

**TRANSLATING WORDS INTO IMAGES – WAYS OF VISIBILITY FOR
CAVAFY'S HOMOEROTIC POETRY**

Profa. Dra. Fernanda Lemos de Lima (UERJ)

RESUMO:

O presente artigo pretende refletir sobre as traduções realizadas a partir da obra de K. P. Kaváfis. Entretanto, não queremos refletir apenas a respeito das traduções de palavra em palavras, mas traduções que transcendem o texto literário... e se fazem em imagem, de desenho e fotografia. Este artigo é uma pequena parcela de um trabalho maior desenvolvido durante o doutorado sobre a poesia homoerótica de K. P. Kaváfis.

Palavras-chave: Kaváfis, imagens, Hockney, Michals

**Try to keep them, poet,
Those erotic visions of yours,
However few of them there are that can be stilled.
Put them, half-hidden, in your lines.
Try to hold them, poet,
When they come alive in your mind
At night or in the brightness of noon**

To keep, to guard, to care, to show even “half-hidden” seems to be the gesture that guides poets, painters, photographers and artists whose art is the way of preservation to those images of the feelings that surround them. In the special case of Cavafy to guard those glimpses of desire that can show up at any time of the day or night must be remembered and used as fundamental material for poetic creation. To keep, to remember are complementary gestures for the building of cavafian poetry and, at the same time, can be linked to the idea of translation for the poetry of the Alexandrian, admired, guarded in words of other languages beyond Greek. To guard, to remember, to recreate gestures also linked sympathetically to the draws of David Hockney and the photography of Duane Michals, which guard the poetry of Cavafy when they translate it into traces and images in dialogue with the loved creation of the past.

In this article I intend to follow the steps of three men, E. M. Forster, David Hockney and Duane Michals. Those men in different manners promoted or have done translations of Cavafian poetry, turning his work of art more well-known worldwide. I intend to show how it's possible to understand the gesture of those men as an attempt to recover through translations – word into word or word into image – the visibility not only of Cavafy's poetry but the figure of the poet himself.

The reflection through what we can understand the complicity of the action of the novelist, the painter and the photographer leads us to the idea of

respect to the poetry and to the poet, and also implies into to a wish of visibility that deals with the homoerotic issue once we are thinking about the visibility of a work of art where the homoerotic desire is fundamental, even “half-hidden”, to the esthetic and ethic constitution of the poetry. To guarantee visibility of Cavafy’s poetry seems to be the action to link those translations, and to understand this is important to remember the silence imposed to the poetry in his place and time, in his Alexandrian world. This effort for Cavafy’s visibility through Forster, Hockney or Michals is a kind of the voice through an ethic of friendship, where we find dose of a social conscience in lower or higher levels. However, particularly in Hockney and Michals, this social component, connected to the idea of reassurance of an art that celebrates the pleasure between men and seeks to be seem as an legitimated way of desire, is predominantly present.

For this reason it’s essential to comprehend this celebration wish through the perspective of *the gay studies*, where works of art are aligned to works of history, sociology, anthropology, philosophy and literary criticism aiming the construction of a discourse, which re-build the silent history of gay experience intending to guarantee rights for the present and the future by the recovering of the denied history.

This recovering movement can be understood by a foucaultian angle of respect to the different individualities until it reaches a kind of friendship ethics, of respect without pre-determined frames and barriers as relations. In his last writings Michel Foucault sketches the parameters for the friendship ethics and at the same time is involved into an esthetical existence. Ethics and esthetics can led us understanding the recovering of Cavafy’s figure and the visibility of his poetry.

The French philosopher developed this thought in some interviews and more recent articles. In *De l’amitié comme mode de vie*¹ Foucault talks about the possibility of a multiplicity of relationships, which can be established, invented, multiplied e modulated by homosexuality, understanding as the central point of the homosexual question the friendship. The homosexual relations would be free of customized forms and would share space and experiences out of the “institutional relations”². In his discourse Foucault shows a different way to understanding possible relations of all kinds, once those who will be in the relations will be free of pre-set frames of behavior, imposed to relations by social codes stated *a priori*. This imposition interferes to assure or destroy relations according to the legality of them. The philosopher reflects about the homosexual way of live, wondering if it’s existence would be possible and how it could creates a culture and a ethics, once it would be experienced by individuals of different ages and social groups³.

Foucault ends his interview thinking about a possible homosexual cultural, or the instruments for polymorphic (checar) relations, in individual variety and modulations. At this point he mentions de idea of an *empty program*, which could avoid the problems of a program with propositions that might end up trapping the

individual into new rules⁴.

The idea of a homosexual culture originated from reflections and volunteer actions seems to be in dialogue with David Hockney’s and Duane Michals’s attitude. However, what calls our attention to this particular part of his discourse is the idea of “empty program”, once the philosopher intends to find a way to free life from any kind of pre-determined dogmatic program. It’s important to comprehend that there is in Foucault reflections the conscience that there are an unlimited number of possibilities of relations, as multiple are the individuals, for that reason the program must be empty, to be a proposition of freedom for diversity.

