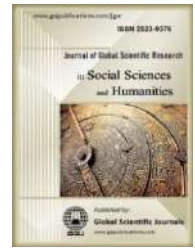




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Calvino's Critical Vision in the Fantasy Character

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ABSTRACT

The novelist work depends on the character because it is the main driver in the narration of events and works to harmonize the elements of the narrative. The character cannot be dispensed with in any literary work, but the ancients did not give it importance and considered it an integral element of the novelist work, as they considered it a secondary thing, and in the last century the character received attention. It is widespread due to the changes that occurred in the development of societies that called for regulating the individual's relationship with society, especially focusing on the character of the hero and his relationship with the world that surrounds him in the fictional atmosphere. Critics have pointed out the presence of narrative characters in the fictional work, as well as the existence of three types of characters, which are (the reference Italo Calvino was interested in narration through his attention to the characters of his novels, which he took from the image of the society in which he lived, especially the working class. Fantasy was one of the terms that had spread in Europe since ancient times through some epic works written by writers such as the epic *The Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, by Homer, as well as in the works of Dante Alighieri, including the *Divine Comedy*. After that, some changes occurred to it, and the term "fantasy" became popular in the West. It reached the height of its prosperity in the nineteenth century and came out with new labels under the title of magical realism and the miraculous. Fantasy occupied a large part of Calvino's interests because fantasy takes the literary work away from its truth and realism to stimulate the reader's imagination because reality has become unreal. Therefore, it was necessary to resort to employing fantasy with the intention of stirring feelings and making it capable of dealing with the dilemmas left by the modern world. Calvino created Fantasy characters that excited readers, including (Cosimo) in the novel *Il barone rampante* lit. ("The Rampant Baron"), (Medardo) in the novel "Il visconte dimezzato: The Cloven Viscount", (Agiololfo) in the novel *The Nonexistent Knight*, and other characters in other works.

1. Introduction

The character and its types:

Within the narrative work, characters assume a pivotal role as the primary force propelling the plot forward. Their indispensability stems from their intricate entanglement with other narrative elements, fostering a process of mutual familiarization that ultimately shapes the text's structural coherence "this complex world with a

very diverged structure ...The Multiple Character of the novel is characterized by the multiplicity of passions, doctrines, ideologies, cultures, civilizations, obsessions and human natures, whose diversity and differences have no limits " (Murtadh, 1998: p73).

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The concept of character has undergone a multifaceted evolution, inextricably linked to the changing tides of literary theory. Initially relegated to a state of obscurity, the character languished in the shadows for an extended period. Tzvetan Todorov attributes this neglect to the inherent flexibility and ambiguity embedded within the very nature of the character (Bahrawi, 1990: p 208).

Delving into the intricacies of character since the era of Aristotle demands meticulous consideration. However, historical practices have witnessed a notable deviation from prioritizing character as a primary focal point. Rather, it assumed a supplementary role alongside other literary elements, relegating it to a secondary status in comparison to the broader spectrum of elements within literary endeavors. (Bahrawi, 1990: p208). "Over time, interest in character emerged, and it acquired significant presence in literary works, without which they would be incomplete. The attention to character and its status gradually became apparent, intertwining with the individual's societal value and emphasizing a focus on all that is humane." (Gharibi, p36) and moving away from focusing on oneself, the character took a wide space of care in the midst of the changes that have occurred in society and the transformations that nations have undergone throughout the ages. A relationship between the individual and society has emerged, considering it as the foundation in the movements of construction and evolution. This is highlighted by George Lukács, who identified the existence of the problematic hero searching for authentic values in a morally compromised world. Expanding on this perspective, Goldmann illustrated the relationship between the hero and the world, positioning the protagonist in a distinctive role crucial to the structure of the novel or any other literary genre (Bahrawi, 1990: p 209). Thus, the hero became intricately linked to a relationship with the surrounding world through active engagement and interaction with it.

Subsequently, research endeavors focused on character, considering it a pivotal element in literary works. Studies by scholars such as Vladimir Propp and Greimas delved into the narrative character, asserting that the narrative persona constitutes a fundamental component of storytelling. These studies scrutinized the actions

of the narrative character independently, detached from its relationships with other characters encompassed within the text. (Lahmadani, 1993: p50). Philippe Hamon, in his work "Semiotics of the Novel: Character, Narration, and Discourse," pointed out the existence of three types of characters: referential characters, indicative characters, and mnemonic characters.

However, the question that arises is: How does the novelist present their characters within the literary work? And in what manner? Each author has their unique approach in portraying characters and the imaginative concepts they craft in their minds, engaging with these characters in a fitting manner. Italo Calvino is considered one of the novelists who endeavored to highlight his characters based on his own perception of reality. Through an examination of his literary works, particularly the novels he authored, Calvino exhibited a profound concern for narrative, placing a particular emphasis on expressing his perspective through his characters "which urges alienation and separation imposed on modern man" (Nasr Allah, 2019: p20).

Given that characters are fundamental components of narrative, Calvino took great care in crafting his characters to convey the ideas he wished to articulate. Consequently, characters became pivotal elements in his literary works. Calvino wrote for diverse social strata, aiming to incorporate them into his literary texts "my writings about the militants were good , I understood a lot about them and through them I became close to many social strata, especially those on the margins of society, I am interested in the working class, but I do not have a convincing way of writing about them, to be interested in writing is something that does not mean to master writing about it," (Nasr Allah, 2019: p19).

2. The Origin of Fantasy:

Fantasy was one of Calvino's areas of interest, and it is a term that has been prevalent in Europe since ancient times through epic works such as Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, as well as Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy. Over time, some modifications occurred in the concept of fantasy. The term "fantasy" or "fantastic" gained popularity in the West, reaching its peak during the 19th century

and evolving into new designations like magical realism and the marvelous. As for how fantasy has evolved, in fact, it originated from the uncertainty that arises in the reader when there is a breach of the laws governing the world.

