Great Britain Journals Press

London Journal of Humanities and Social Science
General Section

RESEARCH FINGERPRINT

IDENTIFIER
LJRHSS-226369

PEER REVIEW
Double Blind

SIMILARITY CHECK
Perplexity AI and iThenticate

ACCESS
Open Access

LANGUAGE
English

PRINT ISSN
2515-5784

ONLINE ISSN
2515-5792

EDITION

ABBREVIATION
LJRHSS

VOLUME
26

ISSUE
4

YEAR
2026

KEY DATES

RECEIVED
2026-03-17

ACCEPTED
2026-03-23

ONLINE PUBLISHED
2026-05-26

PUBLISHED
2026-06-26

CATALOGING

CROSSMARK DOI
10.34257/LJRHSS226369UK

DDC CLASS
810.9, 305.896, 801.95

LCC CLASS
PQ9555, PN841

Article Record

Escrevivent Crossing

CORRESPONDENCE

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ABSTRACT

In this essay, I propose a critical reflection on contemporary Black writing as a practice of reexistence, from a spiral and counter-hegemonic perspective. Structured in three movements, it explores the nocturnal subject as a rupture from the Cartesian model; writing as skin-verb shaped by lived experience; and escrevivências as collective and ancestral expressions of Black subjectivity. Through authors such as Conceição Evaristo, Carolina Maria de Jesus, Sueli Carneiro, and Stuart Hall, the text highlights Black literature as epistemic insurgency, where body, memory, and word construct new ways of being and expressing the world.

Index Terms: Escritura • literatura negra • Subjetividad • Ascendencia • Resistencia • Epistemología

FUNDING
No external funding was declared for this work.

CONFLICTS
The authors declare no conflict of interest.

AI USAGE
No generative AI was used for analysis or results.

HOW TO CITE
Neiva (2026). Escrevivent Crossing. London Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 26(4), 17-23. DOI: 10.34257/LJRHSS226369UK

ACCESS ONLINE

METADATA CONTINUATION

AUTHOR CONTACT QR LEDGER

Dr. Luciano Santos Neiva¶*

ARCHIVAL RECORD

LJRHSS · Vol 26 · Issue 4 · 2026

Article ID LJRHSS-226369 · DOI 10.34257/LJRHSS226369UK

Print ISSN 2515-5784 · Online ISSN 2515-5792

CROSSREF DOI 10.34257/LJRHSS226369UK

ESSAY

Escrevivent Crossing

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Abstract

In this essay, I propose a critical reflection on contemporary Black writing as a practice of reexistence, from a spiral and counter-hegemonic perspective. Structured in three movements, it explores the nocturnal subject as a rupture from the Cartesian model; writing as skin-verb shaped by lived experience; and escrevivências as collective and ancestral expressions of Black subjectivity. Through authors such as Conceição Evaristo, Carolina Maria de Jesus, Sueli Carneiro, and Stuart Hall, the text highlights Black literature as epistemic insurgency, where body, memory, and word construct new ways of being and expressing the world.

Keywords: *Escritura, literatura negra, Subjetividad, Ascendencia, Resistencia, Epistemología*

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1 INTRODUCTION

Sulwe nasceu com a pele da cor da meia-noite[1]." - this is how the children's book Sulwe, by Lupita Nyong'o, begins. And this is also how something awakens within me. As if the darkness of the night that clothed Sulwe touched my face with fingers of memory. I read this sentence and, more than seeing the character, I see myself in childhood: a Black boy, frail, looking into the mirror as one who searches for a crack of light in a body that others always told him was shadow.

It is not only Sulwe's dark skin that pierces me - it is the path she walks toward loving herself, toward realizing that her beauty already existed even before the sun. Reading this story invites me to revisit my own crossings: affective, racial, literary. Paths I walked in silence, like someone who walks over dry leaves and learns to listen to the crackling of time. There were moments when I shrank, as if my body did not fit in the world. There were others in which, even mute, my body spoke. It screamed.

Metamorphosis is when the Black boy and the Black girl who once shrank begin to dance with their scars and understand that each one of them is a form of language. Escrevivência[2], for me, is this very process of transformation. A crossing in which the word becomes skin, and the skin, at last, ceases to be a prison and becomes territory. A territory of memory, of voice, of beauty. The beauty of the night, the beauty of Sulwe - the beauty of midnight that, for so long, I was taught to fear.

But what is this presence that asserts itself against the current of light? What kind of subject emerges from the night, not as the shadow of day, but as its rupture and supplement? I think, then, of what I call the nocturnal subject: one who inhabits the fissures of the so-called rational, Cartesian, illuminated world - and, for that very reason, is compelled to develop other ways of seeing. The nocturnal subject does not recognize himself in the mirrors of European clarity; he learns to see in the dark, to grope with words, to rebuild with fragments of silence.

The Cartesian subject - this diurnal subject - has always demanded proof, order, measure, center. But of what use is a center that excludes me? Of what use is a reason that denies my sensibility, my ancestry, my faith? Escrevivência, by contrast, authorizes me to be deviation, frees me from form, restores me to wholeness. Within it, I am not an opposed duality; I am fertile contradiction. I am body and soul, I am wound and healing, I am darkness and radiance.

