The visual representation of *Daenerys Targaryen* in the first season of *Game of Thrones*

A representação visual de Daenerys Targaryen na primeira temporada de Game of Thrones

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Abstract: The representation of gender and power relations of female characters is an important area in studies of multimodality. The TV series *Game of Thrones*, produced by HBO, achieved high notoriety in 2011, becoming a worldwide phenomenon. The object of the present study is *Daenerys Targaryen*, a character who has a significant role in the narrative, enduring a drastic transformation throughout the first season of the TV series. Based on the grammar of visual design (KRESS; VAN LEEWUEN, 2006), the study analyzed twelve screenshots from six different scenes from the first season of the series. Results show a change in terms of agency, empowerment and independence of the character sustained by her visual representation. Also, from a critical perspective, the study raises issues about feminine representation in the media and notions of gender and culture.

Keywords: The Grammar of Visual Design. Gender Studies. Game of Thrones. Daenerys Targaryen

Resumo: A representação de gênero e das relações de poder de personagens femininas constitui uma área importante nos estudos da multimodalidade. A série de TV *Game of Thrones*, produzida pela HBO, alcançou grande notoriedade em 2011, tornando-se um fenômeno mundial. O objeto do estudo presente é *Daenerys Targaryen*, uma personagem que possui um papel significante na narrativa, passando por uma transformação drástica de comportamento, na primeira temporada da série de TV. Com base na gramática do design visual (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006), o estudo analisou doze capturas de tela de seis diferentes cenas da primeira temporada da série. Os resultados mostram, uma mudança em termos de agenciamento, empoderamento e independência da personagem através de sua representação visual. Além disso, a partir de uma perspectiva crítica, o estudo levanta questões sobre representação feminina na mídia e noções de gênero e cultura.

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Introduction

Gender representation and the portrayal of power relations concerning female characters have been often examined in academia in different means of communication, such as in fantasy novels, magazines, movies, TV series, video games and publicity posters (PINHEIRO, 2007; AUTOR 3, 2004; LORENSET, 2010; BEZERRA, 2008; 2012; GAUNTLETT, 2008; AUTOR 2, 2016; LORENSET and AUTOR 1, 2019). Through a multimodal perspective, it is possible to analyze different modes of communication, in addition to written language, in order to reveal hidden ideologies and positions concerning the representation of women in media.

Due to the easy access of cable TV, the internet and the availability of a large number of streaming services nowadays, TV series have become a powerful resource of ideologies considering their vast popularity in modern society. The HBO series *Game of Thrones (GoT)* is an example of a TV series which has attracted attention since it is considered one of the most popular TV shows in the world and has won a legion of admirers and fans worldwide. GoT is an adaptation of a series of novels named *A Song of Ice and Fire,* written by the American author George R. R. Martin. The first season was released in 2011 and reached international recognition, receiving more than 550 nominations and 373 awards (IMDb, 2019). The eighth and final season was released in 2019 and currently a prequel series of the story is under production.

George R. R. Martin created strong and empowered female characters in his novel, and fifteen years after the publication of the first book, its adaptation portrays these leading women as a sign that the models of women in society when it comes to television have been changing and women in leading roles are now cherished and admired

(JONES, 2012). According to Haastrup (2016), GoT's female characters can be distinguished from those in other TV series because they are portrayed as equally powerful and strong as their male counterparts. These powerful female characters are not very common in current shows, some exceptions being the TV series *West Wing*, *House of Cards*, *The Wire*, *Downton Abbey* and *Mad Men*, which present few female characters at the highest point of the power chain.

GoT also shows the portrayal of a large number of female characters presenting them mostly as stereotypes, such as sexual objects and unnecessary persons, which seems to be related to the common view of women's representation in the Middle Ages. However, this stereotypical representation is opposed by complex representation of women who are multifaceted and pursue their own purposes and goals in life (HAASTRUP, 2016). Martin's strong female characters challenge traditional social standards, as they take part of significant events of the plot, carrying a fundamental role in them, which diverges from most mainstream films and series (HAASTRUP, 2016). Such idea raises the question of how the ideological positions, power relations, and gender representations are constructed.

Daenerys Targaryen represents one of these dominant female characters in a predominantly male world. She undergoes a drastic change of behavior along the story, especially during the first season, which justifies the visual analysis of this particular season in order to observe these significant changes related to this particular character. Accordingly, Daenerys Targaryen possesses enthralling and pertinent traits for a visual analysis through a social-semiotic perspective.