This uncertainty is experienced by beings who are only acquainted with the laws of nature when they encounter an event that is beyond the natural order. It creates a duality between two concepts, one being real and the other imagined.

Thus, fantasy involves illusion, imagination, and the presence of sensory images. Referencing the conceptualizations and functions of imagination, fantasy liberates literary works from their reality and factual nature, captivating the reader's imagination with themes and treatments posed by the author. Realism no longer exerts its influence in this realm, leading modern writers to turn to fantasy.

A literary work that involves a breach of the laws of nature and logic, blending reality, illusion, and imagination, is characterized as fantasy. In such works, the creator undertakes a complex process that intertwines conscious and subconscious elements, exploring the forgotten and repressed aspects. The outcome is a reconfiguration of reality, as if the act of writing is an achievement of what cannot be realized in reality, accomplished through vision and imagination.

3. Employing Fantasy in Literary Work:

Each writer has their unique way of expressing their worldview and the conflicts and differences that unfold in it. They serve as the voice of the present, with the ability to articulate their thoughts in any style they find suitable. Calvino, for instance, provided a rationale for his writings, stating,

"Full of good intentions, I tried to identify myself with the ruthless energies propelling the events of our century, both collective and individual. I tried to find some harmony between the adventurous, picaresque inner rhythm that prompted me to write and the frantic spectacle of the world, sometimes dramatic and sometimes grotesque. Soon I became aware that between the facts of life that should have been my raw materials and the quick light touch I wanted for my writing, there

was a gulf that cost me increasing effort to cross. Maybe I was only then becoming aware of the weight, the inertia, the opacity of the world—qualities that stick to writing from the start, unless one finds some way of evading them."

Through his works, Calvino aimed to illustrate how the reality he experienced unfolded. He adopted a distinctive approach by using fantastical characters, which became the focal point of his novels, to reflect a portrayal of the world. Critics have described his depiction as mythical and legendary, capturing the essence of the world he sought to convey.

In order to comprehend the integration of the characterization bestowed upon his works, it is imperative to examine the method he employed. Calvino turned to probing the issues of the working class and contemplating the human condition and its relationship with the environment through a nuanced exploration of practical and ethical endeavors. From this, the essence of humanity is realized, and the relationship between individuals and the world, as well as with others, deepens. This creates the impetus and desire for the evolution of beings and a love for these entities.

From its beginnings, my work as a writer has aimed to follow the lightning-fast course of mental circuits that capture and link points that are far apart in space and time. In my fondness for adventure stories and fairy tales, I have always sought something like an inner energy, a motion of the mind. I have focused on the image and on the motion that springs naturally from the image, knowing all the while that one cannot speak of a literary result until this stream of imagination becomes words. As for the writer of verse, so for the writer of prose.

His early writings incorporated elements of imaginative contemplation and alluded to artists from the Middle Ages. This inclination was noted by the novelist and poet Cesare Pavese, who likened Calvino to a squirrel carrying a nutshell, referencing his penchant for the fantastical.

The Fictional Character in "Il visconte dimezzato: The Cloven Viscount"

In his novel "Il visconte dimezzato: The Cloven Viscount" ("The Cloven Viscount"), written in 1951, Calvino delves into the character of a fantastical persona represented by the splitting of the viscount as a result of being hit by a cannonball that transports him to imaginary realms. These realms do not actually exist; rather, they symbolize his expanded consciousness that transcends the individual and overcomes human and chauvinistic ideas. Through this narrative, Calvino manages to form perspectives that go beyond human imagination, driven by a sense of responsibility towards the universe and humanity. It is through these splits that his vision of humanity takes shape.

He drew inspiration from observing the world to enrich his perspectives.

This vision, formed through the imagination and visual images, includes the portrayal of the cloven man and transforms this image into others. It becomes a realm of symmetries and resemblances. Subsequently, a phase of interpreting these images begins, granting the ability to craft fairy tales and activating the memory of these imaginary images.

The novel's title blends philosophical elements between the philosophy of the body, class determinants, and the ideological signals it invokes in the recipient. The concealed responses within the deformed body stimulate reflection and prompt the posing of a question: Why did the author choose this title? This leaves an unexpected impression on the reader, leading them to ponder how this viscount became cloven.

This contrast was not aimed at presenting the idea of good and evil, but rather served as a narrative juxtaposition to reveal the division that afflicts the human psyche. Humanity is divided and fragmented, at odds with itself, and this fragmentation has become a characteristic and a motif in modern literature. It is manifested in the fragmentation of space, time, the human spirit, and relationships between humans as well as with the environment.

The author employed this cleavage in his novel through the experiences of the Viscount Medardo, a result of his participation in the war against the Turks. This created a character divided into two halves, presenting a kind of fantasy that portrayed the irrational as if it were rational. The division seemed to suggest that such a split could occur in a person under certain circumstances, with the deformed half of the body beginning to lead a normal life.

Pulling away the sheet, there lay the Viscount's body, horribly mutilated. It not only lacked an arm and leg, but the whole thorax and abdomen between that arm and leg had been swept away by the direct hit. All that remained of the head was one eye, one ear, one cheek, half a nose, half a mouth, half a chin and half a forehead; the other half of the head was just not there. The long and short of it was that exactly half of him had been saved, the right part, perfectly preserved, without a scratch on it except for that huge slash separating it from the left-hand part, which had been blown away.

The transformation of reality into a concave mirror tainted by perpetual deficiency appears as a reflection of the pain and division experienced, sparing no one. Even the frogs' hands fell victim to this phenomenon, splitting them in half. The philosophy of deficiencies, transforming everything surrounding into a form of bifurcation, introduces a psychological complex in the character, acting as a suppressed force that stirs latent motivations within. It engenders a sense that the world can never be complete. Calvino's intent with this fantastical atmosphere and bizarre world is to evoke a sense of awe and to explore the enduring impact of the remnants of evil within the human psyche, affecting all living beings, not just humans.