The crossing I propose here, then, is this: to abandon the comfort of day and accept the call of night - where the orixás dance, where the voices of those who came before resound, where the word is not a weapon of domination but a breath of re-existence. To write is to light a candle where history tried to extinguish it. It is to inscribe oneself where they said there was no place.

This essay is a gesture. A nocturnal gesture. A writing that moves between erasure and reinvention, between trauma and beauty. An escrevivente crossing, in which I do not seek to explain myself to the world - but to re-enchant my own routes.

It is in this spirit that I conclude these initial considerations - not as a closure, but as an opening of paths. This essay is organized as a crossing, as a thread weaving together times, voices, memories, and epistemes. A crossing that departs from the night - this symbolic place of exclusion, but also of potency - in order to reconfigure the forms of existence, subjectivity, and representation of Black bodies, through a writing that becomes flesh: escrevivência, whose beginning takes shape through escrevivent theoretical pathways. From there, the theoretical structure that sustains this journey is organized into three main movements:

In the first, I seek to reflect on the nocturnal subject as a supplement to the Cartesian diurnal subject. I draw on the contributions of Frantz Fanon, Stuart Hall, and bell hooks to understand how Black identities are not constructed from essences, but from displacements and resistances. Here, writing appears as a political and performative gesture

[1]"Sulwe was born with skin the color of midnight." Direct quotations in this article have been maintained in their original language of publication (Portuguese) in order to preserve their semantic nuance, stylistic texture, and conceptual precision. Whenever necessary, a free and contextual English translation has been provided by the author. These translations are intended as interpretative renderings rather than strict literal equivalents, aiming to convey the conceptual force and discursive context of the cited passages.

[2]Escrevivências, a neologism coined by Conceição Evaristo, merges "escrita" (writing) and "vivências" (lived experiences) to designate a mode of writing rooted in embodied memory, collective ancestry, and the lived realities of Black women in Brazil. The term is not translated in this article in order to preserve its semantic density and political force. In future publications, it may appear as escrevivences as a provisional English adaptation, while maintaining its conceptual specificity.

that refuses the neutrality imposed by the white and Enlightenment canon.

In the second movement, I investigate Black writing as a field of (re)existence, rooted in the tradition of "escrevivência" - as proposed by Conceição Evaristo - and expanded through the contributions of Carolina Maria de Jesus, Solano Trindade, Lima Barreto, Djamila Ribeiro, Cidinha da Silva, among others. I discuss how this writing destabilizes the boundaries between the fictional, the autobiographical, and the political, producing new ways of reading and listening to the world.

In the third and final movement, I propose "escrevivência" as a poetics of crossing: a textual practice that not only denounces structures of power, but also founds other possibilities of being, speaking, and imagining. Here, Paul Gilroy and the concept of the Black Atlantic help me think of Black writing as a movement of crossroads, as the expression of a diasporic subjectivity anchored in ancestry and displacement.

This essay, therefore, is an invitation to conscious drift. A call to walk along routes traced with blood, sweat, and ink by those who dared to transform pain into word. A homage to the night that made us and to the word that remakes us. May this be one more step - mine and ours - in the continuous crossing that is to write oneself Black in the world.

2 BEGINNING OF THE CROSSING: ESCREVIVENT PATHWAYS

I do not walk alone. Throughout this escrevivent crossing, I recognize footprints that came before me, that guide me, that push me forward when I think I can no longer go on. They are voices that did not fall silent in the face of symbolic and epistemological violence, and that dared to write with the ink of the body, with the memory of mothers, with the faith of the "terreiros"[3].

I see Conceição Evaristo, who taught us that escrevivência is more than literature - it is embodied memory. With her, I learned that the word smells of coffee brewed in an aluminum kettle, sounds like pots struck by Black women in the kitchens of senzalas or favelas. It is she who shows me that every Black writing carries a little of the altar, of prayer, and of cry.

I see Carolina Maria de Jesus, a paper collector, who with her words tore through the walls of the favela and inscribed, with crooked and courageous letters, the everyday life of hunger and hope. I see Solano Trindade singing "there are people who are hungry" as one who points a finger to the sky and demands justice. I see Lima Barreto, scarred by imposed madness, insisting on writing even when the world did not want him lucid.

I also see those who came later, yet are just as ancestral: Djamila Ribeiro, with her writing sharp as a kitchen knife; Ryane Leão, with poems that give us back the right to cry; Cidinha da Silva, whose prose stitches the everyday and the political with the same needle; Esmeralda Ribeiro and Elizandra Souza, who launch books as one scatters seeds in the alleys.

And from these seeds, entire rivers spring. In Águas da Cabaça (Souza, 2012), Elizandra Souza treats writing as a gesture of healing, evoking the voice of the Black woman as an insistent spring that continues to flow even when the world tries to dam it. Esmeralda Ribeiro, in Malungos e Milongas (Ribeiro, 1988), works with the idea that the crossing of life - with its pains and joys - is always collective, made in the company of those who came before and those who walk beside us. In both, literature becomes a clearing of existence, a territory where the escrevivent body can breathe without asking permission. In this movement, their works cross through my own escrevivent gesture, turning this article not only into a critical analysis, but into a circle: a space of encounter in which my crossings intertwine with others, older and wider, that teach me to walk through time with the respect of one who knows that every written line is always prayer, calling, and return.