The TV series has reached a large number of viewers and may thus influence spectators' beliefs and forms of life (SOUZA; CÂMARA, 2014). However, as Gauntlett (2008) points out, it is problematic to 'confirm' that a certain TV show is 'indeed' motivating or encouraging

people to change their own views; "but if a lot of people have been moved to spontaneously write about it in blogs, websites and forums, then it is fair to take this as evidence that this program can move and inspire viewers" (GAUNTLETT, 2008, p. 73). Therefore, it seems that to advance in the area of TV series studies under a multimodal social-semiotic analytical framework may help to reveal ideological positions that are portrayed by the media, particularly regarding gender and women representation in society.

Thus, considering the rise of the audience of GoT since 2011 and its propagation in media, the aim of this study is to investigate power relations concerning gender in the representation of Daenerys Targaryen in the first season of the HBO TV series Game of Thrones. We analyze the visual representation of the character in interaction with male characters along the episodes of the first season. The following questions will guide this article: 1) Considering the grammar of visual design, what representational, interactional and compositional choices are used to construct Daenerys Targaryen's image in the selected scenes of the episodes? and, 2) What social values, attitudes, and power relations do these visual choices express?

The grammar of visual design

Originated from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the Grammar of Visual Design (GVD) was first developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) in order to help researchers to systematically analyze the multimodal nature of texts through functional descriptions of 'visual grammar' (UNSWORTH, 2001). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), similarly to the grammars of language which describe the ways linguistic structures can combine to form clauses, paragraphs and texts to point to specific interpretations of social experience and interaction, 'visual grammar' allows us to explain how depicted elements

can be combined in visual 'statements' to convey specific meanings. Choices concerning uses of different colors, compositional structures and different ways of representation of a particular image will make a difference of meaning (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006).

In SFL every written or spoken text offer three kinds of meaning (or metafunctions) simultaneously: ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings. Likewise, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) have developed a corresponding functional basis of 'visual grammar': representational, interactional and compositional meanings.

Representational meanings, which correspond to the ideational meaning in SFL, are concerned with the nature of events, the objects and participants involved, and the circumstances in which they take place. They can be categorized into narrative or conceptual images. While narrative meanings are normally composed of participants and the actions involved in the image indicated by vectors, conceptual images represent participants according to their class, structure or meaning, in other words, their generalized essence, which usually has a didactic purpose (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006).

Interactional meanings, corresponding to interpersonal meanings from SFL, focus on the nature of relationships between viewers and the represented participants. Some of the essential aspects to the analysis of this interaction are mood, modality, social distance, and perspective, among others (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006). Lastly, compositional meanings, related to the textual metafunction in SFL, refers to the distribution of the information in the images or the relative emphasis among the text elements (verbal and visual), including framing, salience and information value (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006).

Method

Since the major transformations in Daenerys's character start in the first season, this study focused on this particular season. Therefore, to investigate the visual representation of Daenerys Targaryen in the first season of the HBO TV series *Game of Thrones,* the data was selected within the ten episodes of the season, with Daenerys appearing in nine of them. From these appearances, we selected and then analyzed scenes[1] (specifically screenshots[2] from the scenes) in which she interacts with at least one man. The use of screenshots of each scene instead of dynamic images in this study was chosen in order to cover the entire season, since Daenerys' appearance in nine episodes totalizes more than fifty[3] minutes of film.

For practical purposes, we limited the number of scenes for the visual analysis to six scenes which show the interaction between Daenerys and a male figure. The first two scenes are from the beginning of the season (Episode 1), two other scenes are from the middle of the first season (Episode 4), and the last two scenes are from the end of the season (Episodes 8 and 10). The criteria for selecting these scenes are related to gender roles and chronology. More specifically, first the two initial scenes selected exemplify the role of gender in that particular context, where women were considered inferior and normally offered in marriage in exchange for favors. Secondly, (2) is relevant to observe gender roles when Daenerys goes through a drastic change of behavior.

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[1] A scene according to the Film Terms Glossary consists of a shot (or series of shots) that unified comprise into a unique and complete dramatic event, action, or element of film sequence.

[2] According to the English Oxford dictionary, screenshots refer to images of the data exhibit on the screen of electronic devices, such as a computer or a cell phone.

[3] Information retrieved from https://winteriscoming.net/2017/11/16/data-analysis-reveals-game-of-thrones-main-character/.