He emphasizes the concept of division and cleavage, suggesting that this cleavage prompts deeper contemplation and finds beauty and wisdom in what is torn, fractured, and distorted. The deformity afflicting the character is a result of the self-deformation caused by the events, wars, and disasters she endured, leading to her fragmentation and tearing. Just as the sinister part has its view on cleavage, the benevolent part also expresses its perspective by saying:

It seems as if the author arrived at a Sufi-inspired idea, suggesting that the division and cleavage experienced by the human soul due to witnessing the horrors and calamities surrounding the world from every corner make the soul feel the wounds and pains of others. The perspective on good and evil is different for each fragmented part.

The author chose a geometric form for this cloven being to create a fantastical world that approaches reality but with an imaginative touch. He depicted his main character, which encapsulates both good and evil sides, using the technique of contrast. This literary contrast is akin to a painter using color contrasts to bring forth a crystallized form in their imagination. The narrative contrast employed by the author served to reveal his critique and critical perspective on matters. Through his portrayal of this fractured and divided world, dominated by destruction and ruin, the author expressed his criticism and critical view of a world in disarray. Most of the characters he presented are fragmented and scattered, reflecting the inherent nature of humanity. The author aimed to confront all forms of division to reach the complete human

The conclusion of the novel prompted the author to craft his narrative consciously, employing an engaging style to reach the goal of achieving perfection through the integration of the cloven halves (evil and good).

Book Title is : Six Memos for the Next Millennium

Calvino relies on imagination that inspires him and enables him to depict images of characters in which spontaneity merges with rationality. This approach is aligned with the propositions he presented in his book, "Six Memos for the Next Millennium," wherein he stated, consequently, he brings forth his critical perspective through the execution of his imaginative and creative narrative endeavors.

Original: The Baron in the Trees. Il barone rampante lit. 'The Rampant Baron')

The Fictional Character in Il Barone Rampante lit. 'The Rampant Baron')

The fictional character in the novel Baron the Tree Dweller

The title of the novel serves as a provocative element, invoking a sense of peculiarity and amazement, while connoting the imaginative and fantastical dimensions inherent in the narrative. It prompts an inquiry into the plausibility of the Baron (a titular designation associated with noble personas) leading his entire existence in a state of suspension above the trees.

In this novel, the author delves into a distinct world populated by diverse characters, wherein the interplay of worlds occurs between the character and the setting, reflecting Calvino's astute critical vision in selecting unconventional narrative personas. In his endeavor, he seeks to establish a relationship between the events of his era and the various upheavals experienced by the world. He opts for the richly transformative 18th century, known as the Enlightenment period, in Europe.

The author explores a fully realized fantastical character, namely, the persona of Baron Cosimo. According to him, this character is depicted based on an image that has remained suspended in his memory, harking back to the 18th century. Thus, this image has left its imprint on Calvino, constituting part of the influence of Eastern literature in the West and serving as a renewal of the narrative, as exemplified by the works of the writer Neivo.

Covering the same historical period that extends to the 18th and 19th centuries and addressing social environments, Neivo's novel "Confessions of an Octogenarian" is noted for its narrative enchantment in comparison to European literature. In this context, Calvino sought to reflect a part of himself in the character of Baron Cosimo, expressing his perspective and vision. This is achieved through an exploration and illumination of the historical and social milieu of that period.

The character of Cosimo adopted rebellion as a path to reject the lived reality that fate had ordained for him, leading to the divergence of his destiny from that of his family. His life takes a

distinct trajectory due to an incident that compels him to reconsider all matters surrounding him, as described by the author: Cosimo chose rebellion entirely by his own will, unswayed by any external force. He ascended the tree and never descended from it, engaging in the rituals of his entire life from above. It represents a state of estrangement and isolation, depicting Sufi and spiritual aspects that distance themselves from material things, embracing asceticism. It appears as a rejection of all aspects of life and its tumultuous social relationships, portraying a situation of escape and detachment. Yet, the question remains: Why this escape, and what is its ultimate purpose?

The ultimate goal was to perform altruistic deeds for others and attempt to integrate into society by residing above the trees, extending a helping hand to those in need and offering everything he could. Cosimo rejected a life of luxury, opulence, and aristocracy that he could have enjoyed. Instead, he chose isolation, opting to remain suspended above the trees to serve humanity. He imposed on himself an unconventional behavior, as if depicting the inclination of a human who rebels against circumstances and everyone around him. He believed that he found an alternative to experiencing his humanity in this place. Thus, he lived in seclusion, not as a detachment from reality but as a choice driven by his own will. He practiced a lifestyle while hanging above the trees, moving from one tree to another.

The author portrayed a complete individual who attains his perfection through his own will, imposing upon himself a challenging and rigorous lifestyle. This satirical and reality-defying character presented a broad network of ethical concepts with cultural nuances. Calvino attempted to articulate his critical ideas through his literary works, exploring his relationship with his environment and understanding its intricacies in an ethical manner. He often invoked this approach, as reflected in his statement: Calvino crafted from his narrative material, representing concepts, and visions of the world, along with impressions that governed the movements of the novel's characters. He aimed to steer them toward the direction he envisioned, delving into the internal conflicts and desires for change within these characters to mirror real-world occurrences. This was undertaken to present a product that is distinctly reflective of the author's own self.

