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**UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DA PARAÍBA
CAMPUS I- CAMPINA GRANDE-PB
CENTRO DE EDUCAÇÃO- CEDUC
DEPARTAMENTO DE LETRAS E ARTES- DLA
CURSO DE LICENCIATURA EM LETRAS INGLÊS**

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DEATH AND AFTERLIFE ON THE MINISERIES ADAPTATION OF A *CHRISTMAS CAROL* BY CHARLES DICKENS

**CAMPINA GRANDE
2021**

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Trabalho de conclusão de curso apresentado a Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, como requisito parcial para a conclusão do curso de Licenciatura em Letras, com habilitação em Língua e Literatura Inglesa

Área de concentração: Estudos da tradução.

Orientador: Profa. Ma. Jéssica Thaiany Silva Neves

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V658d Vieira, Allyson Nunes.
Death and afterlife on the miniseries adaptation of A
christmas Carol by Charles Dickens [manuscrito] / Allyson
Nunes Vieira. - 2021.
33 p. : il. colorido.

Digitado.
Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso (Graduação em Letras
Inglês) - Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, Centro de
Educação, 2021.
"Orientação : Profa. Ma. Jéssica Thaiary Silva Neves ,
Coordenação do Curso de Letras - CEDUC."

1. Análise literária. 2. Literatura inglesa. 3. Adaptação
literária. 4. Minissérie . I. Título

21. ed. CDD 801.85

ALLYSON NUNES VIEIRA

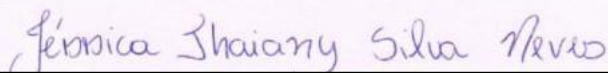
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Aprovado em: 11/05/2021.
Nota: 9,0

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Dedico este trabalho à memória de meus avós, cuja ausência foi crucial para a escolha da temática. Também à minha mãe que sempre apoiou meu interesse pelos estudos e decisões relacionadas à vida acadêmica. Assim como a minha irmã, sempre companheira, mesmo que à distância.

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DEATH AND AFTERLIFE ON THE MINISERIES ADAPTATION OF *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* BY CHARLES DICKENS

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ABSTRACT

Since *A Christmas Carol* was published in 1843 by Charles Dickens many adaptations have been made in order to present the story of Scrooge, an avaricious man who was visited by three Christmas spirits that wanted to change his heart. For this reason, this paper aims to analyze and discuss Knight's and Murphy's miniseries *A Christmas Carol* in order to observe their representation of the supernatural and the darkness aspects in the three episodes of the story. As theoretical background it is discussed here the conception of translation brought by Jakobson (1959) and House (2013, 2017) and also the definitions of adaptations by Luiz (2019), Eco (2007), Mateus (2014) and Hutcheon (2013). In addition, the conception of subtitle transcription as a support for scene analysis is discussed by Gomes (2010), Araújo (2006) and Lima (2015). And the discussions on how the main character, Ebenezer Scrooge, deal with death and afterlife by the perspectives of Bloom (2011) and Bertman (2007). Based on the relationship between the book and its adaptation to a miniseries, a qualitative research was made in order to analyze and discuss how Dickens (1843), Knight and Murphy (2019) presented death and afterlife in their works, and how this caused changes in the main character, Ebenezer Scrooge. In conclusion, we saw the importance of understanding adaptations as an individual work because it was possible to see other perspectives of Scrooge's character development of the same story and also new characteristics of the plot. Moreover, we could understand that death is what makes Scrooge want to live again.

Keywords: *Literary Analysis*. English Literature. Literary Adaptation. Miniseries.

RESUMO

Desde que *Uma Canção de Natal* foi publicado em 1843 por Charles Dickens, muitas adaptações foram feitas a fim de apresentar a história de Scrooge, um homem avarento que foi visitado por três espíritos natalícios que queriam mudar o seu coração. Por esta razão, este artigo pretende analisar e discutir a minissérie de Knight e Murphy *A Christmas Carol*, a fim de observar a sua representação dos aspectos sobrenaturais e das trevas nos três episódios da história. Como pano de fundo teórico discute-se aqui a concepção da tradução trazida por Jakobson (1959) e House (2013, 2017) e também as definições de adaptações por Luiz (2019), Eco (2007), Mateus (2014) e Hutcheon (2013). Além disso, a concepção da transcrição de legendas como suporte para a análise de cena é discutida por Gomes (2010),

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Araújo (2006) e Lima (2015). E as discussões sobre como o personagem principal, Ebenezer Scrooge, lida com a morte e a vida após a morte pelas perspectivas de Bloom (2011) e Bertman (2007). Com base na relação entre o livro e a sua adaptação a uma minissérie, foi feita uma pesquisa qualitativa a fim de analisar e discutir como Dickens (1843), Knight e Murphy (2019) apresentaram a morte e a vida após a morte nas suas obras, e como isto causou mudanças no personagem principal, Ebenezer Scrooge. Em conclusão, vimos a importância de compreender as adaptações como uma obra individual porque foi possível ver outras perspectivas do desenvolvimento do personagem de Scrooge da mesma história e também novas características da trama. Além disso, pudemos compreender que a morte é o que faz Scrooge querer viver novamente.

Palavras-chave: Análise Literária. Literatura Inglesa. Adaptação literária. Minissérie.

INTRODUCTION

A Christmas Carol was first published in 1843, by Charles Dickens, the story is told year by year in an order that even who has never read the book knows the main core of the story. It is hard to find someone that had never heard about it or watched the avaricious man who was visited by three Christmas spirits that wanted to change his heart. No wonder that, according to Standiford (2008), more than 200 adaptations of the story were made.