Finally, the selected scenes follow a chronological order in the narrative, while the amount of images totalizes twelve screenshots.

For the visual analysis, we selected two screenshots per dialogue. By using the program *Windows Media Player,* we selected screenshots from the beginning, the middle and the end of each scene in which Daenerys appears interacting with at least one male character, as already pointed out. Then the selected images were analyzed through the representational, interactive and compositional systems of visual grammar (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006).

First, we observed the representational metafunction (narrative and conceptual representation) of each screenshot concerning the participants and the circumstances involved in the situation. Then, we focused on the interactional system (contact and social distance) in order to describe the power relationships between the participants. Lastly, we analyzed the compositional metafunction (left and right / top and bottom / center and margin, salience and information value) in order to describe the organization of the elements in each image. Finally, the data was also analyzed under the light of gender studies to highlight the sociocultural practice, as represented in this media.

Analysis and discussion – power relations in visual meanings

In this section, we present visual evidence to demonstrate possible power relations among the characters. Each screenshot is followed by the verbal text[4] of the scene and the analysis of the image. In the first scene analyzed Daenerys is introduced in the narrative. Her brother has just arranged her meeting with Khal Drogo later that day. The scene lasts 2 minutes and 30 seconds and the two screenshots are presented next.

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[4] The verbal texts, when present, are presented below the screenshots in order to present the images clearly and without subtitles.

Figure 1 – Screenshot 1: 43s03

[Daenerys talking to her brother Viserys in Pentos]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "- *We've been his guests for over a year and he's never asked us for anything.*"

In this first screenshot, regarding the representational metafunction as a narrative meaning, in a transactional process, Daenerys is talking to her brother about their host while he holds her new gown. Daenerys is facing her brother whose face does not appear in the image. She is looking up since her brother is in a higher position, indicating a position of male power, consistent with the general script of the scene. Regarding her clothing, Daenerys is wearing a delicate garb with straps falling off her shoulder, which may be seen as a symbol of fragility, exposition and weakness (PORTEOUS, 2015).

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) state that in the medieval period, colors and pigments had value by themselves and, therefore, they are a useful resource of meaning-making. The soft and 'candy associated' colors of light pink, which tend to be attributed to girls (GAGE, 1999),

seem to demonstrate an emotional state of sobriety, calmness and even unhappiness, suggesting an aspect of fragile femininity. According to Gage (1999), the contrast between the colors (in this case Viserys portrayed in dark colors and Daenerys in bright ones), suggest the distinction between the old, the wealth and nobility from the new and pure innocence.

From the point of view of interactive meanings, there is a close personal distance between Daenerys and Viserys. They are somewhat close to each other, almost face to face, which shows a more intimate relationship since they are siblings. Daenerys can be seen at the eye level of the viewer, suggesting a point of view of equality and no power difference. However, Viserys is presented from a more powerful point of view, since he is portrayed in a higher position than Daenerys and the viewer. Only Viserys' silhouette can be seen, while Daenerys is positioned in an oblique angle, which may indicate that the audience is not part of their world and, therefore, cannot be involved in it, according to GVD (KRESS; VAN LEUWEEN, 2006).

Concerning compositional meanings, Viserys is positioned on the bottom left side of the image, which might indicate information that is already known by the viewer, the Given. One way to interpret this is to relate Viserys to old traditions, such as medieval patriarchy, defining his power over Daenerys as a man and her brother. Daenerys is positioned in the center of the image, as she is the nucleus of the information, and she may represent the middle ground between the Given and the New.

Figure 2 – Screenshot 2: 1m11s14

[Viserys stares at Daenerys naked]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

In this second screenshot, the viewers see Viserys examining Daenerys's body after he undresses her. Concerning representational meanings, the image contains a transactional reaction, in which Viserys is the reactor and Daenerys is the phenomenon. Viserys's glance has a lower angle and is directed to Daenerys's lower body. Daenerys, in turn, does not imply any movement to try to cover her body. This indicates her submission and lack of power while her brother inspects his 'value', his 'property'. In addition, his gaze suggests power over her, as he is observing her body. The viewer can only see Daenerys' back, as her reaction cannot be observed. Viserys's face and the angle of his hand suggest a meditative look and a sense of approval of what he is seeing.