Thus, the tree transformed into a symbol akin to the Tree of Knowledge, leading to the discovery of the universe's depths and secrets. Knowledge, in this context, takes on a contemplative and inner form, a mental awareness derived from reading books. It is as if the author endeavors to unveil the persona that sought to lead a peculiar life despite possessing a high intellectual capacity that formed its unique philosophy solely through its own will. This could be seen as a path to a new life rejecting the opulent lifestyle, an assertion of a return to simplicity, innocence, and all that is associated with it. It reflects a romantic aspect and an announcement of the rejection of civilization with all its potential ruin for humanity, attempting to revert to the humanity, nature, and innate essence of human existence

With the conclusion of this narrative, the fantastical persona of Cosimo fades into the expansive realm, leaving behind only the indelible traces it imprinted on humanitarian efforts and scientific pursuits. In Calvino's subsequent work.

The Fantastic Character in "The Nonexistent Knight":

"The Nonexistent Knight," penned in 1959 during a period characterized by historical upheavals and profound philosophical inquiries amid the world's tumultuous events, analogous themes find exploration marked by significant intellectual endeavors that encompassed philosophical inquiries in the face of the tumultuous events shaping the world.

Calvino derived the image of the nonexistent knight in his imagination from the events that Italy went through during that period, following the fall of Mussolini and the conclusion of World War II in 1945. The country's troubled situation, plagued by the aftermath of war and its negative repercussions, led the author to create a fantastical character that blends elements of reality and imagination, oscillating between the rational and the irrational.

The image of an empty suit of armor walking came to represent the narrative of "The Nonexistent Knight," a manifestation of this mental image that his imagination had depicted. The creative process for Calvino begins with the idea he harbors in his mind, which then takes its final form on paper. It is

possible to observe the dominance of fantasy in the novel through the title proposed by the author, "The Nonexistent Knight." The imagination of Calvino gave rise to this nonexistent character. The author attempted to present the knight in the form of a warrior, adorned in armor and helmet, actively participating in victorious battles. He earned the title of a knight for liberating a woman.

Chivalry, in this context, took on a new description of its values. The nonexistent knight did not participate in actual wars but rather expressed a humane act by defending the daughter of a king. It's as if chivalry, in the present time, is redefined by portraying a new image of defending the oppressed. Here, the realistic and the fantastical intertwine, raising the question of how a nonexistent person could perform such a humane act.

Calvino conceived this character resembling a humanoid, one who executes assigned tasks. The character of Agilulf, a warrior, was created to fulfill his role in a detached manner. He took on the appearance of a warrior in armor, carrying out his duties armed with willpower, ambition, and awareness. He wasn't a human; rather, he was a voice emanating from the metal he adorned.

Indeed, this character is more closely aligned with imagination than reality, reflecting the author's unique vision in choosing such a persona. This knight possesses all the human values criteria, yet paradoxically, he does not truly exist. Calvino worked to humanize the inanimate armor, symbolizing a representation of a projection onto reality and the aspirations of this character to achieve heroism that it couldn't attain. The character suffers from a split personality, imagining things and heroic feats through the discourse facilitated by the armor. The armor represents a world that has ended, declaring the defeat of war. Calvino aimed to illustrate the place where the fantastical character existed, grounding it in reality by starting with the liberation of the maiden from thieves and participating in the battles that transpired. Thus, a blending of truth and fantasy occurs through the representation of the fantastical, creating a narrative that intertwines with our reality, blurring the lines between the two.

In summary, the fantastical character worked within the literary texts of the author to reflect distorted physical and moral images and various forms that relied on perspectives with philosophies surrounding everything related to humans or the individual, especially in connection with the Italian society, particularly those linked to crises, violence, and wars.

The distortion of the body and its language, which was intricately detailed, served as a significant element in portraying the idea that a physically distorted individual suffers from psychological implications and complexes that express a sense of inadequacy and an inability to cope with reality. Any reference to a place of emptiness, or in other words, deficiency, can become a space of affinity for this character.

This physical fragmentation reflects a psychological division, a fracture, and a usurpation. The contradiction between deficiency and non-deficiency is a non-being concept that reveals the contradictions and oppositions of life. Every work of fantasy requires a character with a split personality or a separation between two worlds (the real and the imaginary).

The characters in his novels are, in reality, hybrid characters, whether in terms of physical deformity or the split personality that leads them to adopt a peculiar way of life. They strive to blend between nature and civilization, seeking to live in a space distant from contemporary human spaces. Living in an isolated place, such as a tree, carries multiple connotations, including those related to the spiritual and cognitive aspects. It is an invitation to return to a more natural state or to the humanity of humans, away from civilizations and the wars they have brought. On the other hand, the fantastical character can be envisioned as a false hero, experiencing a state of division between heroism and weakness. The hero is portrayed as a weak character who adopts the shield as a mask to engage in a dialogue about everything related to reality. This state of usurpation, weakness, and oppression reflects the struggles and vulnerabilities experienced by contemporary characters in the present time.

As for how fantasy has evolved, in fact, it originated from the uncertainty that arises in the reader when there is a breach of the laws

governing the world (El-Kady, 2010: p305). This uncertainty is experienced by beings who are only acquainted with the laws of nature when they encounter an event that is beyond the natural order. It creates a duality between two concepts, one being real and the other imagined.

As for naming it, critics have called Fantasy a "literary work that frees itself from the logic of reality and truth in its narrative, exaggerating the fascination of readers" (Alloush, 1985: p170).

Fantasy is the illusion, imagination and the presence of tangible images (Nasr, 1984: p 61). Thus, fantasy involves illusion, imagination, and the presence of sensory images. Referencing the conceptualizations and functions of imagination, fantasy liberates literary works from their reality and factual nature, captivating the reader's imagination with themes and treatments posed by the author. Realism no longer exerts its influence in this realm, leading modern writers to turn to fantasy "reality has become unreal, so it was necessary to resort to using fantasy in order to stir emotions and make them able to deal with the dilemmas left by the modern world (Manz, 2016: p 310).