Foucault’s homosexual culture and, also, the life stile that creates it are intimated related to the idea of friendship. Ortega (1999) discuss how this “gay life stile” is deeply connected to the idea of an esthetic of the existence, based on the *care of yourself*, with obviously ethical implications:

The problem of an ethics understood as the shape you can give to your own life became up-to-date. The idea of *Bios* as material for the work of art fascinates Foucault. The individual build his/her self through “practices historically analyzable” present in every culture. Consequently Foucault conceives the care of yourself as the preferable useful point of resistance against the political power, and localizes the political object in the creation of *new subjectivities forms*.⁵

Those new subjectivities forms bring within a new posture in terms of society that would create a new “Relational Right”. This right would be based in this life stile intrinsically connected to the idea of friendship as the place for relational possibilities, through an esthetical existence, based on a negative ethics, which brings the concept of empty program. According to Ortega:

The friendship ethics can only be a negative ethics, which program should be empty, namely be able to offer tolls to creates variable relations, multi-forms and conceived in a individual form. Each individual should form his/her own ethics; the friendship ethics prepares the way to the creation of forms of life, without prescript a correct way of existence.⁶

In this sense we can understand how Foucault’s thought tries to establish an ethics that intends a program with multiple possibilities and for it is empty there is no risk of trapping dogmatisms, on the contrary this homosexual way of life or this homosexual culture foresee an attitude of movement and multiple. It’s important to understand this way of life not only as a proposition for same sex relations, but for anyone who wants to be free from relations institutionally determined.

Going back to the homosexual culture issue based on the friendship ethics, with its empty program, we can understand some postures, which reveal ethics attitudes that, aimed and recover a past, an erased history. This history is connected to denied and condemned homosexuality that has been re-read, re-visited and

recovered through the re-writing of the history and the artistic creations that give back the voices of those silenced in the past. This procedure is part of the homoculture constitution that corroborates Foucault's reflections. For this reason, when we understand the mechanisms that constitute the homosexual culture we can comprehend the position of David Hockney and Duane Michals. The photographer opens his photographic essay with a text that exalts the Cavafy's courage for the most important theme in his poetry was the love between men. Those artists through their arts gave back to Cavafy a visibility literally and metaphorically. The same, in a certain measure did Forster, despite the restrictions of his time. Although he has never translated Cavafy, he was the one who worked hard to see the poetry of the Alexandrian published in English and spread beyond the frontiers of the Greek world.

To reflect on the ethical and cultural implications of those translations is fundamental to comprehend Cavafy's position in this days and also what is his position in a homosexual culture as postulated by Foucault. Back to Forster's case we should remember all the way that Forster went to publish Cavafy's poetry. The novelist became the poet's friend between 1915 and 1919, when he was working for British Red Cross⁷. Since then he had been trying to make cavafian poetry known (conhecido) through an English edition of his work, but he didn't succeed before the death of the Alexandrian. After that Forster finally found someone to translate the poems of Cavafy, was John Mavrogordato who concluded the translation on 1937. Despite it, the book with the English of the poems was published only on 1951.

Forster's effort is particularly interesting because through it we can observe how Forster fought to give to Cavafy's art visibility. In the poems translated to English there was an art which deals with homoeroticism, half-hidden, disguised, but still celebrated and in fine connection to the homoeroticism of Forster's novels that present in less or higher degrees as we could read disguised in *A Room With a View* or openly discussed in *Maurice*.

Between Forster and Cavafy we can recognize, in a veiled way, what Eve K. Sedgwick identifies in Ancient Greek society and verifies that had gradually disappeared, or became invisible in the present patriarchal model, the *continuum* between men promoting men interests and men loving men⁸. When Forster aimed to publish Cavafy's poetry it seems that he was taking to the homosocial sphere the bounds of respect to homosexual desire. We are not suggesting here that novelist and poetry were lovers and that they had had corporal relations but with no doubts we found deep bounds of homoaffection, respect, and will to fight for the visibility and recognition of a brilliant work of art, which deals with 'prohibited' desires, love and pleasure between men and, of course, about the art that has its beginnings from casual encounters full of desire.

The homoaffection according to Lopes (2002) intends to express the

different relation levels in political, ethical and esthetical terms:

(...) I defend a policy, an ethics and esthetics of homoaffection. I don't intend to create another term, but I think that to talk about homoaffection is less restrictive than to talk about homosexuality or homoeroticism. (...) It's a more sensitive term to realize the fragile and ambiguous borders between homosexuality and heterosexuality (...) without being restricted to a homophobic homosociability(...) ⁹.