Concerning interactive meanings, Daenerys and Viserys are in a close personal distance, confirming their intimate sibling relationship, while the audience is positioned more distantly, in a medium shot. Regarding compositional meaning, there is a vertical line formed between both characters, separating Viserys to the left and Daenerys

to the right, although both characters are positioned in the center of the shot. Viserys, slightly to the left, may represent the known and familiar information, in the role of the older brother and protector of Daenerys. Daenerys is placed slightly on the right, indicating the new and the unknown, especially because she is portrayed as under analysis of her brother.

Following Gage's (1999) concerns regarding colors, it can be said that throughout the scene, color difference also indicates the contrast between the characters: Viserys is dressed in black and Daenerys's hair and skin are pale white. Even without clothes, she is portrayed in soft and bright colors, suggesting innocence and fragility, whereas Viserys represents sobriety and nobility. Therefore, Daenerys's representation reinforces the image of women as fragile and innocent.

The second scene analyzed is the one in which Illyrio and Viserys are talking about the arrangements of Daenerys's wedding after she was introduced to Khal Drogo. The scene length is 1 minute and 43 seconds and its two selected screenshots are described next.

Figure 3 – Screenshot 3: 05s09

[Illyrio, Viserys and Daenerys on a garden balcony overlooking the sea.]

Verbal text in the image: "- *It won't be long now. Soon you will cross the Narrow Sea and take back your father's throne. The people drink secret toasts to your health. They cry out for their true king.*"

In this image, regarding representational meanings, there is a narrative process, with Illyrio, Viserys and Daenerys in a non-transactional process, constituted by these characters' vectors towards something the audience cannot see. Regarding their clothing, while Viserys is wearing a grey garment similar to the dark one he wore in the first scene, maintaining his look of sobriety and tradition, Illyrio is dressed in red and pastel colors, which may be considered common colors for wealthy people in his position. Daenerys's dress is soft and delicate, in some ways similar to the previous dress, and made of a thin veil-like fabric, leaving her body partially exposed (PORTEOUS, 2015). This might indicate her vulnerability and exposure, consistent with the context of the scene in which Daenerys was just presented to Khal Drogo and his riders. The transparency of the dress allows the future husband to inspect his 'prize' before marriage, confirming her image as a property.

In relation to interactive meanings, Viserys is positioned closer to Illyrio (close personal distance) and in a far personal distance from Daenerys. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p.124), far personal distance is "the distance at which subjects of personal interests and involvements are discussed". Such analysis makes sense since Viserys is discussing the arrangements for Daenerys's marriage. The audience is positioned in a medium shot from an oblique angle, which indicates detachment and distance from the situation around the participants, as it suggests that she does not belong to the male

characters' world. The participants' gaze is not directed to the audience, creating an offer, according to GVD.

Concerning compositional meanings, Illyrio can be seen on the left side of the image, representing the familiar information, while Viserys and Daenerys are on the right, expressing the unknown and the new information. One way to interpret this shot is that after the marriage their destiny is indefinite, then, the audience does not know whether they will be able to go back to Westeros and reclaim their father's throne. Viserys is seen closer to the center of the image, while Daenerys is in the margin, which may indicate the nucleus and the subordinated information, respectively. Thus, Daenerys is set aside, even if the context of the conversation is her own marriage, whereas Viserys is the participant who will have a significant advantage of this arrangement, a fact that reinforces the lack of authority and independence of women.

Figure 4 – Screenshot 4: 1m27s18

[Viserys and Daenerys on the garden]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "- *We go home with an army. With Khal Drogo's army. I would let his all tribe fuck you, all 40,000 men and their horses too, if that's what it took".*

In the second screenshot selected, Daenerys has, for the first time, shared her opinion about the wedding, affirming she does not want to be Drogo's queen; she just wants to go home. Viserys, then, asks her how they will be able to go home, and she replies that she does not know. Concerning the representational system, the shot contains a transactional reaction, created by the direction of Daenerys's gaze at her brother.

From the interactive point of view, Viserys and Daenerys are in a very close personal distance, with a level of proximity between a brother and his sister, while Daenerys is seen at a close shot, showing her head and the top of her shoulders. This might indicate that the audience must pay a special attention to the scene and to what is happening. There is also the angle of Viserys's hand touching Daenerys's face, which may be interpreted as a sign of affection and/or a way to convey love and tenderness. This gesture is even more conflicting if we compare to the verbal text in the image, in which Viserys affirms that he would do whatever it takes, even let his sister be raped, in order to go back to Westeros. Even though the image suggests tenderness, the verbal text shows lack of empathy of Viserys's character to the only surviving member of his family, stating that he would use the fact that she is a woman to take the advantage necessary to reclaim the Seven Kingdoms.