Adaptations are known as versions or (re)interpretations of a source text in order to translate the main idea of the text into another genre. It is possible to adapt a book, for example, into play, movie, song, parody, fanfiction, TV show, graphic novel, painting, etc. Eisenstein (1948), mentions that a reason that *A Christmas Carol* has so much adaptations released is because Dickens has a perception to make the readers imagine precisely the scene in his books similar to a camera point of view.

Taking this into account, it is necessary to look after a brief definition and discussion on translation and also adaptation in order to understand this connection between literature and a mass culture program as a miniseries. After the discussion on how translation and adaptation acts, it will be possible to observe how the writer and director of the miniseries, Steven Knight and Nick Murphy, respectively, interpreted the supernatural and darkness in the story *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens.

Regarding adaptations, it is observed how theorists understand the phenomenon that transport literature into movies and series. For this reason, it is discussed here the conception of translation brought by Jakobson (1999) and House (2013) and also the definitions of adaptations by Luiz (2019), Eco (2007), Mateus (2014) and Hutcheon (2013). Furthermore, the conception of transcription and subtitle will be discussed as support to scene analyses.

In order to analyze and discuss how death and the afterlife it is represented in Dickens's books and the adaptation written by Knight and directed by Murphy. Also, how this impacts the main character, Ebenezer Scrooge, to change its core, through video and transcription analyses. Based on this relationship between the book (*A Christmas Carol*) and its adaptation to the miniseries, a qualitative was made to explore these supernatural aspects in both works.

For this reason, this paper is divided into five topics: first the introduction section, followed by the theoretical background as the second topic and its subdivision: "A brief definition about translation and adaptation", "*A Christmas Carol* on Screen", and "Subtitle and transcription as a support to scene analysis". In the third topic the methodology is presented. In The fourth topic "Death and after-life as cause and effect to scrooge redemption" and how Knight and Murphy (2019) interpreted Dickens, concerning to supernatural and darkness topic of the ghost story will be observed. Followed by the conclusion topic in the last section.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS

Before we observe the relationship between the miniseries and the book *A Christmas Carol* regarding to the influence of death and afterlife in the main character: Ebenezer Scrooge, it is necessary to punctuate the role that translation has in the transmutation from literature into audiovisual. This section also intends to

explain how Dickens used death to characterize the mood of the story. To conclude this section, a discussion about subtitles and transcription will be presented.

2.1 A BRIEF DEFINITION OF TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION

Before starting to establish the discussions between the book *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens and its adaptation for a miniseries by Steven Knight and Murphy it is necessary to discuss here the theoretical background concerning translation and adaptation that will guide the analysis hereafter.

Zacchi (2015), in his research mentions that with the advancement of globalization, the limits between the definition of literature, arts, and mass culture are getting flattened because of the intertwined of genres (ZACCHI, 2015 p. 88). Because of this connection between words and visual aspects is necessary to look after a brief discussion about translation and adaptation in order to understand the relationship between literature and a mass culture program as a tv show.

According to Plaza (2003) a sign can be defined as a representation of something in order to produce meaning (PLAZA, 2003, p. 21). In his research, Jakobson (1959) elucidates that a sign can be categorized into three distinct interpretations: “1. Intralingual translation or *rewording*” when a sign is translated into another sign in the same language, for example the translation of the word ‘ghost’ for ‘spirit’; “2. Interlingual translation or *translation proper*” happens when there is an interpretation of the signs to another language, as example, the translation of the book *A Christmas Carol* into a Portuguese as *Uma Canção de Natal*; and “3. Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation*” that interprets words into a nonverbal sign, here we can use the example of transforming a book into movies. (JAKOBSON, 1959 p. 133).

Because we will discuss the possibility to understand some scenes of the miniseries through non verbal aspects, and also because we brought the concept of intersemiotic by Jakobson (1959) in the previous paragraph, it is necessary to define briefly the meaning of semiotic. Santaella (1983) mention that semiotic investigates languages describing and analyzing all linguistics signs (verbal and nonverbal). Taking this into account it is possible to create meaning through sounds, images, written ideas, color...

According to House (2013), translation means that there it is a transposition of the source text to another text in other language. The author also explains that a translation it is also a new text and not a copy in another language even when, with a translation based on fidelity or similarity, the translator will choose words or expressions that will fit better in his translation in order to make the reader have the same/similar experience. House (2013), also points out that a translation needs to deal with the cultural context as a situation in the process. Another perspective that alludes the fact that culturally the sense of translation needs this idea of replacement and adaptation to the target language is when she says that its not possible to made an identical translation of the source text because a translation deals with the equivalence in some degrees in the other culture. (HOUSE, 2013). In her recent publications House (2017) mentions that a translation refers to a written text and its adaptation to oral and non-verbal forms refers to interpretations of its own.

For this reason, in this paper, we try to make a distinction between both, translation and adaptation. Translation, in some aspects, deals with the similarity with the source text. In the other hand adaptations has more liberty in the transposition to another media as we will discuss for now on.

Luiz (2019), brings the idea that an adaption can be related to the act of creating a screenplay, once the writer of this new version has the sense of liberty to change the narrative, scene, time passage, to add or remove some passages, and also have some degree of similarity with the source text. In consonance with that perspective, Eco (2007) mentions that adaption is a creation that follows the business criterion, which uses the literary works in audiovisual perspective to obtain profit by the manipulation of the source text, only to achieve a marketing criterium. For him an adaptation provides that the story is (re)created to achieve the target audience. For example, adaptation for children or general audience is generally seen in animation perspectives, on the other hand movies and TV shows are generally made for adults and adolescents' audience.

