the same or on the day of the teacher, when the rich children presented her with Cashmere Bouquet soaps and powders, considered by me at that time, as a distinct gift, in the sense of different and superior. I carried a bouquet of roses of different sizes and colors, picked around my house and made by my mother. Upon

handing it over, I felt enormous embarrassment, as I did not consider it a gift. Thus, like Bourdieu (2005, p. 110), I felt separated from my classmates “by a kind of invisible barrier, which was expressed from time to time through ritual insults [...]”, however, in my case, because of my social background. [...] My behavior in the class was marked by modesty, silence and stillness. This, together with my social belonging and the fact that I am a woman, were probably the reasons that led me to be asked to “take care” of a child with trisomy 21, a relative of a teacher, the which I attended with some frequency at the College, when I attended the attached classes at that institution, still attending the initial years of elementary school. This child was in my class, under my care, that is, another child, which gave me the opportunity to learn about coexistence and respect for differences. (Lacerda, 2023, pp. 13-14)

Becoming aware of the violence that the social order exerts on individuals is part of the work of the author's narrative. For that, we know that it is not enough just to describe it, to analyze it in detail, to stop being subject to it, submitted to its force. It is in the warp of the plot between the lived and the narrated that we can understand a singular trajectory, but which can also be defined as a series of positions successively occupied by the same agent (or the same group) in a space of becoming and subject to transformations. incessant. The work of writing, through socioanalysis, does not cease to be a work of contextualization, understanding and interpretation, which is essential.

| The memorial: rite of passage or rite of consecration?

When investigating the sociological nature of the rites, Van Gennep (2012) described a social phenomenon of great importance. Without the rites, human society would certainly not exist as something conscious, a dimension to be experienced and not simply lived, as occurs with the heaviest gestures of everyday routine.

The rites document the way societies are organized, since they constitute one of the critical elements of human social life. To speak of social life is to speak of ritualization, of collective social movements.

It can be inferred that every liturgy involving the rites is still an act of interpretation. Thus, the life of all of us consists of a succession of stages and, to each set of them, ceremonies are found related whose object is identical, that is, to make an individual pass from a determined situation to another equally determined situation (Van Gennep, 2012), when a line, a border, is crossed.

According to Van Gennep (2012, p. i.), “for groups, as well as for individuals, to live is to continually break down and reconstitute oneself, change state and form, die and be reborn”. This is how every little death is followed by a rebirth in a new condition.

Still for this author, every rite gathers three phases: the separation rites, the margin rites and the aggregation rites. Each ceremony has its own purpose. The rites of separation would be preliminary (like funerary rites), those on the margin would be

liminal (ceremonial, more autonomous stages of life) and, finally, the rites of aggregation would be post-liminal (like birth) (Van Gennep, 2012).

The rite that symbolizes the writing of an academic memorial can be described as the liminal phase, that is, an integral part of the margin rites. The margin rites, according to Van Gennep (2012), are located in zones considered neutral, with the possibility of performing rites of entry and exit, beginning and end, death and rebirth. It is from this privileged point of view that the author of the memorial under scrutiny will begin a work of understanding and recomposing the most important events of her life. Berger (1986, p. 65) refers to this phenomenon as “biographical alternation”, that is, “the perception of oneself in front of an infinite situation of mirrors, each one of which transforms the image into a different potential conversion” (Berger, 1986, p. 75).

Placing herself biographically in the liminal phase of the rite (between entry and exit) allowed the author of the memorial to exercise biographical alternation, which is nothing more than the ability to modify the interpretations and reinterpretations of our own biography, once that we speak of the story of a life to characterize the in-between birth and death.

This is because, according to Van Gennep (2012), there are always new thresholds to cross, as the individual's life is a continuous process of disintegrating and reconstituting itself. In this sense, the rites do not fail to express our socialization processes, which occur on a lifelong basis, as we move from one social world to another. Experiencing the relativity and “alternation” between these worlds “allows the person to consider his biography as a movement within and through specific social worlds, which are linked to specific systems of meanings” (Berger, 1986, p. 77).

In this way, writing an academic memorial reflects one of the stages of our socialization process, because, when biographing the years of work that comprise our secondary socialization, the author of the text is compelled to pause between the beginning and the end. It is a look at the crossing that is made from the bank, it is a dying and being reborn, “an act and then stop, wait and rest, to then start acting again, but in a different way” (Van Gennep, 2012, p. i).

By submitting an academic memorial to the docimology of their peers, the individual is statutorily and symbolically consecrated to the condition of a professor who occupies the highest grade in the career of the federal public higher education institution. He then also undergoes a rite of consecration, in addition to the rite of passage⁵. He then also undergoes a rite of consecration, in addition to the rite of passage.