Regarding compositional meanings, Daenerys is placed on the right side of the image and Viserys on the left, representing the unknown and the familiar, respectively. This might be seen as a sign that Daenerys' potential is not yet revealed to the audience, therefore she is still an element that intrigues and arouses curiosity. Another important element is the contrast of their colors: while Viserys maintains the dark and sober colors, dressed in gray, Daenerys is wearing a dress which matches her complexion, giving the idea of innocence and purity, diverging from the idea of evil in Viserys's representation.

The third scene analyzed is the one in which Viserys confronts Daenerys after receiving her invitation for supper from one of her slaves. The scene length is 1 minute and 21 seconds and the two screenshots selected are described as follows.

Figure 5 – Screenshot 5: 10s22

[Viserys drags Doreah into Daenerys's tent]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "*- You send this whore to give me commends? I should have sent you back her head.*"

The first screenshot shows Viserys in Daenerys's tent yelling at her after aggressively pushing Doreah to the floor. From the representation point of view, the image constitutes a transactional action process between Viserys (the Actor) and the slave Doreah (the Goal). Viserys is also involved in another transactional process talking to Daenerys. Concerning his clothing, Viserys's style remains similar to the previous scenes analyzed. His garment is dark and traditional, maintaining the style of noblemen from Westeros. The slaves are wearing Dothraki clothes, which are basically made of natural fabrics, suggesting a

connection between the Dothraki customs and the land, since they are nomads.

Daenerys's clothes, differently from the previous scenes, is also wearing the Dothraki outfit, which might indicate that she feels more connected to her new life as a Khaleesi. Daenerys adopts heavy fabrics with materials such as leather and natural fabrics, which might be consistent with her personal growth, instead of her previous light fabric gowns. According to the narrative, living with the Dothraki for some time and starting to have a good relationship with her husband, Daenerys is becoming more confident and independent each day, growing literally a thicker skin (PORTEOUS, 2015). Her change in clothing might signal her adaption to a new life style.

Regarding the interactional system, Daenerys is at a medium social distance from Viserys, which suggests some personal distance between them since she is now married to Khal Drogo and is part of the Dothraki. Doreah and Irri are also at a far personal distance from Daenerys, showing some level of intimacy with her but also respect, since they are her maids. The audience is at a medium long shot from the characters and in an oblique angle, which denotes detachment: spectators are not part of what they are witnessing.

Concerning the compositional system, Daenerys and Viserys are the most salient participants in the image, since both receive the greatest amount of light and are the closest to the viewers (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2006, p. 176). Both slaves are in a prostrate position, allowing Daenerys and Viserys to be the most eye-catching participants in the shot. At the same time, Viserys is positioned on the left side of the image, representing the old customs and traditions, whereas Daenerys stands on the right side, representing the new. In addition, the slaves occupy only the lower region of the image, indicating the real and concrete information, while Daenerys and Viserys straddle

both regions being the real and the imaginary at the same time. One way of interpreting this representation is that Daenerys and Viserys are descendants of the Targaryen, a royal family of kings and queens, considered to be closer to God according to medieval tradition.

Figure 6 – Screenshot 6: 47s21

[Daenerys confronts Viserys in her tent.]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "- *You have no right to a braid. You've won no victories yet.*"

In the second screenshot of this scene, Daenerys finally confronts Viserys stating that he does not have the right to have a braid because he has not conquered anything. Concerning the representational meaning, the shot presents a transactional process, in which Daenerys is talking to her brother, represented by Daenerys's gaze at her brother and the movement of her lips. Regarding the interactional system, the participants are at a close personal distance, consistent with their close relationship as siblings, and the audience is at a close shot, which shows Daenerys's head and shoulders. This level of intimacy works as a lure

to call attention of the audience, in order for them to pay attention to what is being said in the argument.

From a compositional perspective, Daenerys is the most salient element in the shot, since she has the greatest amount of light in the scene and is the most eye-catching participant in the composition. The audience sees Viserys on the left and Daenerys positioned on the right, maintaining the same relation to the familiar and the unknown information presented in the aforementioned shots. However, Daenerys's facial expression in this shot is different from the previous ones: her glance is more direct, her mouth is open while she is talking, her hair is tied up in long braids, which is a symbol of power in the Dothraki tradition, and, although she is seen in a lower position than Viserys, she looks at him with an assertive posture, suggesting a change in her own behavior. Once more, the contrast of light and darkness can be observed, with Viserys presented in dark clothes and shadows and Daenerys positioned under the light.