Lopes's reflection on the homoaffection issue led us to comprehend Forster's relation to Cavafy as based in a kind of homoaffection, a conception that escapes from the pathological and legal frames carried by the term homosexuality (chegar) and also from the idea of sexual desire and intercourse present in the term homoeroticism. We understand that homoaffection, as thought by Lopes seems to be in dialogue with Foucault's friendship ethics, discussed before.

By an ethics of respect, understood through the ethics of friendship or by the homoaffection proposal, we could understand the Forster's effort to give visibility to cavafian poetry. Those same ethical parameters can be observed in David Hockney's and Duane Michals's propositions of art. They work also recover and help to spread more and more Cavafy's art.

In his book, *David Hockney by David Hockney*, the English painter remember how he met Cavafy's poetry:

Later it was the Alexandrian Greek poet Constantine Cavafy who became a great influence. I'd read Lawrence Durrell's novels *The Alexandrian Quarter*; in the back of *Justine* there's Cavafy's the City, which impressed me. I read more of his poems and I was so struck by their directness and simplicity; and then I found the John Mavrogordato translation in the library in Bradford, in that summer of 1960, and I stole it. ¹⁰

Hockney not just read Cavafy's poetry but kept it not only as a stilled (roubado) book but kepted (guardado) it in his mind to turn it into another work of art, of an art that talks about desire between men as Cavafy did with its own art. The stolen book, that could not be found in the shelves of the library because of his dangerous contents, was an out of print edition that followed Hockney's through the years, and then became a point of departure for some of Hockney's works including a sequence of 14 draws that created specially to illustrate a selection of Cavafy's poetry.

We must remember that Hockney project is connected not to a militant posture guided by gay movements, but by his coincidence as a gay man who decides that his art can deal with the eroticism between men, once he is a man who desires men. In his book Hockney explains how he has an affirmative position of his desire and also how he creates art out of heterosexual parameters:

Doll boy was a reference to the pop singer Cliff Richard, who was very attractive, very sexy. I'm not a great pop music fan, I wasn't then and I'm not now. But I'm a lover of music and a lover of songs and I like singing. Cliff Richard was a very popular singer and I used to cut out photographs of him from newspapers and magazines and stick them up around my little cubicle in the Royal College of Art, partly because other people used to stick up girl pin-ups, and I thought, I'm not going to do that, can't do that, and here's something just as sexy, and I stuck them up. He had a song in which the words were, 'She's a real live walking talking living doll', and he sang it rather sexily. The title of this painting is based on that line. He's referring to some girl, so I changed it to a boy.¹¹

Before the project of an illustrated edition of cavafian poetry, Hockney had already mixed some of the Alexandrian works into his painting, as he did in "The beauty of the Young Cesarion" and in "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall", the last one has the title from the faire-tale Snowithe (checar), but the image was 'stolen' from the poem "The mirror in the front hall". The idea of a mirror with feelings seems to have touched Hockney, specially, in our point of view, because the mirror is moved by an ecstasy because of the handsome boy's image looking at the beauty of his own youth, that seems to feed with joy the old mirror.

In this poem we find a mirror, which changes from a decoration object in a house into a living being capable to appreciate, admire and be delightful with beauty. The mirror is described as a being that observes the simple beauty of a boy, that is capable to embrace "total beauty for a few minutes". The mirror's presence in the poems evokes also the narcissistic contemplation idea, always present in the conception of an object that reflects the same, but a "same" that can become "other" once it turns into an object of desire. In this sense Hockney by using White snow's step mother discourse (mirror, *mirror on the wall*), led us to think about the both sides of the specular (checar) relation, in the traditional faire-tale the mirror judges who's the fairest of all. In Cavafy's poem the mirror does not judge, it experiences the joy of a vision that was expected and never felt before during his eighteen years of existence. Despite of the few moments the mirror enjoyed the image of the young beauty, the contemplation even fast is the reward of a lifetime waiting, reflecting thousands of faces, but not a singular as that one. The long wait is rewarded with the beauty that will last in the memory as perfect joy.

In comparison with the faire-tale, the change of the character mirrored (espelhado) in Hockney's painting is also interesting, as in the traditional tale we find a woman questioning the mirror, in the painting we found a young man, named Peter, as it's written in his own clothes. (Image)

Besides the words extracted from the faire-tale, in the bottom of the

painting below the boy's image, we find verses from Cavafy's poem. Thus, we can observe in *Mirror, mirror on the wall* the faire-tale and the cavafian poem melted in a third work of art, in a pictorial artistic language. Doing that Hockney did an ironic approach to the eternal relation with the mirror, which is connected with human vanity, and with the persecution of eternal beauty and youth. To locate the boy in a first level looking at his self is to locate vanity also in a first level that is expressed by the faire-tale words. The idea of the happiness of the old mirror is located in a second level, as a sequence of the narcissistic relation with the mirror. In the object transformed into a being with feelings we find the regard back not of a narcissistic reflection, but of pleasure in contemplation.