A literary work that involves a breach of the laws of nature and logic, blending reality, illusion, and imagination, is characterized as fantasy. In such works, the creator undertakes a complex process that intertwines conscious and subconscious elements, exploring the forgotten and repressed aspects. The outcome is a reconfiguration of reality, as if the act of writing is an achievement of what cannot be realized in reality, accomplished through vision and imagination (Hameesh, p 74).

Each writer has their unique way of expressing their worldview and the conflicts and differences that unfold in it. They serve as the voice of the present, with the ability to articulate their thoughts in any style they find suitable. Calvino, for instance, provided a rationale for his writings, stating,

"Full of good intentions, I tried to identify myself with the ruthless energies propelling the events of our century, both collective and individual. I tried to find some harmony between the adventurous, picaresque inner rhythm that prompted me to write and the frantic spectacle of the world,

sometimes dramatic and sometimes grotesque. Soon I became aware that between the facts of life that should have been my raw materials and the quick light touch I wanted for my writing, there was a gulf that cost me increasing effort to cross. Maybe I was only then becoming aware of the weight, the inertia, the opacity of the world—qualities that stick to writing from the start, unless one finds some way of evading them." Calvino, 1999: p 17).

Through his works, Calvino aimed to illustrate how the reality he experienced unfolded. He adopted a distinctive approach by using fantastical characters, which became the focal point of his novels, to reflect a portrayal of the world. Critics have described his depiction as mythical and legendary, capturing the essence of the world he sought to convey (Calvino, 2015: p 29). So, how can this be achieved in order to comprehend the integration of the characterization bestowed upon his works, it is imperative to examine the method he employed. Calvino turned to probing the issues of the working class and contemplating the human condition and its relationship with the environment through a nuanced exploration of practical and ethical endeavors. (Calvino, 2019: p 20). From this, the essence of humanity is realized, and the relationship between individuals and the world, as well as with others, deepens. This creates the impetus and desire for the evolution of beings and a love for these entities.

Calvino's selection of characters in his literary works was grounded in thought, aided by his rich imagination filled with diverse narratives, From its beginnings, my work as a writer has aimed to follow the lightning-fast course of mental circuits that capture and link points that are far apart in space and time. In my fondness for adventure stories and fairy tales, I have always sought something like an inner energy, a motion of the mind. I have focused on the image and on the motion that springs naturally from the image, knowing all the while that one cannot speak of a literary result until this stream of imagination becomes words. As for the writer of verse, so for the writer of prose (Calvino, 2019: p 55).

His early writings incorporated elements of imaginative contemplation and alluded to artists from the Middle Ages. This inclination was noted by the novelist and poet Cesare Pavese, who

likened Calvino to a squirrel carrying a nutshell, referencing his penchant for the fantastical. (Calvino, 2019: p 13). In his novel "Il visconte dimezzato:" ("The Cloven Viscount"), written in 1951, Calvino delves into the character of a fantastical persona represented by the splitting of the viscount as a result of being hit by a cannonball that transports him to imaginary realms. These realms do not actually exist; rather, they symbolize his expanded consciousness that transcends the individual and overcomes human and chauvinistic ideas. Through this narrative, Calvino manages to form perspectives that go beyond human imagination, driven by a sense of responsibility towards the universe and humanity. It is through these splits that his vision of humanity takes shape.

(Calvino, 2019: p 200). He drew inspiration from observing the world to enrich his perspectives.

This vision, formed through the imagination and visual images, includes the portrayal of the cloven man and transforms this image into others. It becomes a realm of symmetries and resemblances. Subsequently, a phase of interpreting these images begins, granting the ability to craft fairy tales and activating the memory of these imaginary images (Calvino, p 93).

The title chosen by the writer for his novel makes the reader swim in the atmosphere of interpretation. This choice is the key with which the interpretation begins, which is the threshold of the title, as it "raises in the recipient an obsession to penetrate into the essence of the workIt arouses the curiosity of the recipient and takes into account the expression of the content" (Noor Adin, 1994: p 70)

The novel's title blends philosophical elements between the philosophy of the body, class determinants, and the ideological signals it invokes in the recipient. The concealed responses within the deformed body stimulate reflection and prompt the posing of a question: Why did the author choose this title? This leaves an unexpected impression on the reader, leading them to ponder how this viscount became cloven. (* Viscount : a title to describe different layers of nobility and was used in some European countries and the designation dates back to ancient Latin roots) which reveals the values, moral and social

upheaval. This physical division of the character, which, like the title, is consistent with social division, is among the requirements of nobility in the Society of classes in Italy, especially the fifties period, which passed through an earlier stage for it (namely fascism, which introduces strength over weakness), is expressed by the state of the deformed body of this division in the concept of nobility, which suffered originally a psychological and social defeat, a process of cracks and fractures that affected the strata of society, and the announcement of the death of values and the emergence of others. It raises a very important question why the writer chose fictional characters that represented times far from the present that he lived , imaginary places , and what purpose prompted him to this shift in writing according to what is happening in the field of critical theory, when he joined the Resistance ranks after World War II, the atmosphere that prevailed in Italy during the Cold War indicates a kind of rupture, apprehension and tension that was taking hold of Souls (Calvino, 2015: p30).

In light of this negative reality, Calvino wrote his novel to express the painful feeling of this, so he used the antithesis in the way of Robert Stevenson in the novel (Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde) ** (a novel by Scottish author (Robert Louis Stevenson) published in 1886, its events revolve around a lawyer tracing events that happened to his friend Jekyll and the evil man named Hyde, and mentions the conflict inside Dr. Jekyll represented by two different characters, one good and the other evil).

This contrast was not aimed at presenting the idea of good and evil, but rather served as a narrative juxtaposition to reveal the division that afflicts the human psyche. Humanity is divided and fragmented, at odds with itself, and this fragmentation has become a characteristic and a motif in modern literature. It is manifested in the fragmentation of space, time, the human spirit, and relationships between humans as well as with the environment.