The routes of Black writers are not paved roads. They are trails opened with machetes, muddy paths, labyrinths where the exit is never given - but always possible. They are maps made with sweat, tears, and dreams. And it is in them that I find my inspiration to continue. Because, when I write, I know I connect to a lineage. I know I am not alone.

Thus, this essay is also a collective gesture. An inherited breath. A drum that resounds far away, yet vibrates within. It is by these routes that I go on. With my whole body. With my whole word. And always - in the company of the night.

For it is in the night that Black words find the breath to exist without asking permission. It is in the night that the subject is no longer forced to fit into the Enlightenment mold of universal thought, and can finally be plural, crossroads, contradiction. The night is the space-time where silence is not absence, but the potency of listening. And it was within it that the voices of our ancestral writers sowed other epistemes.

Conceição Evaristo whispers: "A minha fala se faz por fragmentos / Por pedaços de mim / Por pedaços dos outros que em mim / Inteiros vivem"[4] (Evaristo, 2008, p. 15). And it is in this interlacing that escrevivência blossoms - in the juxtaposition between the I and the we, between the lived and the inherited. Night, in Evaristo, is not merely darkness, but a fertile womb. A place of gestation for the word that bleeds and enchants.

Carolina Maria de Jesus, writing by candlelight, affirms: "Escrevo o que vejo, o que vivo. Não invento. Só traduzo a favela em palavras"[5] (Jesus, 1960, p. 23). Her night was real, literal - a blackout of electricity, of policies, of dignity - yet it did not prevent her from building, with words, a shelter against forgetting. Carolina wrote with hunger, and still she nourished. Her writing is Black nourishment.

Solano Trindade, in the midst of the night of racist Brazil, sings: "Tem gente com fome! Tem gente com fome! Tem gente com fome!"[6] (Trindade, 2007, p. 45). And in repeating, he does not merely denounce - he summons. The night of the Black people is, many times, hunger. But Solano transforms this pain into a collective refrain, into a call to action, into a writing that does not seek neutrality, but urgency.

And to begin again, for me, is a gesture that carries the scar as a mark of permanence and reinvention. A gesture that moves with the weight of history, but also with the lightness of ancestralities that propel me. I begin again because I must rewrite the world in my own way - not as rhetoric, but as survival. And in this gesture, I lean on other voices who have thought Blackness as sensitive, political, and aesthetic experience.

Frantz Fanon, with his cutting sharpness, teaches me that the Black rebeginning is also a rupture with the devices that attempt to domesticate us: "O preto não é. Não mais do que o branco"[7] (Fanon, 2008, p. 191). There is force in this becoming. A verb that never concludes, that is always in motion. Fanon presents the Black body as a field of dispute - but also as a space of creation. In understanding that I become Black

[3]The term "terreiros" refers to sacred Afro-Brazilian ritual spaces directly connected to African-diasporic religions such as Candomblé and Umbanda. More than physical sites, terreiros function as living territories of ancestry, community organization, spiritual transmission, and resistance. Historically marginalized and persecuted, they have preserved cosmologies, ethical systems, oral traditions, and embodied knowledge rooted in West and Central African heritages. Their force lies not only in religious practice, but in their role as spaces of cultural continuity, collective memory, and epistemological affirmation within the African diaspora.

[4]"My speech is made of fragments / of pieces of me / of pieces of others who live wholly within me"

[5]"I write what I see, what I live. I do not invent. I only translate the favela into words"

[6]"There are people who are hungry! There are people who are hungry! There are people who are hungry!"

[7]"The Black man is not. No more than the white man"

with each gesture of resistance, with each line I write, I understand that to begin again is also to (re)exist.

Stuart Hall, in turn, helps me understand that identity is not something fixed, given, essential - but a construction in transit: "A identidade é produzida, não descoberta[8]" (Hall, 2006, p. 13). And it is within this process of production that I see myself as a nocturnal subject: in constant reinvention, performing an identity that does not fit into the hasty definitions that were imposed on me. My rebeginning is, therefore, a refusal. I refuse homogenization. I refuse neutrality. I refuse to be only what is expected of me.

bell hooks, with her affectionate and radical writing, provides me shelter by suggesting that the margin should not be understood merely as a site of deprivation, but also as a space of resistance (HOOKS, 1990). This margin - which for many appears as exile - is, for me, home. It is from there that I write: not from the center that oppresses, but from the edge that observes, listens, learns, and reinvents. The rebeginning occurs when I transform the margin into a source, into creative potency, into a poetics of subversion.

Paul Gilroy, in proposing the notion of the Black Atlantic, expands this crossing that is not only individual, but collective, diasporic, aquatic. In the waters that carried bodies and memories, the rebeginning also takes shape as the possibility of a hybrid culture, marked by flows and displacements. I write, then, as one who navigates - between continents, between languages, between temporalities.