In 1966 Hockney begins the project to compose draws to illustrate a selection of Cavafy's poems. The result was the book *Illustrations for Fourteen Poems from C. P. Cavafy*. In the present study we intend not to work on all his draws but only in a selection of them, for this reason, we decided to work with the images of boys in bed and the multiple views of encounters created by Hockney to translate cavafian homoeroticism from words into images.

The first image we are going to observe is the one that illustrates the poem "Following the recipe of ancient Greco-Syrian magicians". The poem presents a lyric voice, an esthete, in a quest of a magic way to bring back the love, the beauty of the young lover to the room of a past time:

What distillation, following the recipe
of ancient Greco-Syrian magicians, can be found
to bring back also - as part of this return of things past -
even the little room we shared.

In this poem we find the voice of an aesthete who wants to recover the experiences of the past, experiences of the love with his *filos*, his male lover, at least for one day. The subject of recovering the past, a major one in Cavafy's poetry, is present in this explicit homoerotic poem written two years before the poet's death. The poem presents a persona

Without name, however an aesthete that seeks through magic recipes the beloved back with all his youth. The aesthete wants to find another time again the sensorial experience with the lover; the sensual experience lived in his own youth. The place of pleasure must be recovered indeed, it's the closed space of the room owned by both lovers (mikrí mas kámari), a place of the couple intimacy that is no more. This possessive "mas" indicates the sharing of a closed space denotes the couple complicity: the room as love shared by both young men.

Hockney translating this poem into image recreates the room lost in the past, but alive in the aesthete memory. The wish of past experiences recovering through Hockney's draws is expressed by the image of two boys in their bed, back to their small room, with their youth and love. The scene translates the accomplishment of the aesthete wish: two young men meet in the bed, one is

waiting for the other, both naked, their eyes meet when the second boy goes to bed raising the sheet to touch one time again the desired body of his lover. Accomplished wish or memory recovered, the image created by Hockney shows the happiness in the boy's face at the precise moment he enters the bed, the fast moment is through the painter's draw now an eternal image of delightful, the two lovers lost in the past are now presented together again by the enduring of art. The recipe to recover the past of homoerotic experience is not in the hands of the Greek-Syrian Magicians, but in the artist's hands that with the magic of art can save the moment from the inexorability of time.

Other poem illustrated by Hockney is 'In the Boring Village' where we find the subject of the releasing sleep, moment when the body's passion can experience the pleasure as desired, even being away from the desired body, it's possible into sleep to see and feel it. Thus the clerk who lives in a boring village with absolutely nothing exciting to do, can satisfy his pleasure (h&donhV) as he wishes (pouV h!qele...) in the moment of sleeping (StoVn u@pno), when he sees (blevpei) and has (k'e!cei) the figure (thVn morfiv) and the flesh (thVn savrka).

Hockney represents this poem with another scene of two boys in bed. They are not making love, but relaxed, maybe chatting in an after play moment. It's interesting to notice that again is the space of bed like the right space of the scene, nothing is important but the two boys in the bed, with their naked bodies under the wrinkled sheet, maybe from their time of pleasure. The painter seems to portray the image of simple happiness after the fruition of intense desire. In a certain way, Hockney builds the image, again, of an accomplished desire, not for the recovering of the past, but of the wished future for a young clerk described in the poem whose body on fire is logging for the place and time to experience the freedom for his desires.

As we could observe in the two illustrations for poems worked until now, we are going to see one detail in those images of bed, the sheets that cover the young men bodies. It's curious how Hockney deal with those half-hidden bodies and, in some sense, we could read those sheets as the verses where Cavafy should insert the images of desire, half-covered, half visible, as the bodies of the naked young lovers.

The bed, as we are going to comprehend after appreciate the five bed scenes for five cavafian poems, is for Hockney transcreations the *locus* of accomplishment of homoerotic desire in all its nuances. Together with the detail of the sheets, the bed seems to evocate and translate homoerotic subject of Cavafy's poetry, half-hidden as we said before and also much in the closet of the room, in the frame of the bed. But the young bodies in Hockney's draws little by little show their nudity, as Cavafy does in their writings that little by little show the homoerotic desire more and more.

In the illustration for the poem "In despair" we find again two boys in bed.

Their looks are different from the two other images, they do not smile their bodies are not so closed, just by an optical illusion we can think that their arms are touching, but we can't be sure. The poem, which this image illustrates, talks about the desperation caused by the lover that abandons another young man. The poem's poetic voice tells the reader about the unfruitful quest of someone who lost his love and try desperately to find again his love in others mouths, in others bodies.

Hockney's illustration shows again, as we said, the boys in bed, with the sheets covering their bodies. They are looking directly to us, readers, specially the boy in the right side. The idea of the broken relationship, that causes despair in the *persona* of Cavafy's poem, a loss provoked by the need of 'salvation' for the lover that went away, is translated by the face that shows neither pleasure nor calm after the sexual relation. The way the boy on the right side looks seems to be tense, as he knew something, as he tries to say something with his eyes.