The fourth scene selected is the one in which Daenerys confesses to Ser Jorah Mormont that she is uncertain about the repercussions of her action towards her brother. The scene length is 1 minute and 21 seconds and the two screenshots analyzed are described next.

Figure 7 – Screenshot 7: 02s05

[Daenerys talks to Ser Jorah in her tent.]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "*- I hit him. I hit the dragon.*"

This first screenshot, regarding representational meaning, contains a non-transactional process, constituted by Daenerys's gaze at someone the viewer cannot see. Later on, the audience finds out that Ser Jorah is with her in the tent. In terms of clothing, only the top of her blouse can be seen, however the brown color may indicate she is still wearing Dothraki clothes, showing a growing connection to her new people.

From the interactive system, the viewer is positioned close to Daenerys at a medium close shot, in which Daenerys's head, shoulders and chest can be seen. From this distance, the audience can see Daenerys's cheek bruised, probably as a result of Viserys's aggression, and her body slightly angled to the left, away from the plan of the viewer. Nevertheless, she looks to the right, obliquely facing the viewer, which might indicate involvement with the audience. Regarding compositional meanings, Daenerys is the most salient element in the shot, since she is the most eye-catching, the largest, most illuminated and simplest

component in the shot. She is also positioned close to the center of the image, which may indicate she is the most important element in this image.

Figure 8 – Screenshot 8: 26s12

[Daenerys talks to Ser Jorah in her tent.]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "*- The common people pray for him. Illyrio said they're sewing dragon banners and praying for his return.*"

This second screenshot shows Daenerys telling Ser Jorah what she has been told about the people's desires in Westeros. In terms of representation, the image contains a transactional reactional process, with Daenerys moving her lips, talking to someone, represented by the direction of Daenerys's gaze at Ser Jorah on the right of the shot. From this angle, it is also possible to observe that Daenerys continues to adopt the Dothraki style of clothing, wearing a top and skirt made of hard fabrics, such as leather, which might indicate the character is developing her strength and confidence, and is growing out of her brother's influence throughout the episodes (PORTEOUS, 2015).

From the interactive system, Daenerys and Ser Jorah are at a close social distance, which according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) may indicate impersonal business. This interpretation appears to be valid since the context of the conversation is Viserys's ability to rule the Seven Kingdoms and his subjects' wishes. In addition, the viewer is more distant from Daenerys, at a medium shot. This distance might suggest that the audience is not familiar with what Daenerys is saying, since she was led to believe in Viserys's destiny to be the righteous heir of the Iron Throne. From the compositional perspective, Daenerys remains the most salient element in the shot and is positioned on the left side of the image, now a familiar participant to the audience. Ser Jorah is on the right margin of the shot, only partially seen, which may represent an additional component to the image.

The fifth scene analyzed shows Daenerys's reaction when she witnesses the destruction of Lhazar after the Dothraki pillaged the place. The scene length is 6 minutes and 12 seconds; however, the dialogue in which Daenerys is interacting ends in 3 minutes and 35 seconds. The two screenshots were taken within the time in which she is a participant in the dialogue and they are analyzed next:

Figure 9 – Screenshot 9: 43s05

[Daenerys walking through Lhazar.]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

The first screenshot selected shows Daenerys arriving in Lhazar and witnessing the destruction of the village. From the representational point of view, the image contains non-transactive action processes, represented by Daenerys, Ser Jorah, Rakharo and the other riders walking to the lower right side of the shot. There are also non-transactional reaction processes, created by the direction of the participants' gaze which are all directed towards something out of the image, something the audience cannot see. The background of the scene, mostly portrayed in grey colors, presents a specific environment of destruction, with fire, smoke, and prisoners bound to a pole, which is consistent with the context of the scene. Concerning the clothing, Daenerys's dress style seems to be still evolving over the episodes. In this scene, she appears wearing a Dothraki garment made of a golden fabric imitating a dragon-scale, which may be related to the symbol of her family House, the dragons, and to her position in the khalasar as a Khaleesi (Porteous, 2015). This may be interpreted as a sign of her personal growth and

empowerment as part of the khalasar, which indicates Daenerys is starting to feel a sense of belonging to her husband's tribe.