Mateus (2014) criticizes the mass cultural adaptations because for him, this type of work tends to simplify the content and also the linguistic aspects present in the canonic work, also recreate stereotypes that are presented in the popular imaginary by using images as strategies to mitigate the complexity and density of the speech that a conventional reading must provide. The author also emphasizes that this type of adaptation is a brief version of the work that was its inspiration.

On the other hand, Hutcheon (2013) defines adaptations into three categories: "i) an acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works; ii) a creative and an interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging and; iii) an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work" (HUTCHEON, 2013, p. 35). In this perspective, Hutcheon (2013) reiterates that, for her adaptations should be treated as adaptations, not only by the criticism or by the analysis on the fidelity of the reference point. Although the adaptation is not the primary work, they are not inferior to the literary work Because this is another creation. For the author, an adaptation applies the same characteristics of a storytelling: contextualization of the story, addition or simplification creating analogies and pertinent criticism in different perspective. It is understood in this sense that adaptation goes through a creative process, that implicates on recreation, reinterpretation and appropriation (HUTCHEON, 2013).

2.1.1 A CHRISTMAS CAROL ON SCREEN

After the discussions about translation and adaptation a discussion of how the book *A Christmas Carol* is represented in an adaption perspective is necessary. Standiford (2009) in his book *The Man who Invented Christmas: how Charles Dickens's A Christ-mas Carol Rescued His Career and Revived Our Holiday Sprints*, that was also adapted to the cinema, punctuate that until "1980 at least 225 live staging's, films, radio dramas, and television plays based on Dickens's "little Carol" had been produced after 1950" (STANDIFORD, 2008, p.130). Some other important and recent adaptations were released such as the Disney animated adaptation (2009) directed by Robert Zemeckis, the BBC miniseries (which is the *corpus* of this paper) created by Steven Knight and directed by Nick Murphy (2019), a graphic novel adaption From Stephen L. Stern (2012) and a play adaptation due to the pandemic situation of Covid-19 entitled "*A Very Covid Christmas Carol*", a virtual play written by Pamela Morgan (2020).

Eisenstein (1948), mentions that "this success on Dickens books is because his descriptions offer not only absolute accuracy of detail, but also an absolutely accurate drawing of the behavior and actions of his characters." (EISENSTEIN, 1948 p. 210). Eisenstein also emphasizes that the way Dickens writes his stories is compared with the cinematographically eye perspective. He immerses the reader into

the scene by using the narrator to capture the attention, as if it was “the camera point of view”.

Because some aspects of the subtitle in the miniseries will be discussed hereafter, it is necessary to analyse the importance of this resource to understand the image.

2.2 SUBTITLE AND TRANSCRIPTION AS A SUPPORT TO SCENE ANALYSIS

Subtitles are an important support in audiovisual context because of his potentiality to achieve the audience rapidly than the dubbed versions, sometimes the dubbed version takes months to be released /done which may affect the expectation audience of other countries that wants to watch an episode of a TV show or a movie.

In other that, Ivarsson and Carroll (apud GOMES, 2010) mention some reasons why the subtitle has been popularized. For them,

one hypothesis that could justify this increase in the acceptance of subtitled movies is the growth in the reading ability of the younger generations, who are increasingly more accustomed to the speed with which information is transmitted in new media such as the computer and satellite and satellite broadcasting, among other media in which words and images on the screen change rapidly. According to them, the speed of subtitles in movies today is much faster than it was 30 years ago. (IVARSSON; CARROLL apud GOMES, 2010, p. 55).

With the advancements of the informational era this audience are facing and dealing with much information in cellphones or computers. And this ability of getting information rapidly may help them to watch and read at the same time.

Another important reason for the presence of subtitles in audiovisual resources it was because this tool is cheaper than dubbing for another language. In addition, the process of subtitling is also faster than dubbing.

Araujo (2006) mentions that subtitle is divided in two aspects: linguistic and technique. In the linguistic aspect, there are the intralingual and the interlingual perspective. The intralingual perspective is when the subtitle acts as a translation of sounds into words in the same language, the interlingual perspective, on the other hand, is the translation of oral speech in the original language for a foreign language written aspect. The technique aspect also presents two divisions: opened or closed. According to Araujo (2006), the open subtitle happens when we do not choose the appearance of the subtitle on the screen as in cinema, for example. The closed one, happens when we choose to include the subtitle on the screen with the “closed captions” button.

Furthermore, the subtitler needs to keep in mind that s/he has to adequate the translation with the velocity of the text and scene taking into account the maximum of characters permitted in the software that was chosen to make the subtitle and respecting humans reading velocity (150-180 words per minute) as mentioned by Araujo (2006). Also, the subtitler must be aware of cultural aspects of the places where the product will be watched.

This paper intended to use the linguistic intralingual aspect of subtitle with closed technique aspect in order to help the transcription process. Lima (2015) defines transcription as the act of transforming sounds into written text. The transcriptions allow a criterions analysis to be done in order to investigate the speech.

3 METHODOLOGY

To understand how this paper was done it's necessary to remember the reasons to write this research. It is intended here to discuss and analyze the main subject (death, supernatural and redemption) presented by Charles Dickens (1843) in his book *A Christmas Carol* through the comparison of the book and Knight and Murphy (2019) miniseries adaptation.