The two boys are in the same bed, however there is a distance between them, just the perspective can make us think that both are touching each other even slightly. But probably their arms are not that close, as in the poem it's the contact to the beloved lips and body is nothing more than an illusion provoked by desperate desire.

For the poem 'Two young men, 23 to 24 years old', we find another couple of boys lying down in the bed. They are touching each other in a moment of rest, an after play again. Both are face down (de bruços) and look like they were in a joyful exhaustion caused by the desire and pleasure experienced before. We can see their bodies traces and more and more their bodies are showed to us. They seem to be happy as the two boys of Cavafy's poem when they give themselves to love, despite the long waiting, despite their families, despite the kind of house that accepted them. Their relationship is condemned by family and society, but they have their "good looks, their exquisite youthfulness" and love and also some money to make things easier. They are all joy even briefly, as the luck in gambling is they decided to enjoy the moment.

This moment of intimacy in a bed that shows their bodies less than half-hidden by a nice blanket is the way Hockney decided to translate a moment after the love the young men gave themselves. The way they lie relaxed not holding but together in the exhausting, maybe sleeping, may be chatting, we can't say it precisely, but with no doubt in complicity and harmony, so distant of the previous image we observed. The image Hockney created is that one Cavafy didn't told us, but let to us to create and so did the painter.

(Image for Their beginnings)

For "Their beginnings" again Hockney used the image of the couple in the bed, but now they do not lying in bed, they are seated staring at us, or at the artist's eyes, to be part of his memory. If in the poem the young men that had left

the suspicious house fearing to be seen together, Hockney decided to register through his art the moment that will years later be back to the memory of the poet, if the poet of Cavafy's poem recover the instant by his art, the painter do the same recovering the unforgettable moment and showing it to us, their readers that they poet, painter, personae know that instant can last forever through art. This subject is always in Cavafy's poetry and led us to think about an aesthetics created from experience, melted to memory and imagination, all elements that are present in the art of those men whose works are in continuous dialogue, as Cavafy, Hockney and Duane Michals, just to say those artists studied here.

When Hockney creates the eyes of these two naked boys staring at us, as the verses of the poet that have their beginnings in that bed, they are talking to the future, to those wished but not previewed eyes which will experience the delight of an homoerotic art that celebrates pleasure, desire, despite all the social barriers. Different artistic languages celebrate the expression of love between men, as Cavafy's creations are re-created by Hockney and also by Michals, to whose work we turn our eyes now.

Constantine Cavafy was a man of great feeling and even greater courage. His poetry was his life. And because he was a man who loved other men, he demonstrated his courage by making public these private passions. He lived then, as we still do today, among those brute people who would literally destroy him both physically and spiritually for the unforgivable sin of loving the wrong person. Despite this vulnerability, he wrote about the truth of himself with painful honesty, and the strength of his art protected him and freed others. I salute his courage and thank him for the gift of his life.¹²

The above text opens Duane Michals photographic essay entitled *Homage to Cavafy*. Michals is a North American contemporary photographer, which explores various conceptions of this art, with a large production on black and white. His work, called by ??? as a philosophical photography mixture images and texts, creating a different composition in his photograph once the text interferes in the image.

In this opening text we observe Michals recognition not only to the quality of Cavafy's poetry work but specially to the way he deals with the subject of pleasure and love between men. Those subjects aroused the interests and inspired the photographer to do the homage. The pictures were done not to illustrate the poems, however Michals intended to make them sympathetic¹³ to Cavafy's work. The term used by the photograph brings the idea of a shared passion, of a shared artistic experience. Indeed the opening text presents Michals perception of Cavafy linked to the idea of homoeroticity postulated before in this article. The photographer makes homage to the courage and daring of the poet from the past

to write about homoeroticism. Therefore we comprehend that Cavafy is treated as a reference in something we can understand as a homosexual culture, to return to Foucault's idea, and Michals gesture seems to make an artistic effort to recover a past, a position, a visibility in a erased and denied history of male homoerotic desire.

To point out the poet's courage with the consciousness of the historical situation lived by Cavafy's is Michals way to recognize in him a herald of those who search to celebrate love between men through any language. This process of recognition can be understood as mediated by a volunteer posture of homoerotic practices ratification. This rescue of Cavafy's figure and of his poetry seems to be modulated by the homoerotic idea, as mentioned before in the relation between Cavafy and Forster. Michals posture is clearly connected to subject of the same erotic experience.

Celebrating Cavafy the artist of the present makes explicitly a posture of ethical evaluation, rescue and visibility of those who experience homoeroticism and transform it into art. His effort translates a gesture of homoeroticism, as thought by Lopes¹⁴, once his ethical position culminates in an aesthetical creation that raises to the *status* of art the homoerotic desire in different ways.