And it is in this between that I find myself: between the boy who once hid and the man who now writes; between my mother's silenced voice and the word that now rises; between yesterday's pain and tomorrow's fertile word. I begin again because I understand that writing, for us, is more than telling stories - it is rewriting destinies. Thus, I go on. I go on in the light of the night, guided by the stars of ancestry and by the theoretical embers that warm me. With each page, a step. With each step, a return to origins. And from each origin, a new rebeginning.

Lima Barreto, even earlier, had already sensed the exclusion that would cross his life: "A minha alma é triste como os tristes destinos dos que nascem nas classes pobres[9]" (Barreto, 1994, p. 58). His night was intellectual - the systematic erasure of his genius by a white, elitist criticism that could not bear him. But his pen resisted. And Lima opened clearings with words so that others might cross.

Djamila Ribeiro, in her philosophical writing, reminds us that "seria urgente o deslocamento do pensamento hegemônico e a ressignificação das identidades, sejam de raça, gênero, gênero, classe para que se pudesse construir novos lugares de fala[10]" (Ribeiro, 2017, p. 43). Her writing is a thinking night - it ruptures the structure that still tries to restrict philosophy to white, male, European voices. She points: Black epistemology is also rationality - but another rationality, rooted in the body and in community.

These names that accompany me are stars in my escrevivente sky. They are beacons that help me navigate the night. For to be a nocturnal subject is also to reclaim other ways of seeing the world: with the eye of intuition, with the listening of silence, with the memory of the body.

Black writing, as these voices show, does not fear the night. It is born from it. And like Sulwe, in recognizing the value of her color, of her inner night, I also recognize that my crossing is only possible because I carry within me this ancestral darkness - fertile, full of constellations. It is in it that I write myself. It is in it that I begin again.

[8]"Identity is produced, not discovered"

[9]"My soul is sad like the sad destinies of those born into the poor classes."

[10]"it would be urgent to displace hegemonic thought and to re-signify identities - of race, gender, class - so that new places of speech could be constructed."

3 FIRST MOVEMENT: IN THE DARK OF THE SPIRAL: THE NOCTURNAL SUBJECT AND THE RUPTURE OF THE CENTER

Writing, for me, has never been a straight line. I don't move from a single point of departure to a final destination the way one traces a predictable route. My writing moves in a spiral—it returns, folds, curves, falls, and rises again. It dances, spins, tangles itself in childhood memories, knots itself in the threads of time and, like kinky hair, resists the "straightening" of single, hegemonic thought. Spiral writing is the kind that goes back to the past to reconfigure the present; it digs into the depth of lived experience and refuses the logic of linear, colonial "progress."

It is in this curving movement that I propose the concept of the nocturnal subject: one who does not see himself represented in the clear light of Western reason and who, for that very reason, finds in the night a place of reinvention. Night, here, is not absence but supplement. It is not the opposite of day, but its symbolic contestation. The nocturnal subject is not formed in the image of the Cartesian man—white, rational, autonomous. Rather, he is born at the crossing of historical exclusion and everyday (re)existence.

Frantz Fanon (2008) had already warned us about the limits of colonial reason when he insists that the colonized is not a fixed being, but a becoming that resists alienation. In that becoming, the nocturnal subject is forged in the fissures—between the violence of erasure and the possibility of remaking oneself. He does not want to inhabit the center; he wants to unsettle it. Stuart Hall (2006) deepens this by reminding us that identity is constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative, and difference. What the nocturnal subject refuses is not only exclusion, but the very criterion that decides what counts as "center" and what is cast as "margin."

Here, spiral writing takes shape as both method and aesthetic. It does not submit to forced clarity or to Cartesian chronology. Instead, it proposes another order—disobedient, rhizomatic, ancestral. This writing often rises from deep silences, from unwept losses, from gestures of care that do not fit inside official discourse. bell hooks (2013) once put it simply: we write because we must speak, because we were not heard. The spiral, then, is the form closest to our voice: it allows return; it does not pressure us to "conclude"; it authorizes narration from what was never said.

This first movement, therefore, is a call to plunge. An invitation to abandon the violent light of neutrality and enter the fertile dark of Black subjectivities. In the dark, we learn to see otherwise. To write otherwise. To become subjects—not of knowledge that imposes, but of a word that germinates.

Like a seed that breaks the soil at the touch of water, spiral writing rises from the womb of ancestry and expands toward what has not yet been named. In this germinative gesture, I move guided by escrevivente words—not a single author, but a symbol of so many anonymous Black women, silenced yet fertile with knowledge. "Germinative gesture" is what I call the act of those who taught us to speak with the body, to pray with feet on the ground, and to write with what life left in the palms of our hands.

It is with this image of writing as inheritance and resistance that I find the theoretical force of Sueli Carneiro. In denouncing epistemicide, Carneiro (2005) offers a key for understanding how the colonial and patriarchal project sought to erase Black intellectual production—especially that of women. The nocturnal subject challenges this control: he does not ask permission to exist in writing; he sprouts like grass insisting on growing through the cracks of academic concrete.