Bourdieu (2008), in his critique of the concept of rites of passage by Van Gennep (2012), whose work was originally published in 1909, underlines that the greatest social effect of the rite is not to celebrate the passage, but to enshrine a difference

⁵ Law No. 12,772/2012 (Brazil, 2012) provides for the structuring of the Careers and Positions Plan for the Federal Magisterium.

in order to make it exist as a social distinction or as exclusion. “In fact, the social effect of the rite is not to separate those who have gone through it from those who will still go through it, but, above all, to differentiate those who can pass from those who never will” (Bourdieu, 2008, p. 98).

To go further, I think it is necessary to address certain questions to the theory of the rite of passage that it does not raise and, in particular, those related to the social function of the ritual and the social significance of the line, of the limit whose passage the ritual makes lawful, the transgression. (Bourdieu, 2008, p. 97)

The perception of statutorily crossing a line, a border, is not always experienced as a ritual of consecration. In his analysis of Bourdieu's concept of rite, Montero (2017) points out that rites establish borders and identities; in doing so, they consecrate rights, limits and competences that put the arbitrariness of classifications to the test. It is an act that approaches a kind of “social magic”, since the rite of institution (which is that of consecration) owes its symbolic efficacy to the fact of what it means to man and what he can be: “become what you are” (Bourdieu, 2008, p. 102). The institution's work, like the work of inculcation, will treat the body as a memory to bring about this second nature which is the social function.

In 1978, at the age of 15, I entered the Teaching course in my city, the only possible high school education offered in the night shift. In the first year of this course, my school performance was below average. However, the following year, I resumed my status as a “good” student. Like Hoggart (1991) who had to change himself several times during his life, I decided to change myself, transforming what tormented me – not being able to study at CEFET-MG – and resuming my dedication to studies, affected by the adage, repeated several times by my mother: if you have to do something, you must do it well. (Lacerda, 2023, p. 17)

According to Moraes (2022, p. 4), it is through habitus that the constitutive differences of the social space (practices, goods, etc.) are transformed into signs of distinction, into differences that build the symbolic systems of the social order and guarantee the existence of the division itself, that is, both the structures and the dispositions:

Thus, I managed to get up, directing my thoughts to the situation I was in and looking for a way out of an imminent disaster (Elias, 1998), in this case, the interruption of studies, recognizing in the process, the elements that I could use to control the situation. Work, at the age of sixteen, with a daily workload of eight hours, reconciled with studies, became what kept me upright. In addition, the constitution of a “resistant” habitus, conducive to facing the difficulties arising from the condition of not having inherited capital, kept me willing, over time, to dedicate myself to studying. (Lacerda, 2023, p. 17)

The rite solemnly marks the passage of a line that establishes a fundamental division of the social order, by calling the observer's attention to the passage (hence the expression “rite of passage”), since what is important is the line. But what separates this line? One before and one after. The work of writing a memoir, which is nonetheless a “biographical alternation”, also introduces a feeling of ambivalence, of displacement, which can be explained by the author's status as a

class shifter, when she abandons her condition of origin to ascend to the ruling class.

For Bourdieu (2008), the rites enshrine a legitimate distinction. The separation carried out on the occasion of the ritual (which itself operates a separation) has a consecrating effect. Conquering a new social position in the career, reaching the titular class, is a rite of institution that is also of consecration. Instituting, attributing an essence, a competence, is the same as imposing a right to be that is also a duty to be (or a duty to be). It's making someone see what he is and, at the same time, making him see that he has to behave according to that identity. In this case, the indicative is an imperative.

Reflecting on the reasons for taking on many activities that compromised the reasonable duration of the Master's and Doctorate, two lessons were drawn. The first explains the overlapping of occupations due to the fact that I live in a small town. In the city, the number of qualified people with a social commitment to occupy management positions in favor of the disadvantaged was reduced. So, I should assume the positions offered to me, as I had the obligation to repay the gifts received (Mauss, 2003). [...] Another conclusion is based on Pascal (2001). In his analyzes of the greatness and misery of the human condition, this philosopher states that man is profoundly unhappy, as only an infinite good could satisfy his longings. Therefore, man needs to throw himself out of himself so as not to see his true self, to occupy himself. However, the occupations sought by man to get rid of his being, to cheer himself up, are not exempt from passions and, still, he seeks his own search, not things. (Lacerda, 2023, p. 21)

In this respect, an academic memorial, considered an "act of institution", is itself loaded with a specific and fundamental symbolic effectiveness that consists of transforming the fact into law, since it establishes a power of legitimation for those who have crossed a line. It is also the struggle for the monopoly of symbolic power, that is, the struggle for the power to legitimately enunciate the truth of the world. "The universally adopted strategy to permanently exempt oneself from the temptation to step out of line consists in naturalizing difference and transforming it into second nature through inculcation and incorporation in the form of habitus" (Bourdieu, 2008, pp. 102-103).