Also this positions points out sometimes the delicate *continuum* between homosociability and homosexuality, which can be half-hidden reproducing the situations indicated by Sedgwick in the modern world men's relations where this *continuum* exists but is kept in a level of invisibility.

In 1982 Michel Foucault wrote the introduction for Duane Michals's exposition book at the *Musée d'Art Moderne* of Paris. In this introduction the philosopher is tempted to describe some of the photographs in exhibition, confessing however all the failure of his intent. Foucault continues his text explaining Michals images not as a process or even a plastic composition, because for him the images were in fact experiences¹⁵. Exactly in this way we can observe the Michals's photographic creations, once he offer himself as a gift to us: "Je suis mon cadeau pour vous"¹⁶. His art that register the light writing is composed not only of images but also of texts, of legends that lead the spectator when their eyes travel around the images, inviting to "an indecisive role of reader-spectator and proposing thoughts-emotions (for emotion is that movement that tremble the soul and spontaneously goes from soul to soul)"¹⁷.

Locating us in a role of reader-spectator, as says Foucault, Michals begins his homage to Cavafy with a kind of photographic epigraph followed by the legend "Portrait of Cavafy haunted by the ghost of his desire". The image brings the movement of two figures captured by the lens: a young man seems to be trying to concentrate or to think, leaning the head on the fist - a classical position - and his duplicated image showing his back to us, staring at the image of the young naked man. This second figure, however in a first glance appears as a more nitide figure

is a kind of *spectrum* through what light can pass, but is not only that, the same image of the naked boy appears less nitide near the image of the “thinker”.

This ‘ghost’ as indicates the epigraph has a firm posture and at the same time the other image like smoke is over the seated man, inquiring, leading us to remember Cavafy’s poem ‘Since Nine O’clock’, where we hear a poetic voice talking about the image of his youth that imposes the remembrance of the past.

(insert image FANTASMA DE KAVÁFIS)

This memoirist poem presents the lyric voice remembering his youth pleasures, place where he found desire and ecstasy and also the pain of his existence. It seems to be in dialogue, as we said, to the photo-epigraph, which Michals exhibits in the opening of his homage. Besides, the legend is in consonance with the idea of a revision that is in Cavafy’s poem, and at the same time in consonance with the images created sympathetically with his poetics. Although Michals has no intention to illustrate Cavafy’s poems he will explore common subjects for both artists. This opening image represents indeed the photographer view of Cavafy’s experimentation of the images from his own past. This image is taken from the poet’s own work of art and is idealized by the photographer’s art and also by the art of others, like Hockney, Fasianos, the Greek painter and a cyber artist from Spain, Carlos Sanrune, those who had contact as readers with the intriguing and seductive art of the Alexandrian poet and identify in him an icon of the modern homoerotic art.

In this article we are not dealing with all Michals photos of the essay, we selected four of them to work on. The first one follows the poem ‘He swears’, a poem where there is a tension between the will expressed by the oath and the body desire for the sensations offered by the night. In a confessional tone the poem exposes the seduction of the night, with its compromises and power. Finally, this Cavafy’s *persona* is defeated by the night. This special poem worth to be reproduced here because not only of the subject of oscillation between will and the seduction of the night, but the shape of the poem, that begins in two separated columns that melt in the end, translating the loss of the battle that made the night the winner.

The battle, the dangerous game that the one who swears plays with the night, is from the beginning favorable to the powerful seductive night, thus from the very first verse there is the idea of a oath, but this is not a inflexible promise

because he does the same “every now and then” (kavqe tovso) what indicates that this promise is condemned to fail. It’s a game where the player shows his cards on purpose because to be beaten is to win the pleasures of the night.

The image created by Michals presents two young men playing cards, nude torsos in half-light rustic room. There is just the light that comes by the window, and we can see the two boys, one that let his face and cards to be seen, the other, although near the window has his eyes disguised by a shadow, they are in the half-light, a image of indefinite.

The legend informs us that one of the friends is cheating, with all the means of this ambiguous word in the area of card games and love games. The picture can be seen in a literal way - the cards game - and in a metaphorical way, where the game is a erotic one, played in a half-light by two men, nothing is clear or visible, but can be sensed and imagined.

FOTO DOS RAPAZES QUE JOGAM

The image of the boy who shows his cards is very interesting, once we can understand this gesture as a metaphorical disclose to the eyes of the other, where the other can be the partner, the lens of the camera and of course us. At the same time that one of the hands shows his cards the rest of the body is half-hidden. Who’s cheating? It’s a good game with no definitive answers.

FOTO QUE ACENDE O CIGARRO DO RAPAZ

Other photograph is in dialogue with the poem “An old man” and brings the image of two boys. The legend tells us about the pleasure that was to light the other man’s cigarette. The movement of the men who lights the cigarette is extremely sensual and there is the attentive look of the one who lights the cigarette, in contrast to the corporal tension of the one who carries the cigarette in his lips, his legs, arms, all his expression is tense, maybe in defense posture, maybe in a veiled seductive gesture.