Sueli teaches us that to resist is also to write oneself. That Black writing is, first of all, a political action: reclaiming the right to narrate. In this sense, it is not about "including oneself" in hegemonic reason, but founding another—a Blackened, crossroads-based, collective reason. Spiral writing is the trace left by this insurgency.

Katiuscia Ribeiro (2016) extends this reflection by reminding us that ancestry is not only a theme, but a form. In proposing afroperspectiva as a way of seeing and writing the world, she affirms that our knowledges are woven in the body, dance, silence, and word; that orality is also writing; that gesture, too, is theory. And it is on this ground that I stand. The nocturnal subject is built with the whole body: writing with bare feet on the earth and eyes turned toward those who came before.

Spiral writing, then, is the shattered mirror of Western modernity. It does not aim to reflect the same world as always, but to reconfigure it around other axes: memory, body, affection, spirituality. And this is a profoundly political gesture—not writing "about," but writing "with," writing "from within," writing "from." From Grada Kilomba, from Sueli, from Katiuscia, from the fertile dark where words are born—the words they tried, for so long, to silence.

I write, therefore, as one who sows. As one who spins. As one who lets himself be carried by this spiral that binds me to ancestry and throws me—courageously—into what is to come.

And it is precisely in what is to come that the spiral intensifies—not as a predictable destination, but as a radical opening to what still has not been. In this horizon of unpredictability, Black writing inscribes itself as promise and risk: promise of reconfiguration; risk of not being understood by the traditional molds of criticism. Here, Jacques Derrida draws near, with his destabilization of fixed structures of language and his concept of *différance*—difference with an "e," shifting in time, deferring meaning, escaping full presence.

For Derrida (2005), writing is not the mirror of thought nor a simple representation of the real. It is supplement: something that adds, yet also threatens, disorders, contaminates the center. Spiral writing, as I propose it, is also this supplement—it unsettles the white, patriarchal, Cartesian logos that tried to convince us there is only one valid way to speak the world. Instead, it moves among absences, silences, and noise, without seeking a totalizing meaning.

When Derrida (2005) insists that writing has "always already" begun, he points to traces, marks, and absence as constitutive. And here he meets escrevivência: to write from Black experience is to mark what was silenced, to scratch through what was fixed, to leave a trace where forgetting was demanded. In our context, différance is not only semantic drift—it is epistemic disobedience, the act of slipping outside colonial grammar.

Black writing, as supplementarity, subverts the very gesture of signifying. It does not merely narrate—it strains the saying itself. It does not merely record—it reconfigures the field of what can be read and understood. With Derrida (2005), we refuse the "pure place of origin," because we know origin is also a myth forged by coloniality. Escrevivência does not return to a fixed point; it begins again—always—from the margins, in the interstices, in the leftovers.

Thus, Black, spiral writing carries différance as ethic and aesthetic. It is a writing that delays, returns, deviates; that will not bow to the imposed clarity of canonical text. On the contrary, it is made with the whole body, inscribing absences as presence and daring the reader to feel before understanding. And if "there is nothing outside the text," then our text is also made of memory, sweat, drum, affection, and scar.

This first movement, then, ends without ending. Like every spiral, it returns to itself and, at the same time, projects itself forward. The nocturnal subject does not walk in a straight line. He spins, dances, zigzags. He writes as one who crosses the night with eyes lit from within. And it is in this turning—where Sueli Carneiro, Katiuscia Ribeiro, and Derrida meet—that spiral writing reveals itself: as trace, as supplement, as a crossing that does not cease.

Because spiral writing—this writing that returns, resists, and begins again—finds in Lima Barreto one of its most powerful precursors: a quintessential nocturnal subject, whose life and work challenged the boundaries of the white, elitist intellectuality of his time. Lima wrote from the margins, with fatigue on his shoulders and wounded lucidity, yet with the urgency of someone who knew Brazil could no longer be read only from the center.

His writing did not stop—even when madness hovered, even when criticism denied him, even when Rio's society mocked him. He wrote because it was necessary. And that, in itself, is already "escrevivência".

In "O Triste Fim de Policarpo Quaresma", he exposes the national project as farce, presenting a character who, in trying to defend Brazil with purity and idealism, is swallowed by the brutality of the very system he meant to save. It is Lima saying—through cutting irony—that bodies outside the norm will be punished; that dreaming, if it is not white, will be condemned as delirium.

In his diary, he confesses that writing can be a way to forget or console oneself (Barreto, 1994). He also registers, with brutal clarity, the everyday racism that crossed his life, noting how the color of his body made him suffer (Barreto, 1994). This is not passive lament: it is political inscription—turning skin into denunciation and into writing.

The spiral, in Lima, is form and content. His language escapes the "proper" norms of the time, mixing the erudite and the popular, bringing the street into the page. He knew his writing would be judged "inadequate," and precisely for that reason it was urgent.

In Clara dos Anjos, Lima narrates the story of a young Black woman, made vulnerable by prejudice and invisibility, whose position is shaped by intersecting social conventions (Barreto, 2010). The sentence becomes an inventory of oppressions — and also of consciousness. Lima offers not only the portrait of an era, but the prophecy of a structure that still insists on remaining.