In terms of interactive meaning, the audience is positioned closer to Daenerys (medium shot), while the other participants are more distant to the audience (medium long shot), which suggests more involvement with Daenerys. Ser Jorah and Rakharo are at a close social distance from Daenerys, which indicates that Daenerys holds a powerful position in this scene since she is the one who is closer to the viewer, as a leader to be followed. Regarding the composition, Daenerys continues to be the most salient element, representing her level of importance, since she is placed on the center of the shot, while the other participants are positioned behind her.

Figure 10 – Screenshot 10: 3m28s03

[Daenerys facing Drogo at the courtyard.]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "- *That is my son inside her, the stallion that will mount the world. Filling her with fire.*"

The second screenshot presents Daenerys, Ser Jorah and the Lhazareen women while she is facing Khal Drogo on the courtyard. She

has claimed the women for herself and stated that if the soldiers want to rape them, they will have to marry them. In terms of representation, the image contains transactional reactional processes, represented by the participants' gaze directed to Khal Drogo, who is speaking. The viewer can only see Drogo's shoulder on the right margin of the shot. From this angle, the audience can observe the golden fabric imitating a dragon-scale in more detail in Daenerys's blouse, suggesting her personal growth as part of the Khalasar and being consistent with the moment in the scene in which she is stating her point to her husband and claiming all the women for herself. In the background of the scene, it is possible to observe the women who Daenerys is claiming for herself, while they are majorly out of focus and portrayed in dark colors, due to their exposure to fire and smoke, consistent with the context of destruction of the scene. Ser Jorah is positioned on the left in front of the women.

Concerning interaction, the audience can clearly see Daenerys from a medium close shot, while the other participants (Ser Jorah and the women) are more distant and less focused than she is, occupying the background. Daenerys is at a far social distance from Khal Drogo and Ser Jorah, which might suggest that Daenerys wants to be taken seriously while she is stating her arguments and conducting the negotiation. This distance, according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) is used to conduct formal and impersonal business and social interactions. Daenerys also appears to be the only character/person who is clearly focused in the shot, whereas the other elements are blurry and more distant, suggesting that the audience should again pay closer attention to her. Her gaze is serious, tense but firm while she faces Drogo, indicating that she wants to be taken seriously.

Regarding composition, Daenerys presents more value in the shot since she remains the most salient element, being the brightest and clearest participant in the image. Although she is positioned more on the

left of the image, she can also be seen as occupying a central position in the shot, being the nucleus of the scene, while the other participants are placed around her, indicating subordination to her character.

The last scene analyzed shows Daenerys addressing the Dothraki people at Khal Drogo's funeral. The scene length is 6 minutes and 13 seconds; however, the dialogue in which Daenerys is verbally interacting ends in 2 minutes and 52 seconds. The two screenshots were taken within the time in which she is a participant in the dialogue and they are analyzed next:

Figure 11 – Screenshot 11: 1m43s09

[Daenerys talking to the Dothraki.]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "– *I see the faces of slaves. I free you.*"

The first screenshot selected of this scene shows Daenerys talking to the khalasar in front of Khal Drogo's funeral pyre. In terms of representational system, the shot contains a transactional reaction processes, represented by Daenerys's gaze to her people and the Dothraki's gaze at Daenerys. The audience can see the people's

backs while they are looking at Daenerys. In this shot, it is possible to recognize Daenerys's clothes and notice she is wearing her wedding dress, possibly as a sign of respect and affection for Drogo. Behind Daenerys, there is a funeral pyre made of wood and straw and the audience can see some Dothraki behind the pyre in the dark and out of focus, which is consistent with the context of the scene.

Regarding interaction, Daenerys is at a far social distance from the khalasar, while the spectators sees Daenerys from a long shot, as if they were part of the Dothraki watching Daenerys. This distance suggests that Daenerys wants to address her people formally while she tells them that she will guide them to a bright future. Her discourse could be compared to a leader's speech, in which the candidate states promises and shows support to the people. In terms of composition, Daenerys is positioned at the center of the shot, while the other participants appear near the margin of the image, suggesting that Daenerys is the element that represents the nucleus of information and the people are subordinated to her. Thus, as she is the most salient element in the shot and occupies the central position in the image, and her lighter clothes distinguishes her from the other elements, she receives the highlight of the shot.

Figure 12 – Screenshot 12: 2m33s15

[Daenerys talking to the Dothraki.]
Source: G*ame of Thrones* – season 1 (2012).

Verbal text in the image: "– *And I swear to you that those who harm you will die screaming*".