(Manz, 2016: p 20 The author employed this cleavage in his novel through the experiences of the Viscount Medardo, a result of his participation in the war against the Turks. This created a character divided into two halves, presenting a kind of fantasy that portrayed the irrational as if it were rational. The division seemed to suggest that

such a split could occur in a person under certain circumstances, with the deformed half of the body beginning to lead a normal life.. Pulling away the sheet, there lay the Viscount's body, horribly mutilated. It not only lacked an arm and leg, but the whole thorax and abdomen between that arm and leg had been swept away by the direct hit. All that remained of the head was one eye, one ear, one cheek, half a nose, half a mouth, half a chin and half a forehead; the other half of the head was just not there. The long and short of it was that exactly half of him had been saved, the right part, perfectly preserved, without a scratch on it except for that huge slash separating it from the left-hand part, which had been blown away. (Calvino, 2006: pp 64-65).

This presentation of body language and its distorted signals raises a state of witness to the enormity and enormity of wars and the state of feeling of inferiority suffered by the character that worked to project this deformation on things and the place within which it moves along the boundaries of voids and permanent deficiency. The physical deficiency is originally an existential deficiency based on the idea of the constant idea of desensitization to full presence.

The decrease in the view of this physical deformation is an obsession from the constant and continuous search for everything that can achieve perfection in the existential view of life that differed when the body was deformed, so how can this bifurcator face reality and how will its relationship with others be, is there psychological damage caused by this bifurcation and all that had its reflection and impact in from her stalk, and from each fruit remains the right part (Calvino, 2006: p 76).

The transformation of reality into a concave mirror tainted by perpetual deficiency appears as a reflection of the pain and division experienced, sparing no one. Even the frogs' hands fell victim to this phenomenon, splitting them in half. The philosophy of deficiencies, transforming everything surrounding into a form of bifurcation, introduces a psychological complex in the character, acting as a suppressed force that stirs latent motivations within. It engenders a sense that the world can never be complete. Calvino's intent with this fantastical atmosphere and bizarre world is to evoke a sense of awe and to

explore the enduring impact of the remnants of evil within the human psyche, affecting all living beings, not just humans. "the evil of the Viscount was omnipresent to everyone, and from moment to moment he appeared in works that no one expected and for which there was no explanation (Calvino, 2006: p 86).

The writer tried to formulate his fantasy worlds through the character of the bifurcator, who was born with the idea of fission and began to call for it through phrases placed on the tongue of this character, saying: "Oh, if everything that is perfect could be split, and every human being would come out and get rid of his stupid ignorant perfection, I was perfect and things for me were normal, different and trivial as air, I thought I could see everything, I could only see the crust, if I became half of yourself, and I wish you this, you would understand things beyond the ordinary intelligence of perfect minds, you would lose half of yourself, and I wish you this, you would understand things beyond the ordinary intelligence of perfect minds, you would lose half of yourself and half of the world, but the rest half would be a thousand times deeper and more, and you would also want everything to be split and torn in your image, because beauty, wisdom and justice exist only in what is bifurcated" (Calvino, 2006: pp 111-112).

He emphasizes the concept of division and cleavage, suggesting that this cleavage prompts deeper contemplation and finds beauty and wisdom in what is torn, fractured, and distorted. The deformity afflicting the character is a result of the self-deformation caused by the events, wars, and disasters she endured, leading to her fragmentation and tearing. Just as the sinister part has its view on cleavage, the benevolent part also expresses its perspective by saying:, " *to be a cleaved person is to realize the pain of every person and everything in the world, the pain that each of them can feel for a split and divided being, but this is the case of you and everyone else, here I am now feeling brothers whose existence I did not realize when I was whole, my brothers to all the ruptures and contradictions of the world, you will learn If you suffer for the suffering of every human being, you will heal your mothers and you heal their wounds,*" (Calvino, 2006: p 144).

It seems as if the author arrived at a Sufi-inspired idea, suggesting that the division and cleavage experienced by the human soul due to witnessing the horrors and calamities surrounding the world from every corner make the soul feel the wounds and pains of others. The perspective on good and evil is different for each fragmented part.

The author chose a geometric form for this cloven being to create a fantastical world that approaches reality but with an imaginative touch. He depicted his main character, which encapsulates both good and evil sides, using the technique of contrast. This literary contrast is akin to a painter using color contrasts to bring forth a crystallized form in their imagination. The narrative contrast employed by the author served to reveal his critique and critical perspective on matters. Through his portrayal of this fractured and divided world, dominated by destruction and ruin, the author expressed his criticism and critical view of a world in disarray. Most of the characters he presented are fragmented and scattered, reflecting the inherent nature of humanity. The author aimed to confront all forms of division to reach the complete human.

The conclusion of the novel prompted the author to craft his narrative consciously, employing an engaging style to reach the goal of achieving perfection through the integration of the cloven halves (evil and good).

"Thus, Madardo returned as a complete man, no longer evil or good, but a mixture of evil and good, but he had the experience of each half of them combined, and therefore he became very wise, his life was happy and he had many children, his judgment was fair, and our life changed for the better," (Calvino, 2006: p 81). The writer thus outlined the future horizon of life in the merger, the result of which was a just judgment after the experiences that the bifurcator went through and created a more humane person with partial unity because each part of him went through an experience that gained him knowledge in the essence of things .

Calvino relies on imagination that inspires him and enables him to depict images of characters in which spontaneity merges with rationality. This approach is aligned with the propositions he presented in his book, "Six Memos for the Next

Millennium," wherein he stated, " the story for me is a union between the spontaneous logic of images and a plan implemented on the basis of rational intent, but at the same time I have always sought in the imagination. There is another definition in which I identify myself to the fullest extent of what identification is, that is, imagination as an ammunition for the latent and hypothetical and for what does not exist and has never existed and probably will not there never is, but there may be" (Calvino, 2006: p 90), consequently, he brings forth his critical perspective through the execution of his imaginative and creative narrative endeavors.

