

Techniques and approaches to produce a documentary film about the social representations of Portuguese rural areas



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Research Goals

- Having in mind the **outlines of rural areas**, this research main goal is to analyse two dimensions: **the rural representations in Portugal** and **the techniques associated with producing a documentary film**, and finally the **relationship** between the two
- With this analysis is intended to approach documentary film characteristics and particularities in a way **that they can be used** to represent the rural areas.

Research Goals

- Therefore, the final goal of this investigation is to **understand in what ways the documentary film language descriptive and analytic potentialities allows a faithful representation and provides spectator interpretation of social imaginary connected to the Portuguese rural world.**

Theoretical background

- From the XX century there were **big changes** on the rural world. In Portugal, essentially, one of the most striking features of the last decades was the country *deruralisation* (Barreto, 2000) and the **dissociation between the rural and the agricultural activity** (Oliveira Baptista, 2006).
- There were major changes on the **social** and **economic** fabrics of rural areas, passing from **food producers** to spaces increasingly recognised as **multifunctional**: combining agricultural and forestry production with many other activities and functions related with the environment and recreational activities (Figueiredo, 2011).

Theoretical background

- Rural areas were nowadays **redefined by its new functions**, changing its social and institutional representations and motivating new demands consumptions, especially related to **tourism** and **leisure activities**.
- In Portugal the rural areas are generally presented as **fragile territories** (Oliveira Baptista et al., 2003), despite occupying more than **50% of the territory**.
- So, and recognising that the rural in Portugal is far from having overcome its link to agricultural production (at least in terms of social representations) it is said that the rural area is outpacing a **identity crisis**, witch is necessary to analyse the outlines and, mainly, the consequences (Figueiredo, 2008).

Theoretical background

- Documentary films join together **film** and **historical reality**, organizing around an argument where the roots dating back to an existent reality.
- A Documentary Film is a **representation** or **interpretation** of world events. Documentary basis is the representation of **local reality**, of **people** and **events**, and it's through the filmmaker and the way he generates representations that is defined a reality version, less reconstructed and less filtered than a fiction movie (Rodrigues, 2013).
- Bill Nichols (2001) refers that **documentaries address the world we're living** in instead of **a world that is imagined by the filmmaker**.
- For Nichols documentaries are dividing in two categories: the "**wish-fulfilment documentary**" and the "**social representation documentary**", which differs mainly on the level of histories and narratives (Nichols, 2001).

Methodology

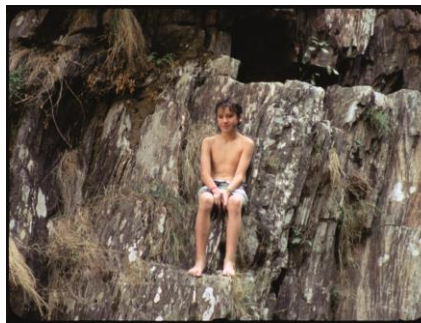
- An initial phase is dominated by **readings** of documents and authors that are important references to **understand the meaning of Portugal's rural world** in a way to fundament knowledge about the theme.
- The next step is to retract information about **documentary techniques and particularities**, reading and analysing having in mind acquire concepts about the rural areas.
- Plus documents and books that present knowledge about **pre-production, production** and **editing** of a documentary where collected as well relevant data through **visualization** and **confrontation** of existent documentaries, some about the analysed topic.

Methodology

- In this phase, data was collected from the process of watching and analysing several films already produced about the countryside, **they are symbolical witnesses to several types of imaginaries and aesthetics about the rural world.**



"Ainda Há Pastores?"



"Lacrau"



"O Regresso"

Methodology

- With the collected information, its systemization was divided in two parts: the **knowledge about rural representation** and **its inclusion in the audio-visual product** and **the instruments and techniques that should be used**.
- This information organization allows creating a **state of art**, in other words, a basic notion about what exists in research, centered in documentary products on social themes, such as rurality is.
- This clear notion of the topics allowed to prepare the **documentary script**, used not also to organize the **filming process** but also the **editing phase**.

Results

This study includes not only a research about **movies** that portray the **rural context**, but also an analysis of them in terms of **colour, shots, sound, movement**.

Characteristics Films	Technical Aspects			
	Color	Sound	Shots	Movements
O Regresso	Contrasted	Voice-over and Background sound	Wide shot and medium shot	Fixed and camera in hand
A Casa Que Eu Quero	Contrasted	Background sound and people talking	Wide shot and medium shot	Fixed and camera in hand
Ainda Há Pastores?	Saturated and sometimes black and white	Voice-over and Background sound	Wide shot, medium shot and Cut-in	Fixed, pan and camera in hand
Lacrau	Contrasted and sometimes very dark	Background sound and music	Wide shot and medium shot	Fixed, pan and camera in hand
Revolução Industrial	Black and white (old pictures), neutral, showed as reality	Background sound, music and voice-over	Wide shot and medium shot	Fixed and pan

Results

- Despite the complexity of the process, the core of this research was to produce a **documentary film** that reflects the visions about **Portuguese rural areas and rurality**.
- This **exploration process** served as **foundation** and discipline to produce that audio-visual product, who reflects its striking characteristics.
- **The documentary will be presented this afternoon, at 14h30 in the UA Bookshop Auditorium**

Results



Conclusions

- This research aimed at presenting **documentaries focal characteristics** that can represent the knowledge and imaginary about the **rural areas in Portugal** and document them, in a way that it can contribute to its public recognising as structural element and strategic for the country economy and culture.
- Is intended that with this **audio-visual product** it possible to convey the several **images** and **ideas** that the **Portuguese population** have about the rurality in order to contribute for a **better comprehension** of its social meaning.

Thank you! Obrigada!



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COMPETE

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RURAL MATTERS

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