The second screenshot shows Daenerys addressing the Dothraki while Ser Jorah binds the healer Mirri Maz Duur to the funeral pyre. From the representational point of view, the image contains Daenerys talking to her people, in a non-transactional reaction, represented by Daenerys looking at something the audience cannot see. Regarding the interactive meaning, the audience is very close to Daenerys, seeing her at a close shot, while the other participants are at a very long distance and out of focus. This shows clearly that the audience is meant to be closely involved with Daenerys.

From the compositional point of view, Daenerys is positioned in the center of the image, representing the nucleus of the scene and she is also the predominant element in the shot. While the background of the image is dark and presents shadowed and blurred elements, Daenerys is positioned in the foreground and receives more light than the other

elements. She is also the largest and simplest element in the picture, indicating her importance, and therefore her powerful position in the scene. During the scene, Daenerys reappears dressed in a soft dress made of delicate fabric, similar to the ones she used to wear in the first episodes. In the second screenshot *(figure 12),* it is possible to identify the outfit, which was the dress that she wore during her wedding to Khal Drogo. However, Daenerys seems different from the first time she wore this dress. She appears more mature and self-conscious of her value. More than that, she has found her purpose in life as a Targaryen heir.

Also, in this final scene analyzed, her hair appears braided, a symbol of power for the Dothraki. In the narrative, at this point, she has lost her brother and her husband. However, instead of following a widow's path during the medieval period, she decides to lead the khalasar and, in order to gain their trust, she needs to show them she is truly a Targaryen, the dragon's daughter. Although Daenerys shows love and support for her people, she is also implacable with those who do her harm, showing that she is not the forgiving type of woman. She orders the healer to be attached to Drogo's funeral pyre and promises the khalasar that the ones who hurt her people will die screaming, which may indicate a courageous and fierce behavior, differently from the beginning of the season.

Research questions revisited

Considering the research questions proposed in the beginning of the article, they can be answered accordingly:

(1) What do the ideational, representational, interactional and compositional choices reveal in terms of gender issues?

Regarding visual meanings, Daenerys's visual representation show a submissive behavior and vulnerability in the first episodes. Her body exposure and nudity in the beginning of the season reveal the

fragility and weakness of her character, which is commonly attributed to the female gender in patriarchal societies. Daenerys is depicted at a personal distance of her brother initially, which suggests an intimate relationship between the characters, as they are siblings, but also a high control of Viserys over her. Daenerys is also mostly portrayed closer to the audience and is the most salient element in the scenes, showing her level of importance in the narrative and how her mysterious personality was yet to be uncovered.

Throughout the scenes, Daenerys's representation changes, adapting to her new style of life, as part of the Dothraki Khalasar, but she also grows in terms of personality and character. She continues to be depicted in a central position of the scenes; however, she is gradually portrayed as if she were in a superior position, and her body posture and facial expression can also be seen differently. Her clothing also adapts to her new way of life, from dresses made of thin and soft fabrics to tops, long skirts and pants made of thick fabrics, more suitable to her new condition as Khaleesi and this transformation also matches her change of behavior.

(2) What social values, attitudes, and power relations do these visual choices express?

In the attempt to construct the image of Daenerys throughout the first season, it was possible to observe the perpetuation of patriarchal values and the undermining of the female gender in the beginning of the series. The only values of femininity which were desirable and expected of Daenerys were beauty, kindness, discretion and obedience. However, towards the end of the season, there is an attempt to break female gender stereotypes through the representation of a strong independent character who has agency and is empowered. Her husband's authority and motherhood initially give her this power, but over time, Daenerys discovers herself as a potential source of her own power and a sense

of leadership, preparing herself for the path ahead of her, the Throne of the Seven Kingdoms. As Daenerys evolves as a leader and as a powerful woman, she understands what needs to be done in order to overcome her past of subjugation and submissiveness.

Final remarks

Through a visual analysis, we were able to point out power relations between Daenerys and male characters in the first season and briefly explore aspects related to gender and values that were uncovered during the analysis of the object of this study. The analysis has allowed us to observe Daenerys's movement from a naïve and submissive girl to an empowered woman and leader. Daenerys's representation changes in terms of clothing (from delicate pink fabrics to heavy materials like leather), and hairstyle (from straight and plain to a braided hairstyle). Furthermore, her changes in body expression and position in the images analyzed demonstrate her adaptation to a new culture and way of life and establishes the character as a significant element of the image in terms of power and importance.

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