When moving on to another of Calvino's works, the second part of The title of the novel serves as a provocative element, invoking a sense of peculiarity and amazement, while connoting the imaginative and fantastical dimensions inherent in the narrative. It prompts an inquiry into the plausibility of the Baron (a titular designation associated with noble personas) leading his entire existence in a state of suspension above the trees. Calvino says in the preface of the trilogy " the history of the authorship of this novel clarifies the psychological state, we are in an era of rethinking the role we can play in the historical movement, while new hopes and New decisions despite everything, as time goes on for the better, it's all about discovering the right relationship between individual conscience and the course of history" (Calvino, 2019: 36). In this novel, the author delves into a distinct world populated by diverse characters, wherein the interplay of worlds occurs between the character and the setting, reflecting Calvino's astute critical vision in selecting unconventional narrative personas. In his endeavor, he seeks to establish a relationship between the events of his era and the various upheavals experienced by the world. He opts for the richly transformative 18th century, known as the Enlightenment period, in Europe , namely the eighteenth century (the age of enlightenment) in Europe. The author explores a fully realized fantastical character, namely, the persona of Baron Cosimo. According to him, this character is depicted based on an image that has remained suspended in his memory, harking back to the 18th century. "It's not a coincidence that the French Antoine Galan translation opened of the book 'One Thousand and One Nights' at the beginning of that century the imagination of the

west on the eastern sense of Wonder, magical carpets, winged horses and elves who protrude from the lamps and with this rush to make the imagination go beyond all limits, the eighteenth century reached its peak with the flight of Baron (von Munchausen) over a cannonball, It is a fictional image that has been forever blurred in our minds by the illustrations that were the great works of Gustav Dor (Calvino, 1999: p 36).

Thus, this image has left its imprint on Calvino, constituting part of the influence of Eastern literature in the West and serving as a renewal of the narrative, as exemplified by the works of the writer Neivo. (* The French Orientalist Antoine Galan (1646-1715 ad) was the first to translate the Thousand and One Nights into a European language. It appeared at the right time, as readers in the early 18th century were tired of classical literature, frozen by artistic templates that did not accept development, and were looking for new literature capable of inspiring their imagination) about the whole life of the Hero, Covering the same historical period that extends to the 18th and 19th centuries and addressing social environments, Neivo's novel "Confessions of an Octogenarian" is noted for its narrative enchantment in comparison to European literature. In this context, Calvino sought to reflect a part of himself in the character of Baron Cosimo, expressing his perspective and vision. This is achieved through an exploration and illumination of the historical and social milieu of that period, "finding the right dimension to be present and absent at the same time, and that was the problem with the tree-dweller Baron, and locating me on a map illustrating the dominant intellectual doctrines today is becoming more and more difficult for me, I can not locate to my satisfaction, I prefer the role of a person who keeps talking, waiting for his subject to become relevant to current events, as all things that have a sound basis (Calvino, 2019: p 197).

The character of Cosimo adopted rebellion as a path to reject the lived reality that fate had ordained for him, leading to the divergence of his destiny from that of his family. His life takes a distinct trajectory due to an incident that compels him to reconsider all matters surrounding him, as described by the author: "the snail dish was removed from in front of him, and we have never witnessed a rebellion more severe than this...

Until that day, when Cosimo refused the snail dish, he decided to separate his destiny from ours.....I didn't understand that my brother's stubbornness and persistence implied something much deeper, " (Calvino, 2015: pp 9-11).

Cosimo chose rebellion entirely by his own will, unswayed by any external force. He ascended the tree and never descended from it, engaging in the rituals of his entire life from above. It represents a state of estrangement and isolation, depicting Sufi and spiritual aspects that distance themselves from material things, embracing asceticism. It appears as a rejection of all aspects of life and its tumultuous social relationships, portraying a situation of escape and detachment. Yet, the question remains: Why this escape, and what is its ultimate purpose?

The ultimate goal was to perform altruistic deeds for others and attempt to integrate into society by residing above the trees, extending a helping hand to those in need and offering everything he could. Cosimo rejected a life of luxury, opulence, and aristocracy that he could have enjoyed. Instead, he chose isolation, opting to remain suspended above the trees to serve humanity. He imposed on himself an unconventional behavior, as if depicting the inclination of a human who rebels against circumstances and everyone around him. He believed that he found an alternative to experiencing his humanity in this place. Thus, he lived in seclusion, not as a detachment from reality but as a choice driven by his own will. He practiced a lifestyle while hanging above the trees, moving from one tree to another (Calvino, 2019: p 197). The author portrayed a complete individual who attains his perfection through his own will, imposing upon himself a challenging and rigorous lifestyle. This satirical and reality-defying character presented a broad network of ethical concepts with cultural nuances (Calvino, 2015: p 38), "he always kept in mind the strange image of the Knight as a model of the way to become a human being who separates his fate from the fate of others" (Calvino, 2015: p 120). Calvino attempted to articulate his critical ideas through his literary works, exploring his relationship with his environment and understanding its intricacies in an ethical manner. He often invoked this approach, as reflected in his statement: "I am interested in storytelling that encourages reflection on man and his integration with his

environment through practical and ethical attempts, and this is something that surpasses the alienation and separation imposed on modern man (Calvino, 2019: p 20).

Calvino crafted from his narrative material, representing concepts, and visions of the world, along with impressions that governed the movements of the novel's characters. He aimed to steer them toward the direction he envisioned, delving into the internal conflicts and desires for change within these characters to mirror real-world occurrences. This was undertaken to present a product that is distinctly reflective of the author's own self.