To bring Lima Barreto into this first movement is to recognize that, long before we theorized "escrevivência", it already pulsed in his lines. He wrote from the dark: from solitude, from the bottom of the well, from wounded lucidity. But also from critical anticipation, from rage turned into verb. Lima is the spiral's persistent trace—the nocturnal subject who, even between breakdowns and silences, did not stop writing, and therefore remains.

Because Lima Barreto made of the verb both weapon and shelter: a verb that refuses the grammar of power and instead strains it—marked by experience, erasure, disobedience, exactly like Black writing that insists on not being silenced. In his pen, the verb already announced what theory would later call escrevivência. For him, writing was vital verb—blood, sweat, lucidity. And it is from the verb that the second movement rises.

4 SECOND MOVEMENT: VERB-SKIN: BLACK WRITING AS A FIELD OF (RE)EXISTENCE

In this new turn of the spiral, I dive into the body of the word—not as representation of the norm, but as living presence. Here, Black writing reveals itself as a field of (re)existence: a territory where the verb becomes skin, memory, and insubmission. It is no longer only about naming the world, but recreating it from the materiality of what is lived. The verb ceases to be instrument and becomes body—body that speaks, body that wounds, body that pulses.

It is on this ground that Conceição Evaristo plants her words: escrevivência is not merely writing "about" oneself, but writing from oneself, with the other and for the other (Evaristo, 2018). The verb,

when Black, carries histories that do not fit inside silence—histories whispered by women at bedside, by men in the corridors of captivity, by children in schoolyards that never wanted them.

In verb-skin, language is not neutral: it has color, class, ancestry. One writes with the whole body—with grandparents' memory, mothers' faith, the pain of the absent. This writing unsettles because it cuts into the dominant order of discourse; because it scribbles the margin in black ink and returns to paper its first function: a space of struggle and beauty.

Here, in the second movement, the spiral thickens. Writing no longer wants only to denounce; it wants to reconstitute. To weave bridges between past and what is to come. To make of the verb not only denunciation, but also cure—word that frightens and word that cradles; word that shouts and word that rocks like a lullaby. The verb, then, is resistance. Territory. A home for us. And it is by it—and with it—that we will keep writing.

Writing like one who sweeps the street to open passage for tomorrow. Writing like Carolina Maria de Jesus, who made of paper rescued from trash an altar of dignity. Her writing did not fit the molds of elitist literary theory—and precisely for that reason it teaches us so much. She wrote with hunger, with anger, with faith. She wrote because she had to register that the favela thinks, the Black woman thinks, hunger thinks.

In Quarto de Despejo, Carolina writes that Brazil should be led by someone who has known hunger (Jesus, 1960). The sentence dismantles entire libraries that name poverty without listening to it. Carolina did not "theorize" in the academic sense: she lived and wrote. And this gesture is already embodied theory.

Her verb-skin is an open wound in Brazilian literature. It shows that writing can — and must — be born from experience, even when that experience is unwanted by academies. Because what her pages carry is not only social denunciation; it is writing that challenges the criteria of legitimacy of the literary field. Carolina wrote in old notebooks, with "incorrect" spelling, without the "techniques" demanded by manuals—yet with a voice no canon could erase.

She herself noted the discomfort she caused: the "man of letters" resents that a woman from the favela writes a book (Jesus, 1960). That rejection—veiled or explicit—is proof of the arrogance of a literary theory that measures value by the yardstick of literate whiteness, as if only those who master official language were worthy of producing literature.

But Carolina breaks through. Tears open. Displaces. Her spiral writing does not climb academic stairs; it spins through alleys and backyards—and there builds its own poetics. She writes the city as body. Hunger as philosophy. Misery as potency of language.

In transforming trash into book, Carolina inverts canonical logic: what was discarded becomes central. What was ignored becomes record. The word that once served to silence becomes instrument of existence. And in that gesture, her writing does not ask permission—it asserts itself as life.

So, in this second movement, the verb is (re)existence, yes—but also insubordination. And if academic theory locks itself inside labyrinths of erudition without listening to voices from the ground—from the washbasin, from the terreiro, from Carolina's stained notebook—then it is theory that must be revised, not Carolina.

Black writing here does not bow to the norm. It is its own norm. Epistemology forged in flesh. Theory forged in hunger. And like Carolina, we continue writing—with improvised notebooks, tired hands, words that hurt and save. Because for us writing was never ornament: it was survival.

To survive, in this context, is more than remaining alive: it is not allowing the word that pulses in us to be silenced. It is making writing a way of inhabiting the world even when the world denies roof, bread, recognition. Carolina survived by writing—and, by writing, she survives in us. Her writing echoes as testimony, but also as strategy: for Black bodies, to write is to fight symbolic and literal death; to write oneself so as not to be erased.

In this second movement, the verb stops being abstraction—it incarnates. It smells of old paper, looks like peeling paint, sounds like an empty pot. Black writing is verb incarnated in the skin of those who are beaten by life and still choose to narrate. That is why it disturbs the bastions of academic literary theory: it exposes their limits, their arrogance, their refusal to come down from ivory towers.