Our hypothesis is that it is difficult to dissociate the rite of passage from the ritual of consecration. Such rites would go through a process of transmutation, of alternation, observable in a reflective writing through the autobiographical narrative, normally present in the academic memorial as a partial requirement for the titular class.

This work often leads the author of the memorial to distrust the deserving of consecration, since the rite of passage makes explicit a discomfort between origin and destination, by objectifying his condition/social position. It is in her socio-analysis work that Wania seeks to understand the reasons for always taking on too much work, even compromising the duration of both her Master's and Doctorate degrees. As if she didn't deserve it, as if she needed to "throw herself out of her mind so as not to see her true self". It evokes the misery of position / misery of

condition, as if the fact of having achieved a position does not redeem it from its condition.

Not always, when writing the academic memorial, its author feels authorized to cross the threshold, that is, to re-enter an already known world, but in a different way. To enter this “old new world”, authorized by a career promotion evaluation process, an autobiographical effort is necessary, in which an exercise of socioanalysis is put to the test.

| Final considerations

If every memorial is still a fabrication of itself, the analyzed academic memorial reflects a work of objectifying the social condition of its author, by narrating, in the first person, the passage from one place to another, authorized by the rites of consecration and of passage.

Here, the determining role of Wania's school career is considered as the one that completely defined her life. It can be understood only if we connect it to the social milieu from which it came.

By crossing the line of boundaries established by the social world, Wania can be described as a subject in displacement, or perhaps a “class emigrant”. This is what Bourdieu has clearly discussed in numerous works, but above all in the text “The Odyssey of Reappropriation” (Bourdieu, 2006), transcription of a conference on the Algerian poet and anthropologist Mouloud Mammeri. In this text, Bourdieu (2006) compares the transfuga movement to a kind of pilgrimage, which includes moments such as moving away from native culture towards universal university culture and, later, reappropriation of the culture of origin. It is a movement that implies retracing the journey, like Homer, thanks to the rescue of the renegade culture through the culture that imposed its denial. The work of self-socioanalysis required of a memorial for career promotion purposes can certainly be a tool that makes it possible to explain this double dimension of the journey between worlds, experienced by a class trans-escape. The end of this path is equivalent to confronting some of the modalities of symbolic domination, such as reflection on shame, the feeling of illegitimacy, etc.

Bourdieu (2006, p. 94) says that:

The work that, by overcoming shame in relation to the culture of origin, leads to its reappropriation, constitutes a true socio-analysis, which one is never sure of having been completely completed. This is because overcoming the initial denial cannot take the form of a denial of what determined the initial denial itself, that is, of all the sources that the dominant culture offers.

For Didier Eribon (2022, p. 104), “this Odyssey is [...] the path that all those who come from a dominated society, or from a dominated class or region in dominant societies, must follow to find themselves or to meet again”. The narrative plot present in the memorial analyzed here can be interpreted as part of this Odyssey.

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Resumo

Este artigo toma como objeto heurístico a análise de um memorial acadêmico para fins de progressão na carreira, uma vez que o memorial pode ser considerado um gênero narrativo que se materializa em uma escrita autobiográfica. Investiga-se aqui a contribuição da Sociologia para este gênero de escrita, ao operacionalizar categorias como rito de passagem (Van Gennep, 2012), rituais de consagração (Bourdieu, 2020) e socioanálise (Bourdieu, 1991; Kakpo & Lemêtre, 2020). Conclui-se que, ao escrever a vida em um memorial, os ritos de passagem e de consagração transmutam-se em uma trama narrativa que passa por um trabalho de socioanálise e, portanto, de objetivação da nossa posição social no mundo.

Palavras-chave: Ritos. Progressão na carreira docente. Memorial acadêmico. Escrita autobiográfica.

Resumen

Este artículo toma como objeto heurístico el análisis de un memorial académico con fines de progresión profesional, ya que el memorial puede ser considerado un género narrativo que se materializa en un escrito autobiográfico. Se investiga aquí la contribución de la Sociología a este género de escritura, operacionalizando categorías como rito de iniciación (Van Gennep, 2012), rituales de consagración (Bourdieu, 2020) y socioanálisis (Bourdieu, 1991; Kakpo & Lemêtre, 2020). Se concluye que, al escribir la vida en un memorial, los ritos de paso y consagración se transmutan en una trama narrativa que pasa por un trabajo de socioanálisis y, por tanto, objetiva nuestra posición social en el mundo.

Palabras clave: Ritos. Progresión en la carrera docente. Memoria académica. Escrita autobiográfica.

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