Thus, the tree transformed into a symbol akin to the Tree of Knowledge, leading to the discovery of the universe's depths and secrets. Knowledge, in this context, takes on a contemplative and inner form, a mental awareness derived from reading books. It is as if the author endeavors to unveil the persona that sought to lead a peculiar life despite possessing a high intellectual capacity that formed its unique philosophy solely through its own will. This could be seen as a path to a new life rejecting the opulent lifestyle, an assertion of a return to simplicity, innocence, and all that is associated with it. It reflects a romantic aspect and an announcement of the rejection of civilization with all its potential ruin for humanity, attempting to revert to the humanity, nature, and innate essence of human. With the conclusion of this narrative, the fantastical persona of Cosimo fades into the expansive realm, leaving behind only the indelible traces it imprinted on humanitarian efforts and scientific pursuits. In Calvino's subsequent work, "The Nonexistent Knight," penned in 1959 during a period characterized by historical upheavals and profound philosophical inquiries amid the world's tumultuous events, analogous themes find exploration.

As for the novel *The Nonexistent Knight*), which Calvino wrote in 1959, and this marked by significant intellectual endeavors that encompassed philosophical inquiries in the face of the tumultuous events shaping the world (Calvino, 2015: p 40). Calvino derived the image of the nonexistent knight in his imagination from the events that Italy went through during that period, following the fall of Mussolini and the conclusion of World War II in 1945. The country's troubled

situation, plagued by the aftermath of war and its negative repercussions, led the author to create a fantastical character that blends elements of reality and imagination, oscillating between the rational and the irrational: "What I'm doing is trying to see which meanings of the images match with the overall design scheme that I want to give to the story ... What matters is the written word as a search for an equivalent to the visual image" (Calvino, 1999: p 88). The image of an empty suit of armor walking came to represent the narrative of "The Nonexistent Knight," a manifestation of this mental image that his imagination had depicted. The creative process for Calvino begins with the idea he harbors in his mind, which then takes its final form on paper, "I carry the idea in my mind for several years before I give it a form on the papers, and in many cases it dies while waiting for this to happen. The idea dies when I decide to start writing, and from the moment there are attempts to capture the idea. The struggle with the methods of expression every time I start writing takes a lot of effort because what awaits me is hard work, repeated attempts and revision and rewriting" (Calvino, 2019: p 363).

It is possible to observe the dominance of fantasy in the novel through the title proposed by the author, "The Nonexistent Knight." The imagination of Calvino gave rise to this nonexistent character. The author attempted to present the knight in the form of a warrior, adorned in armor and helmet, actively participating in victorious battles. He earned the title of a knight for liberating a woman, "I got the title of Knight because fifteen years ago I saved the daughter of the king of Scotland the Virgin Sophronia from the assault of two robbers" (Calvino, 2016: p 86). Chivalry, in this context, took on a new description of its values. The nonexistent knight did not participate in actual wars but rather expressed a humane act by defending the daughter of a king. It's as if chivalry, in the present time, is redefined by portraying a new image of defending the oppressed. Here, the realistic and the fantastical intertwine, raising the question of how a nonexistent person could perform such a humane act.

Calvino conceived this character resembling a humanoid, one who executes assigned tasks. The character of Agilulf, a warrior, was created to fulfill his role in a detached manner. He took on

the appearance of a warrior in armor, carrying out his duties armed with willpower, ambition, and awareness. He wasn't a human; rather, he was a voice emanating from the metal he adorned, " a metallic voice came from inside the closed helmet, as if a voice did not come out of the throat ... The metal of the shield itself was trembling, and with it a low echo I am Agilulf... Charlemagne insisted: I'm talking to you, Knight, How Not to show your face to your king ... How to provide your services to the army if you are without presence ... Agilulf said: By force of Will, and by faith in the holy cause, " (Calvino, 2016: pp 14-15).

Indeed, this character is more closely aligned with imagination than reality, reflecting the author's unique vision in choosing such a persona. This knight possesses all the human values criteria, yet paradoxically, he does not truly exist. Calvino worked to humanize the inanimate armor, symbolizing a representation of a projection onto reality and the aspirations of this character to achieve heroism that it couldn't attain. The character suffers from a split personality, imagining things and heroic feats through the discourse facilitated by the armor. The armor represents a world that has ended, declaring the defeat of war. Calvino aimed to illustrate the place where the fantastical character existed, grounding it in reality by starting with the liberation of the maiden from thieves and participating in the battles that transpired. Thus, a blending of truth and fantasy occurs through the representation of the fantastical, creating a narrative that intertwines with our reality, blurring the lines between the two.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the fantastical character worked within the literary texts of the author to reflect distorted physical and moral images and various forms that relied on perspectives with philosophies surrounding everything related to humans or the individual, especially in connection with the Italian society, particularly those linked to crises, violence, and wars.

The distortion of the body and its language, which was intricately detailed, served as a significant element in portraying the idea that a physically distorted individual suffers from psychological implications and complexes that express a sense

of inadequacy and an inability to cope with reality. Any reference to a place of emptiness, or in other words, deficiency, can become a space of affinity for this character.

The characters in his novels are, in reality, hybrid characters, whether in terms of physical deformity or the split personality that leads them to adopt a peculiar way of life. They strive to blend between nature and civilization, seeking to live in a space distant from contemporary human spaces. Living in an isolated place, such as a tree, carries multiple connotations, including those related to the spiritual and cognitive aspects. It is an invitation to return to a more natural state or to the humanity of humans, away from civilizations and the wars they have brought. On the other hand, the fantastical character can be envisioned as a false hero, experiencing a state of division between heroism and weakness. The hero is portrayed as a weak character who adopts the shield as a mask to engage in a dialogue about everything related to reality. This state of usurpation, weakness, and oppression reflects the struggles and vulnerabilities experienced by contemporary characters in the present time.

5. References

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