A theory that cannot recognize Carolina, that cannot dialogue with peripheral orality, with Candomblé wisdom, with the denunciation of escrevivências, is a blind theory—sometimes willfully blind. It is more comfortable to analyze nineteenth-century European realism than to face the real Brazil that bleeds and writes.

Black writing, in this sense, is also counter-discourse. It strains the criteria of value, questions the canon, destabilizes the pacts of power hidden beneath the neutrality of criticism. When Carolina notes that she had nothing to eat, yet she wrote (Jesus, 1960), she says more than a thousand essays: she founds an ethics of the word—an ethics from the ground, where aesthetics cannot be separated from existence, nor text from body.

And it is with this body-writing that I continue this second movement. Because each time a Black woman writes her life, she tears open the pages of silence. Each time a Black man narrates his childhood, he defies the logic of erasure. Each time a Black child becomes a character in a book, a future announces itself.

The verb is seed. Scar. Drum. Water that wears down stone. An arrow launched against forgetting. And if literature cannot contain all this, then let literature widen—let the concept of literature bend before the escrevivente crossing that persists even when everything is lacking. Because the verb is skin. And Black skin writes.

It writes with calluses, with inherited silences, with ancestry pulsing in the bones. It writes as insurgency and as invention. And in the face of that, theory can no longer remain immune: it must commit, implicate itself, move. This is where thinkers who write from the margins become central in this crossing.

Achille Mbembe, for instance, with the notion of necropolitics, helps us understand Black writing as response to the politics of death: we write against erasure, against the management of racialized bodies, against regimes that treat Black existence as disposable. Writing—as Carolina's and so many others'—is direct confrontation. Mbembe suggests that Black life is often captured as life under control, at the margin (Mbembe, 2018), and it is from that margin that writing rises—not as plea, but as affirmation.

Patricia Hill Collins is essential here. In building Black feminist standpoint epistemology, she insists lived experience is a valid criterion for knowledge-making, breaking the myth of scientific neutrality. In paraphrase: wisdom emerges from the feeling body, the wounding everyday, the silence that listens (Collins, 2019). When the Black woman writes from herself, her community, her memory, she refuses to remain an object of study—she becomes author, producer, architect of language.

Gloria Anzaldúa, with her notion of borderlands, also illuminates this. She proposes a fragmentary, hybrid writing that mixes languages and forms. She famously states she writes out of fear of writing, but fears even more not writing (Anzaldúa, 2012). This fear becoming verb is central to much contemporary Black literature: fear that does not paralyze, but is transfigured into courage.

Grada Kilomba, in turn, strains language as a site of exclusion. She argues that the colonizer's language silences us and must be reinvented — our words, our forms, our listening (Kilomba, 2019). Writing becomes

the place where the body and history are reclaimed: to write oneself Black is often to cross invisible fences of power.

Thus, this second movement reveals Black writing as verb and denunciation, but also as theory—an embodied theory that will not fit in traditional compendia. It demands a sensitive, ethical, decolonial listening: a listening that does not "correct," but receives; that does not classify, but recognizes.

To keep writing is to refuse the logic of exception. It is to affirm that words born at crossroads are not deviations, but paths—paths that open even when everything tries to close them. Paths built with verb, skin, memory: paths of (re)existence.

And it is precisely from life—from life in its fullness, with pain, struggle, subterranean joys—that the third movement rises: a life that does not separate from text, does not detach from body, does not fit into the sealed categories of traditional criticism. A life that writes while living, and lives while writing. Because for us writing was never mere style: it was breath, survival, rebirth.

5 THIRD MOVEMENT: ESCREVIVÊNCIAS: THE WRITING OF US

In this new turn of the spiral, it is no longer only about narrating the world: it is about narrating ourselves. Returning to ourselves the right to tell our own story, with our own rhythms, silences, and images. Escrevivência is the point where the word becomes us—us as collective subject, as bond, as cord that ties us to other voices. To write, in this movement, is to share existence.

When Conceição Evaristo coins the term escrevivência, she not only names a Black aesthetic; she founds an ethic of writing. Her insistence is clear: these writings are born from flesh, not from paper (paraphrase of Evaristo, 2018). And for that very reason they refuse erasure and the domestication of Black bodies by language. Escrevivência is a gesture of liberation: it returns to literature its function as living memory, its function as cure.

Here, the word is drum. Prayer. A mother's lap. A crossing of the child who was silenced and now returns to write from within. Escrevivência is writing with feet dirty with mud, with hands marked by time, with a mouth full of stories the world refused to hear. It is, finally, the writing of us—of all who resisted at the margin; of all who made the verb shelter, weapon, bridge. And this is why we go on: turning, returning, resignifying, writing with life and for life.

Because when life breaks into the text, it does so with bodily force, with the sound of memory, with the smell of earth. Contemporary Black literature has become a fertile field where this life inscribes itself without asking permission—through escrevivência, self-writing, (re)existence. Voices no longer content with "representation": they demand, perform, invent.

This is what Djamila Ribeiro does when she frames thinking itself, for Black people, as an act of resistance and a way of staying alive (Ribeiro, 2019). The act of writing becomes a gesture of confrontation, a mode of being-in-the-world despite everything.

In Ryane Leão's poetry, experience becomes both delicate and fierce: she names herself as made of pasts no one wanted to hear and futures no one wanted to foresee (Leão, 2017). The short verse becomes both blade and balm: word as living skin, bleeding and suturing as it is spoken.

Cidinha da Silva, when she denounces the persistence of state violence, writes of mothers who do not sleep because they must guard their children's dreams (Silva, 2019). Here, escrevivência is vigilance: a body writing with fear, yet refusing to surrender.

In Eliana Alves Cruz—especially in Água de Barrela—the text becomes inheritance: family oral memory crossing time into narrative. She insists on knowing where she came from in order to know where she can go (Cruz, 2016). This is escrevivência: sewing past to now, stitching identity they tried to unravel.

And in Lázaro Ramos, writing becomes mirror and interrogation: he is what racism tried to make of him, but also what it could not destroy (Ramos, 2017). Escrevivência is what survives trauma and turns it into language—not empty resilience, but daily reinvention.

These contemporary authors write life in all its folds. Their words seek not merely a place in the literary market, but full life, true listening, narrative dignity. Their words are not only about Black experience: they are Black experience.

So the third movement returns to body, affection, collectivity: a writing of us, and with us—as entanglement, bond, permanence. Because when life writes, the text stops being object and becomes territory. And it is on this territory that we continue.

It is here that thinkers like Kwame Anthony Appiah offer conceptual tools for grasping these reconfigured Black subjectivities in literature. Appiah argues that identities are not fixed essences but narratives—ways of telling ourselves to others and to ourselves (Appiah, 1997). This resonates with escrevivência, which is self-telling that is also collective, ancestral, crossroads-based.

Appiah also warns against essentializing Black identity into a single normative model. Diasporic culture is plural. Black writing is not homogeneous: it is rhizome, crossing, crossing-over. Escrevivência, then, is not merely genre or style, but an epistemology in motion.

This movement of crossing is also present in Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic: the experience of modern Black life cannot be understood only within national borders, but through diasporic flows, transits, exchanges. Gilroy suggests Black culture is both product of modernity and simultaneous critique of it (Gilroy, 2001). Escrevivência inscribes the Atlantic into the text—not as sea of death, but as ocean of memory and reinvention.

Stuart Hall, likewise, insists identity is a position, not an essence: identity is produced, never simply found (Hall, 2006). That is exactly what escrevivência does: continuous production of self from erasure, memory, wounded body—yet not defeated.

Anzaldúa again helps us inhabit the in-between, the border space where pain and creativity coexist. She writes because she must register what others sweep away (Anzaldúa, 2012). Escrevivência is that seam: between silence and word, pain and beauty, forgetting and memory.

To incorporate these theoretical voices is to recognize escrevivência not only as resistance but as theory made with the body—critique born of lived life, philosophy in raw flesh. It proposes another idea of literature: one that dares to feel, distrusts analytical distance, and calls the reader to ethical engagement.

And when we speak of beginning again, Conceição Evaristo rises like a beacon. Her work is an inexhaustible source of returns and re-beginnings: narratives that do not close but unfold like spirals of memory, pain, affection, resistance. She writes as one who returns to the past not to inhabit it, but to refound the present through the eyes of ancestry.

6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: AN ESCREVIVENTE HARBOR: WHERE THE WORD DOCKS AND THE BODY RESTS

I arrive at the end of this essay as one who docks in a harbor—not a harbor of absolute rest, but of recognition. An escrevivente harbor: a place where the word that left wounded returns whole, even if marked. Where the body thrown into the sea of silence finds shelter in listening. Where the text ceases to be "only theory" and becomes crossing.

Throughout this route, I wrote not only with the head, but with the whole body. I was guided by the voices of Conceição Evaristo, Carolina Maria de Jesus, Lima Barreto, Lázaro Ramos, Sueli Carneiro, Stuart Hall,

Appiah, Anzaldúa, bell hooks, and so many others who—like ancestral lighthouses—lit this path. Each passage of this essay is a fold in time, a stitch of memory, a (re)existence in verb and affection.

Across the three movements, I understood that Black writing does not submit to canonical molds. It spirals, dances, falls, rises, begins again. The nocturnal subject who writes within it does not seek artificial lights, but the deep brightness of ancestry. Contemporary Black literature displaces white centrality, dismantles the myth of neutrality, and reconfigures the concept of literature itself.

Escrevivência — this term born from the life-gesture of Black women — reveals itself here not merely as category, but as method, ground, ethic. To write from skin, memory, pain, and joy is to affirm that our lives are worthy of narration—and more than that, that they can found other epistemologies, other possible futures.

The escrevivente harbor, therefore, is this place that receives words unwelcome in other territories. It is where the text rests but does not fall silent; where silence is held and also broken; where each sentence is an oar; where each comma is a breath. Where the verb is boat—and the body, compass.

And so, with feet still wet from crossing, with skin marked by sun and memory, I finish this essay without closing it. Because Black writing does not end. It turns. It returns. It departs again. And wherever there is body, pain, affection, childhood, silence, and courage—there will always be a new harbor. Escrevivente. Black. Ours.

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