UM VELHO

The position of the two men in the image is in contrast with the poem “An old man”, which describes a lonely old man seated in a café remembering the past time, his youth and the foolish done in the name of “prudence”. There is the loss of youth experiences were caused by the belief in prudence.

The idea of the ruthless passage of time is present in Cavafy’s poem and also the subject of regret for not had dared when he was young and handsome. The image of the two men gives us the perception of an atmosphere of desire; the boy who lights the cigarette is delightful to do it. And we can’t forget the fatic object that is the cigarette touched by double fire: fire from the one who excites it; fire from the one who gives it.

Nevertheless if there is the pleasure of the man who lights the cigarette there is also the one who let the cigarette to be lighted in that sensual way, despite de closet, rigid and tense posture, the sensuality is close. The ordinary gesture in the photograph is changed by the erotic atmosphere, which is enlaced to the legend that confirms the erotic mode. However there is something more, the suggestion that seems to evokes the unrealized actions that we find in the poem: “Quma`tai o*rmeV pouV bavstage: kaiV povsh/ cavra qusivaze(...)”.

Michel Foucault comments the image above discussed and points out the image in contrast to the legend:

Dans l'*hommage à Cavafy*, on voit deux garçons aussi semblables que possible.(...)Il est difficile d'imaginer proximité plus grande, communication plus affirmée, et plus lisible pour les décrypteurs habituels du désir. Mais voici ce que dit, sous la photographie, le texte: “Le seul fait d'allumer sa cigarette était un grand plaisir.” Et, du coup, l'image est comme allégée de son poids de réel, aspiré par les mots; toute réciprocité disparaît; la complémentarité se diloque. Reste la solitaire et secrète sensation d'un plaisir fugitif qui brûle le corps de l'un des deux; tandis que l'autre immobile, les bras croisés, les yeux bien fixés sur la main qui s'approche de son visage, ne sait pas, ou ne veut pas savoir.¹⁸

This incertitude raised by Foucault about the non perception of the one who let the cigarette to be lightened indicates one situation of the desire between men that can neither be named nor be experienced and must be pleased by the pleasure of the contact to the cigarette. Thus aware or not there is the restriction in the air, something cannot be clearly said, but just insinuated through the sensual gesture.

In the poem we also have the idea of loss in the name of prudence, in other words in the name of the social parameters that prohibited some desires to be considered lawful. We have portrayed interdicted desires, that passes by the homosociability which brings intense grades of complicity, but that can not be said, desires that can not be fulfilled because of society's taboo in relation to homosocial and homoerotic bounds, at lest in terms of visibility as states Eve Sedgwick in *Between Men*.

The last photograph of the homage is preceded by the poem “half an hour” which we transcribe here because of it's homoerotic and aesthetic subject that interacts directly with the image created by Michals, a kind of meta-photograph that deals with sensuality, art work, creation mediated by the eyes of the artist Cavafy, Michals anyone that can bring to art the exact moment of the aesthetic sensation generated by the vision.

The sight is the more important sense to mediate the erotic pleasure lived by the one who belongs to art (th~V TevcnhV), at the same time this language of art

can perpetuate the beauty and liberate the imagination to turn itself into something almost real (san u&likhv). Therefore we find in the poem a voice recognizing himself as an artist whose erotic fantasy becomes real through imagination. (Photo 10)

It's important to remember that in the poem the imagination is only possible because of the sight. However the object of desire observed corresponds to the erotic desire expressed through the sight, a desire of lips and bodies contact that was well comprehended and stimulated. What would be called a frustrated encounter, without the “sensual encounter of the bodies” on the contrary becomes half an hour completely erotic (ei^ca mivsh w@ra tevlaia e*rtikhv).

The image that follows the poem has an exquisite legend “The old man photographs the young man”. We have a young men seated showing us his back and maybe looking through the window. The camera is located between the “model” and the photographer, Michals himself inserted in his own artistic creation. That image could be considered a met-photograph, which makes explicit the media of production of the art, turning the poetic/artistic reflection on something to be portrayed. The same procedure was used by Cavafy in several poems where we can find a voice talking about the literary creating that come from innumerable experiences, many of them mediated by the sight fundamental element for the photograph which reveals the sight of an instant through the lenses and turn it in something fixed image of the youth registered in words, sketches and photographs, and also the poetry of old man/photographer image registering the beauty of the young man. The same register does the old poet in “very seldom” when he is delightful with the idea that now he is old, the youth are pleased with his poems: “Tov u&geievV, h*donikoV mualov twn,/ h& eu!grammh, sfictodemevnh savrka twn,/meV thVn dikhv tou e!kfansi tou~ w&raivo sugkinou~ntai.