This paper has a qualitative methodology of research because it's intended to explain how Knight and Murphy (2019) portrayed the supernatural and darkness in Dickens ghost story. According to Minayo (*apud* GERHARDT; SILVEIRA, 2009) this type of research deals with aspect of "meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes" in order to present a deep observation on the corpus of the research based on description, comprehensions and explanation of the results (MINAYO, 2001 *apud* GERHARDT; SILVEIRA, 2009, p. 32).

Furthermore, Sousa et al (2019) comments that by using videos and transcriptions as scientific material the researcher provides a relationship between symbolism and empiric perspectives in order to observe the verbal and non-verbal characteristics. The authors also mention that throughout the video transcription the research can point out the events that he wants to work with.

As we already mentioned, the book *A Christmas Carol* was written by Charles Dickens. According to Frazão (2019) Charles Dickens (1812 – 1870) was an English writer that it is known for his critics on social aspects of the Victorian Era with the advancement of industrialization. During a crisis in 1843 he wrote *A Christmas Carol* which is now part of the Christmas Anglo-Saxon mythology.

A Christmas Carol portrays Scrooge's story. The character is a misery man that only cares about himself and about money. Throughout the story Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his ex-business partner which reveals to him that during three nights he will be haunted by three Christmas spirits. These spirits try to melt Scrooge's cold heart to prevent the same fate that his partner had. During this journey he faces his acts and reflects about what happened, what is happening and what is going to happen in the future. These reflections made him change his mind about what he does and turned him into a better person.

In the next topic it will be discussed and analyzed how death and after life acts in Scrooge redemption in the book, and how the adaptation for a TV miniseries, written by Steven Knight and directed by Nick Murphy (2019) based on the *A Christmas Carol* story by Dickens, presents the perspectives of death and afterlife.

4 DEATH AND AFTERLIFE AS CAUSE AND EFFECT TO SCROOGE'S REDEMPTION

In *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens (1843) appeals to the symbolism as a way to get the reader involved in the story. The main symbolism present in the story is about the idea of the Christmas spirit. This idea is personified by Dickens when he represents the ghost of the Christmas Past, the ghost of Christmas Present and the ghost of the Yet to Come, the Christmas Future, to guide the journey of Ebenezer Scrooge until his redemption. This journey makes the reader think about moral aspects and religiousness aspects presented in the book and reflect on the reason why Scrooge hates Christmas.

The first mention of death in the story is in the first paragraph. To begin with, Dickens makes sure to his readers that Scrooge partner in business is dead in the

first paragraph of the book, when he states: “Marley was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it.” (DICKENS, 1843, p. 7).

Still in the first chapter, Scrooge’s nephew tries to convince him to see the good part of Christmas time. In the passage below we can observe a dialogue about the message of accepting others as brothers and sisters that will have the same destiny: Death:

[...] I have always thought of Christmas time [...] as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys (DICKENS, 1843, p.10).

For Bloom (2011) by choosing “fellow-passengers” Dickens intends to point out that every action has a consequence and the choices made has a role on how we relate with others and how others are affected by this choice. Bloom (2011) also argues that: “This notion of taking responsibility for one’s direction and purpose in life—and of having free will to take that responsibility—is the foundation for the transformation Scrooge undergoes from being one kind of person to being a different kind of person.” (BLOOM, 2011, p 28).

Dickens choose to call each chapter as “staves”. According to the Cambridge dictionary, a stave is “the five lines and four spaces between them on which musical notes are written.” He chooses to divide the chapters into staves because of the name of the book *A Christmas Carol* which is a song people sing during Christmas time. for this reason, he calls the five divisions staves of the complete song.

In stave one, Dickens (1843) show us the relationship between Scrooge and the death of his business partner Jacob Marley. In the book despite having overcome the doom of his friend, he does not replace him and sometimes answer by his name as it is perceptible in the paragraph below:

Scrooge never painted out Old Marley’s name. There it stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door: Scrooge and Marley. The firm was known as Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley, but he answered to both names. It was all the same to him. (DICKENS, 1843, p 8)

Even though Scrooge has some troubles to face his friend, in ghost appearance, because for him there is no possibility of afterlife existence. For him ghosts are only undigested food and creation of human’s minds. The appearance of Marley’s ghosts happens in the beginning of Scrooge’s journey. Santos (2013), in his studies, mentions that a ghost acts as a messenger, that appears to communicate something from the other side. Based on the idea of ghosts as a foreshadowing for something, Bloom (2011) comments that:

The ghost of Marley comes with a single revelation and a single task. First, he announces that life continues after death for each individual, and the quality of that life is determined by the sum total of earthly purposes and preoccupations. He (Marley ghost) explains that he has been condemned to undertake his unearthly sojourn for seven years. (BLOOM, 2011 p.33)

Farias and Cardoso (2017) point out that Scrooge got restless with the presence of his ex-partner as a spectrum because Marley has revealed a negative side of Scrooge's destiny. Furthermore, in this moment Dickens shows to the readers the first moment that his protagonist fears his death. Because of the admiration that Scrooge has for his business partner he sees the semblance of the ghost as a reflection of his own afterlife fate.

By observing a prelude of the afterlife context presented by Dickens in the book based in the image of Marley's ghost, presented on Fig. 1. It is possible to observe that Marley's character is with chains attached to heavy safes which represents his connection with the material world and the avarice that he shared with his ex-business partner Scrooge.

Figure 1: Marley's Ghost illustrated by John Leech



Image taken from the illustrated book of *A Christmas Carol* p.19

Based the representation of their sins personified on Fig. 1, we can also observe some similarity with the description of the fourth cycle of hell presented by Dante Alighieri in the "canto 7"¹ of the *Divine comedy* portrayed on Fig. 2 in which all greed and avaricious men is predestinated. In this passage translated to English by Longfellow (1867) "Here saw I people, more than elsewhere, many, on one side and the other, with great howls, Rolling weights forward by main force of chest." (inf. 7. 25-27).

¹ Original version of *La Divina commedia* Dante Alighieri Canto VII: "Qui vid' i' gente più ch'altrove troppa, e d'una parte e d'altra, con grand' urli, voltando pesi per forza di poppa."

Figure 2: *La Carte de l'Enfer* - Sandro Botticelli



Font: Wikipedia

According to Bertman (2007) in his investigations about “Dante's role in the genesis of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*” a possible appreciation of Dickens for Dante’s hell may happen because:

As a literary man curious about the human condition and a man passionately committed to the cause of social reform, Dickens might have been particularly fascinated by the *Inferno*'s depiction of man's inhumanity to man and its theme of crime and punishment. In addition, as an individual who believed in the power of education to transform people's lives, Dickens would have been sympathetic to *The Divine Comedy*'s emphasis upon the possibility of spiritual redemption. (BERTMAN, 2007, p 172-173)

Regarding to death in Dickens story, in the end of stave four Scrooge faces his own death and begs for the last of the spirits to let him try to be a better person and to have a different destine from Marley. We can see also that he is desperate with the notion of his death. Because now life is important to him and we can notice that he not enjoyed his life properly as we can see below:

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, EBENEZER SCROOGE.

The finger pointed from the grave to him, and back again.

“No, Spirit! Oh no, no!”

The finger still was there.

“Spirit!” he cried, tight clutching at its robe, “hear me! I am not the man I was.

I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse. Why show me this, if I am past all hope!”

For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

“Good Spirit,” he pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it: “Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!”

The kind hand trembled.

“I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone!”

In his agony, he caught the spectral hand. It sought to free itself, but he was strong in his entreaty, and detained it. The Spirit, stronger yet, repulsed him.

Holding up his hands in a last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom's hood and dress. It shrunk, collapsed, and dwindled down into a bedpost. (DICKENS, 1843, p, 82-84)

The fear that Scrooge feels it is presented to the readers in the beginning of the stave 4 to point out the conscience of the main character of his sins. Differently of the advises of others ghosts we only realize his vulnerability when he sees his grave as presented in the quotation above. Moreover, we could see in this topic Dickens used the Christmas spirits and Marley's ghost to show the reader that when scrooge death was near the character, he realized that what he was doing would have effects in his afterlife and the consequences would be permanent in others lives also. To make a contrast with the book, in the next topic we will discuss and make an analysis on Knight and Murphy (2019) miniseries adaptation.

4.1 KNIGHT AND MURPHY VERSION OF A *CHRISTMAS CAROL*: ANALISYS OF THE REDEMPTION JOURNEY THROUGH GHOST LENS

Scrooge at first treats the ghosts as an illusion in the book. In comparison to the miniseries the main character also tries to fight with this unrated situation in order to convince himself that they are all "humbug" term which Scrooge used to refer to this word when he does not believe in someone or something, and has the same meaning of impostor. Before the appearance of Marley's ghost on screen, Knight and Murphy guide the audience to observe Scrooge dealing with the death of his ex-business partner. Differently from the source text, Marley has died only one year before the story begin but still has an impact on Scrooge.

In the transcription below, Scrooge sees himself alone. At the same time some flashbacks from the nightmares of the previous night appears in his mind as memories. Then, he begins to analyze his action after Marley's death.

Scrooge: Last night... I had a dream of chains and furnaces and... and I realized, when I am alone and I talk out loud... it still you I am talking to. (Clock ticking) As if you are not completely gone. But I was at your burial. And I am rational. I put coins in your eyes. I saw your coffin lowered so I have no explanation why I speak out loud to you (KNIGHT; MURPHY, 2019, 00:15:04h – 00:16:05h).

This scene indicates that Scrooge does not see an afterlife as a possibility when he utters "completely gone" in his monologue. On Fig. 3 we can observe the visual representation of this scene, through the non-verbal elements that emphasize the admiration for Marley. Despite being completely gone, Marley's workplace remains as he left which can represent the idea of not letting go related to Scrooge. It is possible to observe two interpretations: first, Scrooge is not ready to replace his missing friend as part of his life and as part of his company; second, because of his avarice he does not want to hire anyone else or sell part of his company which will make he share his profit.

Figure 3: Marley's vacancy



Source: *A Christmas Carol*. Directed by Nick Murphy. Written by Steven Knight. London: BBC, FX Network and Fox, 2019. (173 min.), color. Subtitled. Series 1

In the picture we can also observe that the adaptation captured the mood of the character in the disposal of lights, since Scrooge embrace his solitude and questioned himself about why he continuous to talk as if his partner was there which create an empathic tone by showing Scrooge's fragility and emotional perspective. The contrast between outside lights and inside lights shows Scrooge darkness and avarice. He prefers to let the windows without curtains in order to illuminate the place instead of using more candles or extra coal on the fireplace, because the darkness and the cold do not affect him more than spending money unnecessarily.

Another perspective of the relationship between death and afterlife is the new aspect that Knight and Murphy (2019) give to the character development of Marley in the afterlife by showing on the scene why Marley had the duty to advise Scrooge on the appearance of the other ghosts. As mentioned by Luiz (2019) and Eco (2006), this version created an interpretation by adding elements that is not in the book to achieve a business strategy. In this specific additional scene Marley is laying down in his coffin and he wakes from his peace resting and claims he wants to get back to his quiet rest.

Marley: Oh, fate. Oh, spirits of life and death whoever is in charge on this ill-begotten universe, I'm begging you to free me from this consciousness. Let me rest. Give me darkness. I know my sins were many but I have repented, I repented, I repented. Tell me what I must do to make amends...and I will do it. Please. (Bell rings loudly). (KNIGHT; MURPHY, 2019, 00:16:35h – 00:17:19h)

Knight and Murphy (2019) in their adaptation put not only Scrooge in a journey to find his redemption but also Marley who is attached to Scrooge by the same sins. In this creation the links of the chain represents each life that Marley and Scrooge has ruined. Here we can also see a connection with Dante's divine comedy but this time with the purgatory point of view: the ones that repent belatedly must stay in purgatory in order to have a redemption that is not guaranteed. The irony sense is presented in the scene when he comes to the purgatory when he tries to bribe the purgatory messenger with coins that Scrooge had left in Marley's eyes in an attempt

to release him from his new afterlife consciousness, even though, as we could see in the transcription above, in his mind he had repented of his avaricious life.

Figure 4: Marley in the purgatory



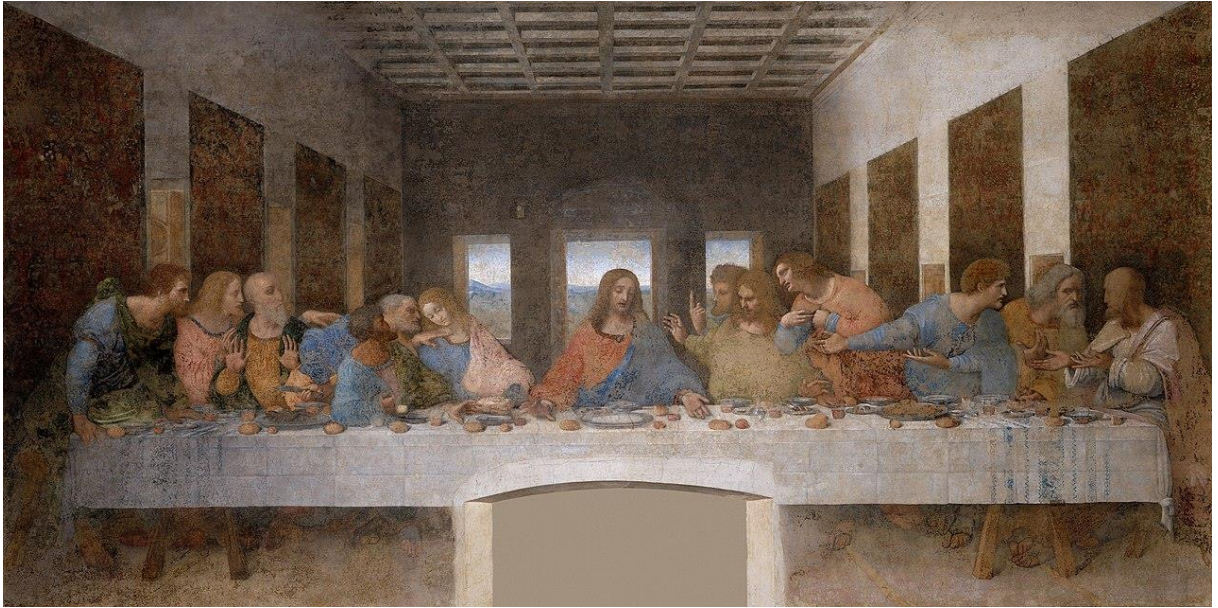
Source: *A Christmas Carol*. Directed by Nick Murphy. Written by Steven Knight. London: BBC, FX Network and Fox, 2019. (173 min.), color. Subtitled. Series 1

After taking his chains and heavy iron Marley continues his journey to find the first spirit, he becomes complete hopeless when he discovers that his redemption depends on Scrooge's attitude to change. In this moment is presented to the viewers the appearance of the spirit, the Ghost of Christmas past. It can be observed how this spirit represents fire as a symbol of transmutation and purification when he says that the fire can warm humans' souls or turn them into ashes as we can see in the transcription below:

Ghost of the Christmas past: On the fires I burn memories and old affections. I am the ghost of Christmas past. Here to smoke out redemption. You have lingered in purgatory for your many sins. If it turns out you can be redeemed. I will rake you out of the flames and blow you cool and deliver you to everlasting and eternal peace (KNIGHT; MURPHY, 2019, 00:27:52h – 00:28:33h)

The only spirit that has the power of redemption in the story is the Ghost of the Christmas Past, coincidentally or not, the first appearance of this spirit in the miniseries' it has an occidental Jesus Christ resemblance. It is valid to make a historical and cultural perspective to understand why Knight and Murphy used this image in the adaptation. We can observe the descriptions of Jesus as a classical white European resemblance since the European renaissance between XIV and XVI centuries as we can see in the fig.5 with the representation of Jesus in the picture by Leonardo Da Vinci in the XV century

Figure 5: The Last Supper Leonardo Da Vinci



Source: Wikipedia

There is also the representation of Jesus as the judge in the final judgment painted by Michelangelo in the XVI century as we can see on fig.6 below, where we see Jesus crucified in the bottom of the picture and Jesus as judge in the middle of the scene with a white light behind him and deciding the destine of sinners. Taking into account that Dickens Book has an appealing to Christianity and was written in London, Knight and Murphy (2019), probably used this European image to represent the ghost of past and also because of all the symbolism that this character has.

Figure 6: The final Judgment by Michelangelo.



Source: Wikipedia

Furthermore, it is possible to make a connection here between the scene on fig.7 and the Bible scriptures: "The dead in Christ will rise first, then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. So, we will be with the Lord forever." (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). The passage shows Christ as the only savior. The semblance is also present in the crown of thorns that the ghosts' wears and the representation of Jesus appearance in the Bible scriptures: "The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire" (APOCALYPSE 1:14).

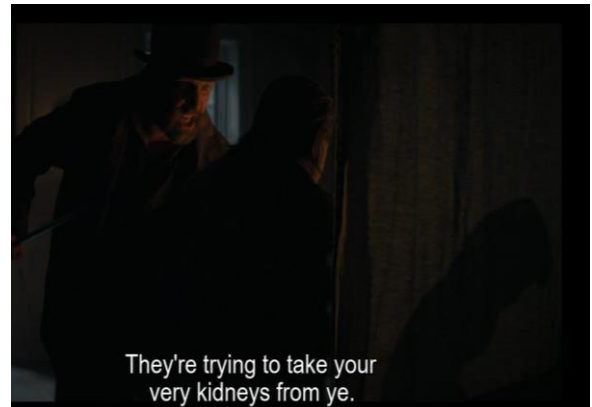
Figure 7: The ghost of Christmas past



Source: *A Christmas Carol*. Directed by Nick Murphy. Written by Steven Knight. London: BBC, FX Network and Fox, 2019. (173 min.), color. Subtitled. Series 1

Another important fact about this ghost is that he goes deeper in the memories of Scrooges as if it was omniscient. The ghost also has the power of transmutation. The spirits change its form from characters that interfered negatively or positively to the construction of Ebenezer as a character during the previous Christmas: first, his last Christmas gift (a mouse); then, his father that still affects him negatively causing him fear, as a nightmare. Ali Baba which is his only company during the days that he stays on the school during the festivities, one of Scrooge's miners that died in a mine accident whose horses' death was more important to Scrooge than the humans that died that day and; a businessman that points out that Scrooge does not care about the people who lost their jobs in a difficult moment, because Scrooge only cares about profit. Lastly, he is represented by the old man with Christ's appearance that shows Scrooge could not be excused from his behavior. In the last memory, the ghost goes back to the day that the wife of Scrooge's clerk begs him for a loan in order to save their child named Tim. Scrooge instead, proposes a submission from the woman in exchange. He makes this offer just to test her and see what people do in exchange for money even with all morality aspect involved.

Figure 8: the faces of the ghost of Christmas past





Source: *A Christmas Carol*. Directed by Nick Murphy. Written by Steven Knight. London: BBC, FX Network and Fox, 2019. (173 min.), color. Subtitled. Series 1

To contrast with this analysis of the adaptation, we can observe and compare how Dickens presents the first ghost:

It was a strange figure—like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium, which gave him the appearance of having receded from the view, and being diminished to a child's proportions. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if its hold were of uncommon strength. Its legs and feet, most delicately formed, were, like those upper members, bare. It wore a tunic of the purest white; and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprung a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible; and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm. (DICKENS, 1843, p 29)

As we can see in the citation above, in the book the ghost has not a familiar

appearance as it has in the miniseries in its transmutations to his fathers, his employee and others as on fig.7. however, the ghosts also use a crown in his head and has a child and old appearance that may justify why Knight and murphy used an old Jesus in his interpretation.

To understand Scrooge's reluctance to change his core, the second spirit appears to reveal what is happening in the Christmas Present, in this moment the appearance of the ghost is the memory of his sister Lottie. The ghost presents herself and explains why it has the appearance of his sister by saying: "you paid for my funeral so here I am. The ghost of the Christmas Present. A present unknown to you" (KNIGHT; MURPHY, 2019, 02:10:04h – 02:10:15h). The spirit, then, takes him to see his clerk's family and makes him observe that love is what makes them happy and not an amount of money as it can be perceive in the transcription below:

Lottie: So, it is love, love that saves the system from revolution. A scientific and economic reason for you to embrace it, Ebenezer. See the value of it.

Scrooge: You are mocking me.

Lottie: You are mocking yourself, putting a value to things that have no price. (KNIGHT; MURPHY, 2019, 02:13:43h – 02:14:05h)

A moment after that, the spirit explains that sometimes when experiencing big emotions, humans can see ghosts which explain why Scrooge is facing this journey. When time forwards the spirit goes away. We can understand in this moment that Scrooge has regrated what he has been doing and what he has done. The scene presents the first moment that the main character, Scrooge, talks about his felling, but he does not explain his acts. By analyzing this scene represented in Fig. 9 it can be observed the lights are everywhere and they symbolize that he has accepted the lights by fighting the darkness in his heart

Figure 9: Scrooge and the Ghost of Christmas present



Source: *A Christmas Carol*. Directed by Nick Murphy. Written by Steven Knight. London: BBC, FX Network and Fox, 2019. (173 min.), color. Subtitled. Series 1

The last one of the three spirits, the unknown spirit, is the final step to the redemption journey of Ebenezer Scrooge. The appearance of the last spirit, the Christmas yet to come, is mysterious as can be noticed on Fig.10. That happens because humans cannot see the future and as a consequence the ghost is not allowed to speak. This feeling of uncertainty is represented on the screen by the use of shadows and darkness. Moreover, because the ghost is harsh but speechless, Scrooge has to deal with his fate by reflecting by himself about what will happen if he does not change.

Figure 10: The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come



Source: *A Christmas Carol*. Directed by Nick Murphy. Written by Steven Knight. London: BBC, FX Network and Fox, 2019. (173 min.), color. Subtitled. Series 1

In this moment, Scrooge character has to face Death. Firstly, he faces the death of his clerk' son whose life Scrooge "saved" before when he humiliated the clerk wife. Secondly, he had to face his own death. But for the first time, he was not focused in

his fate but on the son's clerk life. During this scene, Scrooge also refuses to have his redemption by accepting his fate because for him, he deserves to pay for everything that he has done for his own benefits as we can see below:

Marley: We're so wrong. Admit that, at least.

Scrooge: No, no I refuse. I refuse to change. All their (spirits) effort were for nothing, because I refuse redemption.

Marley: what in God's name, Ebenezer, why?

Scrooge: This fate... this piss, covered; second-class grave is exactly what I deserve. And if redemption were to result in some kind of forgiveness, I do not want it. Because I will find a way to justify everything I have done according to the consequence 'cause that is who I am... the only thing... the only thing I want the spirits to do, the only chance I want them to make... is to spare the life of him (point out Tim's grave). (KNIGHT; MURPHY, 2019, 02:41:52h – 02:43:20h)

As we can observe in the dialogue, in this final act of redemption, Scrooge chooses to change his fate, the clerk's son fate, Tim, along with Tim's family fate. After being visited by his ex-partner and three spirits which led him into his past, present and future. which made him reflect on his acts which made everyone around him suffer. Scrooge could learn also that money have no influence in happiness, but money could save someone's life. The genuine will to help others was the reason why Scrooge come back to be human again. This also released Marley's spirit, he got rid of all chains and safes that were capturing him and then, he finally got back to his peaceful rest.

As we could see, differently from what Matheus (2014) critics in this adaptation do not simplify Dickens story. Knight and Murphy (2019) not only recapture a Christmas Carol but also add some elements which makes the story get a deeper and darker point of view of Dickens creation. With this new version, the ghosts get more connotations about life, death, and afterlife.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The adaptation of the book *A Christmas Carol* (1843), by Charles Dickens, for a miniseries directed by Knight and written by Murphy (2019) added the director and writer perspective about death and supernatural spectrum on Scrooge's redemption journey. The adaptation discussed here acted not as a secondary version of the book, but as a creation. The writer and director had the liberty to change the narrative, scenes and time passage. Adding and removing stories to place the main character through other challenges.

By analyzing both miniseries and source book it was possible to notice that the book shows how Scrooge represents the way capitalism can destroy society by corrupting people. In the series, on the other hand, the symbolism of Jesus transmutation throughout Scrooge's memories as the personification of the Christmas past also revealed that human actions have consequences. These consequences are not only to humans lives but resonate in an afterlife. The writer and director try to show how guilty can redeem sinners.

Another observation that is valid to mention, it is that the ghost's appearance in the miniseries has a familiar appearance for Scrooge, because of his connection with the people that the ghosts of past and present portrayed in the narrative. Except the appearance of the ghost from the Christmas yet to come, which is completely different and strange for him. Making Scrooge reflect about his actions and

understand that he should pay for his sins. Consequently, when Scrooge realizes that he can change, he does not care about his fate but he tries to be the best man that he can be. In order to accomplish that he went on a journey facing different situations and seeing different scenarios, facing a death and an afterlife situation was the final moment in Scrooge journey and it had an inner effect not only in Scrooge's life but also the lives of everyone that was around him.

This research showed a possible way to observe a different perspective of Scrooge development. In the adaptation every act Scrooge performed has influence other people's and it all happened because of money. Marley and Scrooge were linked by their deadly sin and their connection made Scrooge observe three aspects of death: first, how afterlife can be painful and he discovered that death it is not the end of human existence; second, death is connected with religiousness by using the spirits as guides to Scrooge's redemption, and in the end; the idea that life is short and it should be enjoyed with things that really matter: happiness, family and by living life as if was the last day of our lives was presented.

To conclude, we aimed at treating adaptation as a new text in this paper, in order to compare not based on the fidelity with the source text but to see how both treat the same topic which complements each other. We could also observe and discuss the reason that makes Scrooge rethink his trajectory and influenced his change by fearing death.

As contribution and possibilities for further researches we suggest on literary and translation/adaptation studies the analysis on the cultural and moral perspectives that bases the story and the adaptation as well, also how death and supernatural experience affects human's manner of living, in addition it is possible also to help in psychology studies regarding to death and its acceptance.

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AGRADECIMENTOS

A Deus, por ter permitido que eu tivesse saúde e determinação para não desanimar durante a realização deste trabalho.

A minha mãe e irmã, que me incentivaram nos momentos difíceis e compreenderam a minha ausência enquanto eu me dedicava à realização deste trabalho.

A professora Jéssica, por ter sido minha orientadora e ter desempenhado tal função com dedicação, amizade e paciência.

Aos professores do curso de Letras Inglês, pelos ensinamentos que me permitiram apresentar um melhor desempenho no meu processo de formação profissional e acadêmica ao longo do curso.

A todos que participaram, direta ou indiretamente do desenvolvimento deste trabalho de pesquisa, enriquecendo o meu processo de aprendizado.