The lens, the sight is in the center of the space between old and young as points Foucault. The black box, the registering of light's sketches, of erotic sights creates a language that mediates art and it's subject, producing the artistic ecstasy which only those who live for Art are capable to usufruct, by the sight that transforms what is seem in to poetry of words, of traces, of images.

With the meta-photograph Duane Michals finishes his *Homage* to the Alexandrian poet, the one who became a reference of perseverance and endurance in the quest of his desire, shared and celebrated by Michals, Hockney and so many others, including us who recognize in his the will to create art beyond the frontiers of the Victorian pudency which his time is immersed.

Therefore we comprehend the multiple translations of Cavafy's poetry, not only as recreation but also as gesture of recovering of visibility, from Forster to Michals, including other artists that we could not investigate here, but are undutiful translator of the Alexandrian in many different ways. The celebration that brings visibility is a manifestation of what we called here homoaffection as thought by

Lopes, or a trace of the homosexual culture as designed by Foucault. In special the gestures of Hockney and Michals gave a visibility not only real but metaphorical once they transformed words, verses, subjects into draws and photographs, promoting an enlargement of the frontiers of cavafian poetry, and in consequence an amplification of the spaces for recognition and again visibility, which the poetry of Cavafy occupies as a relevant name in the recovered history of a homosexual culture.

NOTAS

¹ FOUCAULT, Michel. De l'amitié comme mode de vie (Friendship as a way of life). In: — (1994), p.163-167.

² Idem, 164.

³ Idem, p.165

⁴ Idem, p. 167.

⁵ Cf. ORTEGA, Francisco (1999), p.153.

⁶ Idem, p.167.

⁷ Cf. BIEN, Peter (1990), p.198.

⁸ Cf. SEDGWICK, Eve Kosofsky (1992).

⁹ LOPES, Denilson (2002), p. 37-8.

¹⁰ HOCKNEY, David (1976), p.63.

¹¹ Idem, p. 63.

¹² MICHALS, Duane (1978), p. 7.

¹³ Idem, p.5.

¹⁴ Cf. LOPES, Denilson (2002), *loci cit.*

¹⁵ Cf. Foucault, Michel (1994), p.244.

¹⁶ Id. *ibid.*, p.244.

¹⁷ Idem, p. 248-9. Nossa tradução.

¹⁸ FOUCAULT, Michel (1994a), p.248.

MARCAS DO LATIM MEDIEVAL NA PEREGRINATIO AETHERIAE – ALGUNS COMENTÁRIOS

Em homenagem a Rosalvo do Valle

Prof. Dr. Álvaro Alfredo Bragança Júnior (UFRJ/ABRAFIL/FL/PPGHC)

RESUMO:

A *Peregrinatio Aetheriae ad loca sancta* constitui-se em um dos mais importantes documentos literários do assim denominado Latim Vulgar na Baixa Latindade. Através da análise do vocabulário da monja Egéria é possível uma apreensão de várias vertentes da língua latina, que moldaram o texto da religiosa. Rosalvo do Valle debruçou-se sobre características desse tecido lingüístico em sua obra *Considerações sobre a Peregrinatio Aetheriae* (1975). Este artigo, porém, tenciona apresentar, de forma extramente sucinta, marcas lingüísticas por nós encontradas, que mais tarde serão de uso constante no chamado Latim Medieval. **Palavras-chaves:** Latim Medieval – *Peregrinatio Aetheriae* – Alta Idade Média

I. Por uma tentativa de conceituação do latim medieval¹

Como bem afirma Maria do Horto Soares Motta (1982:23), “não há unanimidade entre os autores quanto a classificar o latim da Idade Média como uma língua morta ou como uma língua viva, do que resulta uma grande variedade de conceituações.”

A dificuldade, pois, para se precisar o conceito de latim medieval é o ponto de partida para a discussão sobre seus traços fonéticos, morfológicos, sintáticos e semânticos específicos. Uma gama de variadas opiniões de estudiosos, recolhidas por Christine Mohrmann em seu célebre artigo *Le dualisme de la latinité médiévale* nos dá uma idéia dos problemas para a delimitação do latim medieval².

A partir do século IV d.C. ter-se-ia desenvolvido na Europa um *sermo latinus*, de capital importância na história lingüística européia, cognominado de latim medieval. Ludwig Traube o considera uma língua morta, embora apresentasse ainda possíveis modificações. Para Karl Vössler seria uma forma intermediária entre uma língua viva (latim vulgar) e uma língua morta (latim clássico). P. Lehmann entende o latim medieval como uma língua viva, mas limitada por certas conjunturas.

Karl Strecker era de opinião que o latim medieval seria uma continuação normal do latim clássico, utilizado como meio de expressão pelos escravos da Baixa Latindade. M. E. Löfstedt pensa, porém, ser o latim medieval uma língua viva em curso normal e orgânico durante a Idade Média.

O caráter de língua viva também é acentuado por Dag Norberg. Em seu *Manuel pratique de latin médiéval*, o estudioso assim define o latim da Idade Média: