***Yvone Kane*, memory, mourning and melancholia. Unresolved pasts and "lost futures"**

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1. Silence, mystery and knowing how to remember

Early on in *Yvone Kane* (2014), Rita Moreira is asked whether she remembers. The meeting between Rita and an ex-operative who went by the code name Alex, who claims to know her family and shows a photo of himself with the family when Rita was still a child as proof, plays on the subversion of the well-worn trope of photographs stirring vague, fleeting memories. Rita stares blankly at the photograph which shows Alex with a young Rita and family in a leisurely setting. She then sways her head in answer to the question "Não se lembra nada de mim, pois não?" [You don't remember me at all, do you?]. Rita's absence of memory is an inauspicious start for a film that will tackle the History, histories and memories surrounding the figure of Yvone Kane, a political commissary and anti-colonialist revolutionary leader in an unnamed African country murdered under suspicious circumstances in the late 1980s. Featured in Ariel Bigault's documentary *Fantasmas do Império* [Ghosts of Empire] (2020), which approaches the way in which Portuguese cinema has represented colonial and imperial legacies, Margarida Cardoso takes a clear stand regarding the detrimental impact (unacknowledged perhaps) that policies of silence on the past may have on questions of memory and identity:

> Todo esse silêncio que se fez, mesmo depois do 25 de Abril, em relação à forma como devíamos analisar a intervenção que tivemos ali, a nossa posição colonial, essas palavras todas ainda hoje... As pessoas têm dificuldade em aceitar essa questão de que a memória depois faz parte da construção da nossa identidade. Se nós não sabemos como recordar as coisas, também acho que não sabemos muito bem quem é que somos, não é? (*Fantasmas do Império*)
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> [All that silencing surrounding the ways in which we should evaluate our intervention there [the colonies controlled by Portugal], our colonial position, all those words still today, after 25 April [i.e. 1974, the "Carnation Revolution"]... People still find it difficult to come to terms with the way in which memory is part of how we construct

> our identity. If we don't know how to remember things, I think we also can't really get to know who we are, right?].

Memory plays a part in constructing identity, but imposed or self-imposed silence, orchestrated or not, creates an obvious obstacle. In an interview included in the promotion materials for *Yvone Kane*, Cardoso stresses the importance and lasting impact of specific historical – and memory – markers in her own filmmaking process. In an interview featured in the press kit for *Yvone Kane*, Cardoso evokes her childhood in Mozambique as the daughter of a helicopter pilot fighting for the Portuguese colonialist regime against the liberation movements, followed by the arrival of "another absolutely surprising moment in history", the (albeit short-lived) revolutionary process set in motion by the toppling of the Portuguese colonialist Estado Novo on 25 April 1974 (*Yvone Kane* Press Kit). Such markers, evocative of revolutionary period and movements (anticolonialist, democratic, emancipatory, and equalitarian), end up featuring as important coordinates in Cardoso's research and filmmaking process:

> When I started making films, I naturally began a search process – not for my past, but for a moment in history and the places where that moment had been experienced. Everything that I do always comes from a deep need to "investigate" something; and a feeling that "something" will reveal a mystery to me… though I really don't know what that mystery is. It may, perhaps, just be a sense of unease… I recognise the same unease in people who, like me, never really belonged anywhere… who have a diffuse, nebulous identity. I think that is what appears in my films. An attempt to give form to something that is unflaggingly ethereal and slightly phantasmagorical, perhaps… (*Yvone Kane* Press Kit)

The ethereal and the phantasmagorical in *Yvone Kane* certainly include the deterritorialized figures of Rita, her mother Sara (an anticolonialist and for a long period member of the ruling Marxist party post independence), and Sara's adopted son, the teenager Jaime, who was dislocated as a child as a consequence of conflicts in the North of the country. The sense of unease and of a nebulous identity which Cardoso represents through these characters is indelibly linked to the wider sociopolitical context, relating both to the historical past often represented in the films, or to the contemporary period of the film's shooting and production. As a woman filmmaker working in Portugal, Cardoso could hardly ignore the resurgence of an

ill-disguised imperial nostalgia, in the wake of the post-2008 Global Financial Crisis and the sovereign debt crisis in Portugal. Furthermore, as someone who spent part of her childhood in Mozambique (then still a colony under Portuguese rule) and who has researched and filmed in (independent, post-socialist) Mozambique in the interim, it is hardly surprising that Cardoso does not shy away from addressing the acceleration of neoliberal capitalism in both Portuguese and Mozambican societies in the twenty-first century. When asked about the differences in production between *A Costa dos Murmúrios* (2004) and *Yvone Kane*, Cardoso points out the end of two eras: of the colonial era in the first instance, and of the Communist revolutionary period. Those who have fought for revolutionary causes find themselves, in Cardoso's own words, with a sense of unease in the new "ultra-capitalist" and "ultra-liberal" societies in which they now find themselves:

> Aquelas pessoas que estiveram lá e que acreditavam naquelas causas, naquelas ideologias, no Homem Novo e a igualdade entre as classes. Todas as vezes que essas pessoas tentavam construir esses países, que agora são ultra-capitalistas, são ultra-liberais, enchi-os com "sonhos e ideias comunistas". Então, com este filme tentei retratar um fim de uma época de ideologias e de sonhos (quoted in Gomes 2015).
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> [All those people who were there and believed in those causes, in those ideologies, in the New Man and equality between classes. Every time those people tried to build those countries, who are now ultra-capitalist, ultra-liberal, I have filled them with "communist dreams and ideas". So, with this film I tried to portray an end to a time of ideologies and dreams.]

Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx* was also published precisely at a time when dominant discourses proclaimed, as the author puts it, "not only the end of societies constructed on the Marxist model, but the end of the whole Marxist tradition, even of the reference to the works of Marx, not to say the end of history" (Derrida 2006 [1994]: 69). The book, based on a lecture given in 1993, presciently addressed the modern "tele-techno-capitalism" (Derrida's term) which began rolling out in the 1990s globalization drive as well as the manic discourse enveloping its announcement, represented most emblematically in Francis Fukuyama's *The Last Man and the End of History* (1992), both a "symptomatic signal" and an example of "neo-liberal rhetoric" (Derrida 2006 [1994]: 87). Derrida denounces the triumphalism of such rhetoric, "both jubilant and worried, manic and bereaved, often obscene in its euphoria" (2006

[1994]: 87). He further notes that "neo-capitalism" and "neo-liberalism" had not yet produced any "disavowal" which had "managed to rid itself of all of Marx's ghosts" (Derrida 2006 [1994]: 46). And yet it is hard to disagree with Mark Fisher's assessment, in 2009, that "Fukuyama's thesis that history has climaxed with liberal capitalism may have been widely derided, but it is accepted, even assumed, at the level of cultural unconscious" (2009: 6).[1] In contrast to Fukuyama, *Specters of Marx* engages with the legacies and the inheritance of "Marx's spirits", invoking the specters and ghosts which, from Derrida's perspective, cannot simply be conjured away, and which have a crucial role to play in face of the frantic mutations that are reshaping the globalized world. *Specters of Marx* explores also the limits of the deconstructive gesture, the "emancipatory promise" and "an idea of justice" that "remains as undeconstructible as the possibility itself of deconstruction" (Derrida 2006 [1994]: 74).

We shall return to ideas of emancipatory promise and justice later on in this chapter. For the moment, it is importanto to note how Cardoso's exploring of the inheritance and the legacies of "communist dreams and ideas" in *Yvone Kane* or, previously, in the 2003 documentary *Kuxa Kanema: O nascimento do cinema* [*Kuxa Kanema*: The Birth of Cinema], goes hand in hand with an investment in how memory interacts with questions of justice and emancipatory hopes (social, political, economic). Traverso's conceptualization of "left-wing melancholia" (2016) – at least partially indebted to Derrida's considerations on spectrality and the work of mourning – may help shed light on Cardoso's previously mentioned "attempt to give form to something that is unflaggingly ethereal and slightly phantasmagorical" and to portray the end of the time of ideology. This does not mean a nostalgia for State socialism or other forms of twentieth-century Marxism, any more than it means accepting (more or less exhilaratingly) to live in the world as it, supposedly, is:

> Left-wing melancholy does not mean to abandon the idea of socialism or the hope for a better future; it means to rethink socialism in a time in which its memory is lost, hidden, and forgotten and needs to be redeemed. This melancholia does not mean lamenting a lost utopia, but rather rethinking a revolutionary project in a nonrevolutionary age. (Traverso 2016: 20)

[1] While the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 opened up a discussion on "the end of the end of History", Fukuyama penned a piece calling for the renewal of the "Spirit of 89" (2022).

Traverso is concerned with the lack of a horizon of expectation (see Traverso 2016: 7), a diagnosis that partly coincides with Bifo Berardi's assessment of the difficulty of glimpsing a "horizon of possibility" (2019: 28). Mark Fisher's concept of "capitalist realism", "the widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but also that it is now impossible even to *imagine* a coherent alternative to it." (Fisher 2009: 2), succinctly conveys a similar point. Like Traverso, Mark Fisher detects a political potential to melancholy, and to "hauntological melancholia"[2] to be precise, insofar as it manifests a refusal to simply accept things as they are, and will purportedly continue to be. Fisher's comments on twenty-first century cultural production evincing a "yearning for an older regime of materiality" (2014: 21) to resist "capitalist realism" clearly goes against a simplistic understanding of any revisitation of the past (or investigation into, in the case of *Yvone Kane*) as being, in and of itself, nostalgic. It is increasingly obvious, however, that the Left (after the liberations and revolutions, after the fall of the Berlin wall and in face of ultra-liberalism and ultra-capitalism that Cardoso identifies) is having a difficult time "planning and organizing a future that it really believes in." (Fisher 2009: 78).

2. The neoliberal regime of historicity, decolonial feminism and a *new* New Man?

Yvone Kane's revisitation of the revolutionary period ostensibly through the figure of Yvone Kane (both as myth *and* historical figure) goes hand in hand with a critique and a reappraisal of women's role and place in revolutionary ideology and discourse. In alignment with Françoise Vergès's proposal for a "decolonial feminism" (2021), *Yvone Kane* supplements the New Man of revolutionary socialism by highlighting its blindspots and bias[3] while simultaneously confronting the limiting and limited *homo oeconomicus* of neoliberalism, as well as his correlative *homo memoricus* (Traverso 2017: 3).

In both societies – where Rita currently resides and the in country where she grew up and to where she returns during the course of the film – there is little or no trace of revolutionary

[2] Derrida's coining of hauntology seeks to destabilize the foundations for Heidegger's ontological difference: "To haunt does not mean to be present, and it is necessary to introduce haunting into the very construction of a concept. Of every concept, beginning with the concepts of being and time. That is what we would be calling here a hauntology. Ontology opposes it only in a movement of exorcism. Ontology is a conjuration." (Derrida 2006 [1994]: 202).

[3] As Traverso points out, revolutionary feminism had both "deeply put into question many assumptions of classical socialism – notably its implicit identification of universalism with male vision and agency" and, crucially, "it shared an idea of emancipation projected into the future" (Traverso 2016: 4).

or emancipatory action; both appear numb, desolate, and devoid of the hope and emancipatory promise (albeit not bereft of difficulties and challenges) that Rita uncovers when researching into Yvone Kane's public and private lives. Underneath the frenetic pace of acceleration that is felt rather than seen from the beginning of the film (e.g. João's frustration that time does not seem to pass while he is staying with Rita during her search), societies are sedated (Rita in the hospital bed), terminally ill (Sara in the doctor's office), and seemingly disconnected (Rita travelling to the meeting with Alex, in an anonymous crowd; Sara's relationship with both biological children and Jaime). Cardoso's mention of contemporaneity as the end of Communist ideologies and dreams coincides with Traverso's diagnosis that we live in a post-utopian world. As Traverso notes, the neoliberal "regime of historicity at the beginning of the twenty-first century discloses a deep crisis of utopic imagination" (Traverso 2016: 57) and marks a new stage in how collective memory is constructed (Traverso 2017:3). Cardoso's work appears to be driven by a similar recognition that the politics of memory of the capitalist, neoliberal twenty-first century has taken a depoliticizing, deceivingly post-ideological stance. It should be noted that the erosion of political participation and the erasure of political action in "neoliberal rationality" is a feature, not a flaw, and it springs from the configuration of "human beings exhaustively as market actors, always, only, and everywhere as *homo oeconomicus*" (Brown 2015: 31); it was built into neoliberalism's "antipolitical 'post-ideological' features" as political actors "roled out neoliberalism as a global project in the 1990s" (Brown 2019: 85). One must not underestimate this point: although neoliberalism is to be understood at its core as a "[...] a theory of political economic practices" (Harvey 2005: 2), one should take into account that it became "hegemonic as a mode of discourse" (Harvey 2005: 3) and that its "revolutionary impulses" remade "the world around us in a totally different image" (Harvey 2005: 1).[4]

With regards to the politics and policies of memory, the stakes are high, since the twenty-first century regime of historicity implies, according to Traverso, an amnesia where

[4] Neoliberalism governmentality is far more insidious than any simple economic theory, as Wendy Brown suggests by addressing the stealth revolution of neoliberalism, which configures an undoing of democratic practices and institutions (see Brown 2015). It should be noted however, that stealth was not always the preferred method for implementation, as is attested by the first experiment with neoliberal state formation: Chile under Augusto Pinochet's authoritarian rule (Harvey 2005: 7). Whether neoliberalism is still the dominant ideological framework for capitalist accumulation is up for debate; in Mark Fisher's view, the bank bailouts in the 2008 Global Financial Crisis have discredited neoliberalism while making it abundantly clear that "while neoliberalism was necessarily capitalist realist, capitalist realism need not be neoliberal" (Fisher 2009: 78).

"[...] entire dimensions of the past – antifascism, anticolonialism, feminism, socialism, and revolution – are buried under the official rhetoric of the 'duty of memory'" (Traverso 2016: 19). It is not just a question of what is remembered; the image of Yvone is present throughout different public spaces in the film after all. The question is rather, picking up on Margarida Cardoso's point, *how* Yvone is remembered. Yvone Kane's case would not be an isolated incident, but rather part of a trend in which world revolution and the liberation and revolutionary struggles (for which Yvone Kane fought) became progressively bundled together with the tragedies of twentieth-century political violence in the wake of the Fall of the Berlin Wall, leading to contemporary memory policies celebrating political agents as victims rather than as activists and fighters (Traverso 2016: 57).

Throughout *Yvone Kane*, Rita Moreira refuses to simply move away from the past either on a personal level or on a historical level because she recognizes in that request the cynical and egotistic desire to, somehow nostalgically, go back to "how things were", to supposedly be realistic and "accept things as they are", thus pre-empting any meaningful sociopolitical change. Sara's investigation will chip away at the carefully maintained image and memory of Yvone Kane that Elias, a University professor, and perhaps the closest Rita gets to a figure of the status quo, summarizes for Rita's benefit: a martyr, murdered by foreign enemies in defense of the "ideais do Partido e da nossa revolução" [the ideals of the Party and of our revolution]. Rita's endeavour to write about Yvone Kane is superfluous, the history of Yvone Kane "já está escrita" [has already been written]; it is a fine story ["bela história"], Elias adds. Speaking from a position of power (Rita is kept waiting before she is given access to him, guarded by a secretary with a photo of, presumably, the President behind her), Elias conjoins in his statement that history is "already written" and that this is the "verdade que nos convém, por enquanto" [the truth that is convenient for us, for the time being] the post-ideological, transactional perspective of the *homo oeconomicus* and the depoliticized vision of the past fostered by its correlative, the *homo memoricus*. Even memories from the revolutionary period are alien to Elias: "E essa memória da Yvone, dos tempos da Yvone, parece uma coisa de outra vida." [And that memory of Yvone, of the times of Yvone, seems like something from another lifetime]. In Yvone's time, Elias further complains, true to form, that everything was ideological.

Elias is not the only one to have failed to live up to the prompted equality between classes or the ideal of the New Man to which Cardoso refers to in the Director's statement, or to have seamlessly moved on and blended in the new ultra-capitalist and ultra-liberalist times. He is just one among a number of overwhelmingly male antagonists in Rita's quest regarding

the truth about the death of Yvone Kane. Be it for cynical or self-serving reasons, or because it is a sign of the times – and the *homo memoricus* is of course in synch with the twenty-first century regime of historicity – they consistenly attempt to discourage or belittle Rita's search, while consistently reinforcing that there is no alternative to the present, nor to the present vision of the past. João's insistence that they should move on from the death of their daughter mirrors ("voltar para aquilo que nós éramos" [Go back to what we were]), on an individual level, Elias's and Eduardo Malange's (the brother of Yvone's lover) rather disparaging remarks that she should not disturb carefully constructed and controlled collective memories. As Eduardo Malange succinctly puts it: "Deixe a vida continuar em frente. Em paz." [Let life go on. In peace].

The emphasis that is given to the coming of the New Man in one of the very few occasions in which Yvone's voice comes through in the film can best be understood in light of the failure of the socialist political project. In the news piece on Yvone Kane and the Women's Detachment that Rita accesses in the archive, titled "5 days with the Women's Detachment", Yvone makes her aims clear: "Our aim is to create a New Man who can give rise to a new Socialist nation." Yvone's proclamation of the New Man while speaking as the leader of the Women's Detachment acts as an ironic reminder of the shared values as well as tensions between classical socialism and feminism. Before, when Rita interrupts the scripted museum tour to ask for information on Women's Detachment, she deliberately set herself up to go beyond the official History presented (and silenced, or hidden) in the name of supposedly higher causes (such as the nation) or political expediency.[5] Rita's stance is therefore in close alignment with Edward Said's call for postcolonialism in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), as Leela Gandhi puts it, "[...] to reconsider the significance of all those other liberationist activities in the colonised world – such as those of the women's movement – which forcefully interrupt the triumphant and complacent rhetoric of the anti-colonial nation-State" (Gandhi 2019: 82). Such a reappraisal is achieved by drawing from historical figures such as Josina Machel or Sita Valles as a means to compose the fictional character Yvone Kane (Gomes 2015).[6] Cardoso's proposal goes somewhat further, though, by subverting the equally triumphant – even in defeat

[5] Perhaps unsurprisingly, the history of the Women's detachment had been consigned to a back room in the museum. See Sally Faulkner's reading of the "neglected backroom of a museum containing an alternative version of national history" (2020: 197–198).

[6] Josina Machel was a political leader in Mozambique, unjustly better known as the wife of the first president of the independent nation, Samora Machel. Sita Valles, a revolutionary in Angola, was murdered in 1977. She is the subject of Margarida Cardoso's 2022 documentary *Sita: A vida e o tempo de Sita Valles*.

– cult of the male revolutionary leader, nationalist or internationalist. Yvone Kane's presence on screen, in the news piece Rita watches in the archive, is modelled upon the image of Samora Machel (Mozambican President and Revolutionary Leader) captured in the *Kuxa Kanema* newsreels from the revolutionary period that Cardoso researched in preparation for the eponymous documentary (see Gomes 2015); Yvone's image, framed in a timeless and heroic style, which appears throughout the film in billboards and posters, references Alberto Korda's 1960 "Guerrillero Heroico" [Heroic Guerrilla Fighter] photograph.[7] The point could be made that Yvone Kane's image, arguably not unlike Che Guevara's or Samora Machel's, has been coopted and reduced to a mere icon, emptied out of any relevant political meaning and significance. Nevertheless, the rescuing of the figure of guerrilla fighter and political commissar Yvone Kane – a political leader with strong convictions, the leader of the FPLA Women's Detachment – stresses the ways in which revolutionary feminism and revolutionary liberation struggles, despite tensions, were both heavily invested in shared political aims and objectives. Yvone Kane, consciously and subversively, comes to embody the (yet unaccomplished) "New Man" of twentieth-century socialism.[8]

The history of feminist movements has not of course been immune to the proclaimed end of History. The fall of the Berlin Wall, together with neoliberalist and conservative rule, signalled a turn that may have led feminist movements to have become, as Nancy Fraser put it, "more attuned to the 'post-socialist' zeitgeist" (2013: 4). Yet, as Valerie Bryson reminds us, one must not underestimate feminist resistance to neoliberalism (Bryson 2021: 170). Even if *Yvone Kane* does not set out to tackle the "unhappy marriage" between Marxism and Feminism (see Bryson 2004) or, for that matter, to explicitly address the "missed encounter" between Marxism and memory (Traverso 2016: 56), Cardoso's interruption of phallocentric historical

[7] Sally Faulkner pointed out the relevance of Che Guevara iconography (Faulkner 2020: 205), which can also be spotted in a graffiti in an abandoned building, presumably one of Jaime's haunts. Yvone's image can be contrasted to the far more institutional presidential photo in black and white that can be glimpsed in the background in offices and at the airports. The image also echoes both the image and, of course, the surname in the election poster of Charles Foster Kane in Orson Welles *Citizen Kane* (1941).

[8] This realignment goes down to Yvone Kane's missionary-like devotion to the cause, something characters in the present time have difficulty remembering or outright condemn. Elias, for instance, presents himself as someone who, as a young man, was open to much more of what life had to offer (drinks, fun, love), beyond ideology; this placed him at odds with Yvone Kane, whose near-fanatical devotion to the cause, it is implied, put a strain on their relationship. Andrea, a member of the Detachment who assists Rita in her archival research, also hits out at Yvone as "guardiã da moral revolucionária" [guardian of revolutionary morals] and mocks Sara's committed militancy by aping Sara with a raised fist and shouting "Marx! Marx! Marx!".

narratives –exemplified in Rita's reaction to Eduardo Malange's and Elias's admonitions, or in her derailing of the Museum scripted tour, opening up the back room where the history of the Women's Detachment was in fact memorialized so as to be best forgotten – is inseparable from the rescuing of the memories of revolutionary emancipatory promises, and the revisitation of communist ideals of equality, hopes and dreams.[9] The picture that Rita is ultimately able to reconstruct, furthermore, supplements the image of Yvone Kane as devoted militant and the martyr who died for the nation, defending the ideals of the Revolution: not only was she tormented about the Party and expressed her doubts (raising questions with Sara Moreira and with Amélia Zuri), but there is a warm and human side to Yvone that transpires when Rita talks to close friends (Amélia) or lovers (Sérgio).

Margarida Cardoso's, and Rita Moreira's, quest therefore ends up aligning with Françoise Vergès's proposal of "decolonial feminism", which views feminist aims intricately linked to "the destruction of racism, capitalism, and imperialism" (Vergès 2021: 5) and which harks back to past revolutions, anti-colonial struggles, and revolutionary feminism. Rita's stance against Malange's endorsement of silence ("Paz não é silêncio" [Peace does not mean silence], she replies) reveals an awareness of the ways in which societies in the twenty-first century neoliberal "regime of historicity" often revert to amnesia, silence or to a cemented, self-serving historical narrative that hinders emancipation, reform, or change. Women, even in relative positions of power, find themselves having to fight against prejudice or incompetence. The Mother Superior, who effectively becomes Sara's line manager once she leaves the Party, and herself physically wounded by war, is a case in point: together with the sisters in the religious order, she supports young victims of conflict in face of the State's inaction and powerlessness. Other scenes betray an awareness of the relative privilege enjoyed by these women, and, in particular, Rita and Sara. At key moments, *Yvone Kane* present long shots, filmed from Sara's and Rita's perspective, of groups of African women commuting or going about their daily business. The hardship endured by anonymous figures that Sara observes in precarious transports in the city or the ones to whom Rita and Gabriel provide a ride when

[9] One could indeed apply to Cardoso's feature films Estela Vieira's insight that, aesthetically, Cardoso's and Susana de Sousa Dias' documentaries present both a "memory politics" and a "feminist politics" (Vieira 2020a: 130). Even if, as Mariana Liz and Hilary Owen point out, "contemporary Portuguese women filmmakers tend to dismiss the 'feminist' label" (Liz and Owen 2020: 5; see also 2020: 10–11).

Gabriel drives her North, lend credence, in retrospect, to the fights of the Women's Detachment and highlight the need for that same fight to continue.[10]

That the recognition of past defeats and struggles (against violence, for women's emancipation, for equality) must continue, even if it seems impossible in the current circumstances, is manifested when the young refugee women who have arrived at the Mission are sexually assaulted. It becomes clear that justice will not be served since authorities seem unable to address the matter satisfactorily and the issue remains (like many others in the film) unresolved. The shots of the young women's looking straight into the camera in a demand for justice constitute an interpellation to the viewer, all the more impactful in a film structured around reflections on surfaces, and on gazes that miss each other, or by the propagandistic saturation of Yvone Kane's Guevara-like photo, looking into the distance.

While the film goes to the length of having Yvone Kane, in her own words, state what are the ideals and the causes of the struggle (liberation, emancipation, anti-colonialism), the story of the refugees is significantly not framed or contextualized in any way; all the spectator knows is that there are conflicts in the North. One is not provided a political compass, ideological values, belief in emancipation or liberation. Just violence, and alongside it dwindling hopes of a different future; or no discernible future at all.[11] Whereas Sara had once set out to transform the world together with Yvone Kane and the Women's Detachment, she is now struggling even to interpret it, particularly as she needs to come to terms with the fact that her adopted son Jaime might in some way be involved in the sexual assault. Her role as a medical doctor is palliative, to provide assistance and help mitigate suffering in the Mission rather than fighting against injustice, oppression or violence. It is as if revolution and the struggles had never taken place.

3. "Not just any time". The work of memory and hauntological melancholia

Can the spectres of "Marx, Marx, Marx" (which is how Andrea, mimicking, defines Sara's past militancy) be warded off so easily or, as Derrida suggested in *Spectres of Marx,* there is no

[10] The relevance of the Women's Detachment in the film mirrors perhaps Machel's positioning of women's liberation, after 1975, as "the fundamental necessity of the revolution" (Delap 2020: 167). Such a move was preceded by the founding of the Organization of Mozambican Women by the FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique) in 1972.

[11] For a discussion of gender violence and its links to historical memory in Margarida Cardoso's films, often expressed through "silent visuals", see Vieira (2020b: 80–85).

future without it: "Not without Marx, no future without Marx, without the memory and the inheritance of Marx: in any case of a certain Marx, of his genius, of at least one of his spirits." (Derrida 2006 [1994]: 14). Indeed, the African postcolonial state represented in *Yvone Kane* comes to exemplify the ways in which "the legacy of liberation struggles has become almost invisible, taking a ghostly form" (Traverso 2016: 19). Cardoso's attempt to "give form to something that is unflaggingly ethereal and slightly phantasmagorical" then meets the "landscape of sorrow", where "new collective hopes have not yet risen above the horizon" that Traverso identified in the twenty-first century's regime of historicity (Traverso 2016: 18–19). However, that is only half the story. In the Director's Statement, Margarida Cardoso specifies that the "spectral land inhabited by ghosts" that she aimed to create is haunted both by colonial ruins and capitalist acceleration:

> The film takes place in Africa, in an unnamed country. A land that today, transformed by time – and not just any time – has become a repository for the remains of the past. A place where there always seems to be mysteries to unravel, and where the ruins of colonial times cohabit with the symbols of accelerated liberal mutation. […] By fragmenting the characters, by stripping them of many features, I wanted to create a sort of spectral land inhabited by ghosts – those that haunt us and those that are part of each of us, and those that are all around us – in the waste, in the cracks, in the signs of war, in the remains of something that once was. (*Yvone Kane* Press Kit)

It is not just any time, Cardoso points out, that transformed that land; among other factors, the "epochal turn" of the fall of the Berlin Wall, with its "unexpected and disruptive character" (Traverso 2016: 2), promoted a vertiginous ride from Marxist revolutionary teleology to the neoliberal turn, global capitalism and the end of History. The "spectral land" that Margarida Cardoso films is cohabited by colonial and postcolonial ghosts, emphasized by the processes of globalization.[12] The focus then should be on how to remember (for Cardoso, that is the question) the revolutionary past, and its emancipatory promises, in a non-revolutionary, post-ideological, accelerated time and place. Cardoso's revisitation of past times and places (of

[12] As Pheng Cheah notes, by building on the notion of spectrality developed by Derrida in *Specters of Marx*, "the spectrality of the nation is especially pronounced in contemporary globalization" (Cheah 1999: 247). This goes for the postcolonial nation too, of course, which is Cheah's object of study.

liberation, anti-colonialism revolution, and women's role in these), and the creative tension between history, memory and fiction that is played out in her works fits into Annette Kuhn's conceptualization of "memory work":

> Memory work is a conscious and purposeful performance of memory; it involves an active staging of memory; it takes an inquiring attitude towards past and its (re)construction through memory; it calls into question the transparency of what is remembered; and it takes what is remembered as material for interpretation. (Kuhn 2002 [1995]: 157)

Such a performance of memory is perhaps most visible in Rita's quest and in Cardoso's fashioning of archival materials (photos, documentaries, visual footage) featured in the film which helps construct the figure of Yvone Kane . Both Rita's research and the fabricated archive that Rita – and, consequently, the spectator – engages with will come to underline Annette Kuhn's point that memory can be "understood better as a position or a point of view in the current moment than as an archive or a repository of bygones" (Kuhn 2002 [1995]: 128). The engagement with the past represented in the film should be then read as a performance (or "an active staging") rather than a symptom of a post-ideological, post-utopic age. Cardoso's own "fascination" with the archive and her decision to assume the "materiality of the image", which she traces, in an interview, to her experience of exploring the past when working on the 1999 documentary *Natal 71* (Ene-Mitrovic´ 2022: 247), plays a significant role in this endeavour. The slowing down of the images of the audiovisual archive that Rita performs in *Yvone Kane*, which enables her to detect Yvone's discomfort in official ceremonies, essentially repeats the practice undertaken by Cardoso in the documentary *Kuxa Kanema* when the newsreels produced in the early period of revolution are slowed down, which inevitably changes the way images can be interpreted.[13] What the photographs or the footage incrementally reveal (or, at least, indicate) about Yvone Kane's ideals, feelings, allegiances or disaffection slowly but surely perturbs the "transparency of what is remembered" at the official level.

[13] Regarding the question of the archive in Margarida Cardoso's work, see Martins (2020: 112–113), Ene-Mitrovic´ (2022: 147–159) and Silva (2016: 98–104).

Furthermore, however, the archive, progressively revealed – and constituted in a sense by its progressive revelation [14] –, betrays a "yearning" for an "older regime of materiality" (Fisher 2014: 21). Cardoso's "fascination" with the materiality of the archive, compounded by Rita's refusal to yield to pressures to let go or have a fresh start, attributes a "political dimension" to Rita's melancholic demeanour throughout the film, since "it amounts to a failure to accommodate to the closed horizons of capitalist realism" (Fisher 2014: 21). The fabricated photographs, news stories, footage of official ceremonies that take a central role in *Yvone Kane* recreate a (historically-grounded) different time, a time before the end of ideology and of communist hopes and dreams. Indeed, the "ghostly form" of the legacies of liberation struggles transpires in the archive, with which both Rita Moreira, Margarida Cardoso and, effectively, the spectator engage with. The way in which the materiality of the archive is emphasized (Rita's careful analysis of footage and photos; the fact that this archive is a fictional construction, even if this may not be evident at first) provides a counterpoint to the spectrality of contemporary characters (including Rita or Sara), insistently captured in reflections on mirrors or windows that act as a formal manifestation of Cardoso's interest in the aftermath and the "ecos e reflexos" [echoes and reflections] of conflicts (Gomes 2015).

Cardoso's creative engagement in reframing, reconceptualizing or fabricating archival materials inscribes, and stages, the past not as something merely to be remembered, but to be worked through ("what is remembered as material for interpretation", as stated by Kuhn). Similarly, Cardoso can be said to engage creatively with her previous films, namely the documentary *Kuxa Kanema: O nascimento do cinema* and Cardoso's other feature film to date, *A Costa dos Murmúrios*. Both are evoked to great effect, pushing the hauntological melancholical dimension further by emphasizing the way in which the "spectral land" of *Yvone Kane* is haunted by what Mark Fisher, departing from Bifo Berardi's formulation of the "slow cancellation of the future" (Berardi 2011: 35), terms "lost futures" (see 2014: 6–25).

Kuxa Kanema and *A Costa dos Murmúrios* also addressed, in very different ways, the legacies and challenges of anti-colonialism, liberation struggles and the abandoning of equalitarian hopes and dreams. Both *A Costa dos Murmúrios* (an adaptation of Lídia Jorge's 1988 eponymous novel) and *Yvone Kane* take place in unidentified African countries[15] with

[14] It does so, it should be noted, however, with a critical perspective, with characters commenting on what or who was left out from photos, or what they hid at the time in order to conform to the Party's orthodoxy.

[15] Although the setting of the novel is easily identified as Mozambique, where both the author Lídia Jorge and Margarida Cardoso lived, both *A Costa dos Murmúrios* and *Yvone Kane* film deliberately avoids identifying markers, although both films were shot in Mozambique. Sally

conflicts raging in the North and with storylines dominated by strong women figures, while male figures in *Yvone Kane* can easily exhibit a similarly aggressive behaviour to that of the Portuguese soldiers in *A Costa dos Murmúrios*.[16] Rita's encounter with Alex early on in *Yvone Kane* seems to pick up, albeit in inverted fashion, where *A Costa dos Murmúrios* left off.[17] *A Costa dos Murmúrios* begins with the protagonist Eva stating "Gostei de ler a sua história" [I enjoyed reading your story], while *Yvone Kane* features the ex-operative Alex providing Rita with documents because, he says, he enjoys reading her stories ("Gosto muito de ler as histórias que você escreve" [I enjoy reading the stories that you write]). The fact that Beatriz Batarda plays the leading part in both films, while Adriano Luz, who plays Alex (a nod to the name of the protagonist's husband, Luís Alex), also played the part of Captain Forza Leal, the violent and mysoginistic "hero" of the colonial regime in *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, adds to an uncanny dimension which is later reinforced in *Yvone Kane* with the shots of Sara Moreira in very similar physical settings where Eva Lopo also appears in *A Costa dos Murmúrios*. While in *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, the gaze is seemingly directed backwards, Sara Moreira looks towards an undisclosed and undefined horizon.

Yvone Kane's "spectral land" of silence is haunted by the future promised by the fall of colonialism in *A Costa dos Murmúrios*. When Gabriel asks Rita if she remembers how the place that she left ten years before looked like, Rita once again, like in the early exchange with Alex when asked if she remembers him, does not verbalize an answer. It is Gabriel that says: "Há dez anos, tudo isto era mato. Lembras-te, Rita? Agora, já viste?" [Ten years ago, this was all bush. Do you remember, Rita? And now, do you see this?"].Ten years before, in 2004, the spectator had a chance to see Eva Lopo (in *A Costa dos Murmúrios* still referred to as Evita, at that time) predict the inevitable fall of the colonial regime, defeated by the heroes fighting in the "mato" [bush] for their land, as she points out to an angry Forza Leal. Rather than answering Gabriel, Rita gazes at the billboard with Yvone Kane's image on the side of the road, which in turn evokes the beginning of *Kuxa Kanema*, when the off-screen narrator speaks of the telling transition from "República Popular de Moçambique" [Popular Republic of Mozambique] to simply "República de Moçambique" [Republic of Mozambique] while a weathered billboard

Faulkner discusses the implications of such a process of deterritorialization *in Yvone Kane* (Falkner 2020: 203–207)

[16] For an analysis of colonial masculinities as represented in *A Costa dos Murmúrios,* see Mark Sabine (2014).

[17] Although not exactly concurrent with the point I am trying to make here, Adriana Martins develops an insightful reading of the two films in tandem and argues for an "aesthetic parallelism" between the 2004 and the 2014 productions (2020: 108–109).

with an image of Samora Machel is accompanied by a truncated quotation. In the case of the billboard featuring Yvone Kane, and proof of the emptying of meaning of the struggles for liberation and revolution, all that is evoked is an image and a name.

Both past and future spectres of the land will need to be engaged with: the colonial past haunts, as do the futures that the past liberation struggles projected in their fight against colonialism. The strange (i.e. ghostly) status of the liberation legacies in the (neoliberal, globalized) spectral land comes across in Isabel Noronha's comment in *Kuxa Kanema.* The 2003 documentary features interviews with those, such as Noronha, involved in the production of the newsreels during approximately the first ten years of Mozambique as an independent – and revolutionary – nation, with the death of Samora Machel (first President and a prominent figure in the newsreels) as a turning point. There is a sense that contemporary Mozambique, from where interviewees speak, emerging from the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Civil War (1977–1992), has progressively relinquished its equalitarian aspirations and its revolutionary past in the face of neoliberal acceleration.[18] According to Noronha, the dereliction of the Instituto Nacional de Cinema [National Film Institute] building – the first major cultural institution of newly independent Mozambique – presents an accurate image of the country:

> O que se passa naquele edifício é exactamente a imagem do país. No fundo, as paredes estão lá, o edifício está lá, os filmes estão lá, melhor ou pior, guardados dentro das mesmas latas e com os mesmos rótulos, no mesmo armazém, etc. É uma coisa que existe sem existir. E então isso dá uma sensação assim de… uma angústia estranha. Quer dizer, tudo aquilo que se fez mas também não existe. (*Kuxa Kanema*)
>
> [What is taking place in that building [Instituto Nacional de Cinema] is exactly the image of the country. Ultimately, the walls are there, the building is there, the films are there, well preserved or not so well preserved, kept inside the same canisters and with the same labels, in the same warehouse and so on. It is something that exists without existing. So, this makes you feel... something like a strange anguish. I mean, everything that was done but that also doesn't exist]

[18] Such acceleration is visible in the contemporary TV and media landscape described at the end of *Kuxa Kanema*, the diametrical opposite of the *Kuxa Kanema* newsreels in terms of form (no spontaneity or originality) or content (entirely lacking in it, it is hinted).

What Noronha describes as a "strange anguish", Traverso or Fisher might refer to as melancholia. In both the 2003 documentary and the 2014 feature film, the billboards of leading figures of a revolutionary past who announced a better future (that did not materialize) are overlooked, powerless before the aimless bustle of unbridled capitalist acceleration. They may be remnants, but they are also mere tokens in the "presentist" experience of time as a "permanent acceleration within a 'naturalized' and eternized social structure, that is, conceived and considered as immutable, without any possible alternative" (Traverso 2016: 57).[19] They are all the more remembered, everywhere, only so that things can remain the same.

Ultimately, Rita Moreira's and Margarida Cardoso's performative slowing down of archival images or the fixation on images contrasted against the relative indifference of passers-by who walk behind the billboards cannot slow down the experience of time ("not just any time", let us remember). It can only provide a change of perspective (memory as point of view, not as an archive, Kuhn *dixit*) and a precarious but noteworthy defence against the encroaching upon the spaces of the living and, historically, of the fighters who fought against oppression, in the bush; but also, as we will see in the next section when we address Sara's visit to the cemetery, the spaces of the dead. If the revolutionary past in the since abandoned newsreels exists without existing, the futures imagined by the revolutions also haunt us; just as much, even if – and to an extent because – they did not materialize.

4. "Because she did exist": unresolved mourning, "living-on" and a politics of melancholia.

Margarida Cardoso's hauntological melancholic approach to the rethinking of memory, history and legacies of Marxism and liberation struggles is crucial to the investigation of the ghosts and remnants of the past in *Yvone Kane*. Particularly when bearing in mind the challenges set by the "ruins of neoliberalism" (Brown 2019) and by a "horizon of possibility" which is only too "[...] hard to distinguish, and the territory that borders this horizon is hard to describe or to map" (Berardi 2019: 28). More so than *Kuxa Kanema* and *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, which similarly addressed the legacies of colonialism and liberation struggles, *Yvone Kane* reveals a melancholic preoccupation with the aforementioned rarefication of horizons of "expectation"

[19] For his analysis, Traverso draws heavily from François Hartog notion's such as "regime of historicity" and "presentism" (see Hartog 2015).

or “possibility”, and Berardi’s “slow cancellation of the future”. *Yvone Kane* is a film under the sign of mourning and grief: the recent death of Clara, the foretold death of Sara, the death of Yvone Kane, decades before, which prompts Rita’s search. The focus on Rita’s trauma and her proto-therapeutic search, swerving from an initial idea which centred the film around Yvone Kane, according to the director (quoted in Silva 2016: 99; Faulkner 2020: 200), sets up the film as an attempt to come to terms with the challenges of the present and project, however dimly, a vision for the future rather than constituting a (potentially nostalgic) investigation into the past.

For there is always the temptation to take refuge in the past, illusory or not. After João leaves Rita following her refusal to go back to "what we were", Rita lays down next to her mother in bed. The physical similarity between actresses, sought by Cardoso (Gomes 2015), pays off when the faces of Beatriz Batarda and Irene Ravache are placed side by side in profile. This rare moment of shared intimacy is soon dispelled, however, when Sara asks for photos of her granddaughter Clara, only to backtrack and state that she would rather not see the photos because it would be as if she never existed (“Assim ela nunca existiu. Para mim ela nunca existiu.” [This way she never existed. For me, she never existed.]) Rita snaps out of that illusory comfort by reaffirming that Clara did exist. Even if she does not exist anymore: “Mas eu quero que tu vejas. Porque ela existiu.” [But I want you to see it. Because she did exist.].

In a film so indelebly marked by loss, trauma and morning such as *Yvone Kane*, Rita’s melancholia acts as a signifier of a deeper and wider cultural anxiety. Her dogged refusal to let go of the past *and* of a future means she has not resigned to accepting things as they are. Revisiting the past will act as springboard to counteract silence or amnesia, not in spite of but *through* mourning, grief, and melancholia. Ghosts and spectres manifest themselves because Rita consistently fails to mourn:

> Haunting, then, can be construed as a failed mourning. It is about refusing to give up the ghost or – and this can sometimes amount to the same thing – the refusal of the ghost to give up on us. The spectre will not allow us to settle into/ for the mediocre satisfactions one can glean in a world governed by capitalist realism. (Fisher 2014: 22)

By holding on to the object of love – and this is certainly the case for Rita, in her attempt to mourn the death of her daughter, but also in her quest for the truth about Yvone Kane and the past – Rita’s hauntological melancholia also expresses how “not only has the future not arrived,

it no longer seems possible" (Fisher 2014: 21).[20] Rita's palpably melancholic demeanour is opposed to the manic triumphalism of neoliberalist discourse as diagnosed by Derrida, but nevertheless strikes a tone with the emancipatory promise of revolutionary struggle. The political dimension of Rita's melancholia becomes clearer if we understand Rita's individual and family grief as symptomatic of a wider sociopolitical concern. Not only are the mourning for Clara and the search for the truth concerning Yvone intertwined in the film, Rita's reaction ("But she did exist") closely parallels Isabel Noronha's insistence, in *Kuxa Kanema*, that the revolutionary past took place, exists even without existing. As, ultimately, does Sara's acknowledgement: "Eu sei que ela existiu." [I know she did exist.]. Rita's insistence on seeking justice, not silence, on wanting to know Yvone's "end of the story" – as she reports to Sérgio Malande when they finally meet – signals, as in Fisher's analysis of hauntological melancholia, "a refusal to give up on the desire for the future" (Fisher 2014: 21). Rita succeeds when she fails to mourn, to accommodate, and insists on the idea of a future; in that sense, Rita's excavation of Yvone's story allows her to retrieve a certain memory of socialism (which, in the figure of Yvone, is intertwined with anti-colonialism, feminism, etc), to redeem its memory by failing to mourn it. Characters in Y*vone Kane* gain strength from *not* letting go of the ghosts of the past that *did* exist or of the futures that have not come to pass: of liberation struggles, of equality, of *Marxs* ("there is more than one of them", the spirits of Marx are heterogeneous, Derrida 2006 [1994]: 14, 95), of alternatives to reigning neoliberalism and capitalist realism.

In her fight for justice and against silence ("Paz não é silêncio"), Rita follows Derrida's exhortation in *Specters of Marx* to live more "justly", "to learn to live with ghosts, in the upkeep, the conversation, the company, or the companionship, in the commerce without commerce of ghosts" (2006 [1994]: xvii-xviii). Rita's voyage to the country and her stay in a hotel that looks semi-abandoned will certainly provide ample room for conversations about and, somewhat ambiguously, with spirits. In a display of solidarity, the owner of the hotel befriends Rita and avails herself of her company as a welcome respite from the male guests who come back only at night and who by the morning leave her to pick up pieces of broken

[20] Fisher helpfully differentiates hauntological melancholia from Wendy Brown's left melancholy – not to be confused, I would add, with Traverso's left-wing melancholia (see Brown 1999) – and Paul Gilroy's postcolonial melancholia. The left melancholiac is "someone who no longer has any expectation that his desire for radical transformation could be achieve, but who doesn't recognize that he has given up" (2014: 23) As for the postcolonial melancholic, he "doesn't (just) refuse to accept change; at some level, he refuses to accept that change has happened at all" (2014: 24).

glass from the floor.[21] Adding to the sense of conflict and injustice that the sexual assault to the young girls had already instilled, the hotel owner tells Rita how the locals deem the hotel to be haunted by the spirits of those executed in the premises, when the hotel was used as a detention centre. The swimming pool, used as a kill zone, still displays the bullet holes. When the guests, in the background, loudly shatter bottles in the swimming pool before they leave for their hunting and fishing expeditions in the morning, they farcically repeat the tragedy of the killings (see Faulkner 2020: 207).

The hotel owners' son, who is bored stiff because the sea is too rough, or the man in the wheelchair by the swimming pool, are a visual manifestation of a stasis underneath the pointless hustle and bustle of the guests, away on hunting and fishing trips, repeating the behaviour and the violence of colonial soldiers from *A Costa dos Murmúrios*. The hotel stands as a neoliberal ruin, with international tourism hardly able to provide a new sense, or breathe new life into the hotel. The saturating presence of the image of Yvone Kane now in the hotel, as before by the roadside, emphasizes a "present charged with memory but unable to project itself into the future", the "future imagined in a bygone time" (Traverso 2016: 7). The effect is all the more dramatic because, in contrast, the present time (Cardoso's time of the end of ideologies) appears incapable of engaging convincingly with *a* future.

Yvone Kane echoes both Traverso's and Vergès's recognition of the importance of reengaging with the legacy and inheritance of past defeats and struggles (Traverso 2016: 59; Vergès 2021: 8), a recognition that "the struggle would continue" (Vergès 2021: 8) or, as Yvone Kane shouts in the faux news piece "5 Days with the Women's Detachment", "A Luta Continua" [The fight will carry on]. Early on in *Yvone Kane*, and after she was made aware of her diagnosis, Sara Moreira looks bewildered at the encroaching city in the distance, while standing at the place she was scouting with a view to being buried there herself. She is mourning the defeats in the past as she confronts a future that she cannot envisage, in which she cannot place herself (or her bodily remains, it seems). The contrast between the announcement in the cemetery, in capital letters, that "A REVOLUÇÃO NÃO MORRE" [The revolution will not die] and the eerie, anonymous but brutal, encroachment of the city enacts a passage between a regime of historicity in which future played a role to one in which the future

[21] The bond between women despite their differences (anonymous travellers, refugees, Mother Superior, Amélia, Sara, Yvone, Rita, hotel owner,) provides a counterpoint to more than just the toxic masculinity evinced by male characters. It points to a model other than that of the traditional family or of the fraternity, one in which feminism is not automatically subdued, coopted, sacrificed in the name of supposedly more urgent, more important demands.

is seemingly cancelled. The performative contradiction is clear: the sign reads that the revolution will never die, while the sign itself is framed as a remainder in the cemetery. As a result, Sara seems disoriented and somewhat disconcerted when Gabriel informs her that the cemetery ended "Lá atrás" [Back there]. And so, symbolically, the revolutionary past. And yet... "A Revolução não morre" can also be read as a plea for the struggle to continue. The question remains: can the future (and what kind of future?) be projected from the memory of political defeats whose legacy lingers on, however faintly? Revolution, liberation, anti-colonialism may be dead (and Derrida's thoughts on spectrality and on the irrecusable legacy of the spirits of Marx should provide for a certain degree of circumspection) – but they are not gone, and they are proving hard to be buried.

In returning to the unnamed African country, Rita revisits a place in which the past has noticeably been abandoned: first and foremost, the history of liberation and of women's role in it. Sara's funeral, nearing the end of *Yvone Kane*, acquires then full significance when it follows Rita's writing (against Elias's, among others, recommendation) Yvone's story, now that she is finally in possession of documents buried for safekeeping by Sérgio Malange. The funeral, without the presence of Rita, lines up on opposite sides political comrades against the religious order, with each side presenting a formulaic farewell to, respectively, the ex-comrade and to the medical doctor. With Sara's visit to the cemetery in mind, it would be rash to view the funeral as a definitive farewell to ideologies. As a matter of fact, Sara's death and subsequent funeral, while Rita is up North, will put forward melancholia as "memory and awareness of the potentialities of the past: a fidelity to the emancipatory promises of revolution, not to its consequences" (Traverso 2016: 52). Rita's failure to mourn would be meaningless if this resistance was not linked to a sense of injustice and did not imply a commitment to hope, to promises, to the future. Rita's refusal echoes Derrida's point that there is no justice without life being carried "beyond present life or its actual being-there", "not toward death but toward a living-on [sur-vie]" (Derrida 2006 [1994]: xx). Indeed, what unites both speeches at Sara's funeral (the Marxist and the religious) is that they still hold forth the idea of some sort of afterlife, life beyond death – and not merely in a temporal or transcendental sense. The off-screen indistinct noise and chatter that is heard during the funeral, of indeterminate origin, acts as a further indication that this is not the end of the story, let alone the end of History.

Yvone Kane will not be resurrected, as Eduardo Malange tells Rita, but it was never about that. Rita had herself made the point that Yvone Kane was dead early on when Alex first beseeched her to look into Yvone Kane's death. On hindsight, it is Alex's reply – "Mas nós estamos vivos" [But we are alive] – that sets the tone for Rita's search. Ultimately, Rita's

recovery of the documents that Sérgio had buried for safekeeping – and about the contents of which the spectator is left none the wiser –, implies that the crucial mystery is *not* the one surrounding Yvone Kane's death, but how the memory of what she stood and fought for lived on. When Eduardo Malange rather disparagingly asks Rita for whom she is writing the story on Yvone Kane, Rita's answer ("Para mim" [for me]) is a far cry from reinforcing a cynical, individualist pursuit typical of neoliberalism. Rather, it highlights Cardoso's recognition of "mysteries to unravel" that reveal, in contrast to a depoliticized "duty of memory", a repoliticizing "memory work", as put forward by Annette Kuhn. Yvone Kane, like the revolution, lives on in a way that contrasts with the mere survival of other characters.[22] However, the fuller and more ambiguous figure of Yvone that is recovered by Rita makes it clear that Traverso's notion of left-wing melancholia as "the rethinking a revolutionary project in a nonrevolutionary age" (Traverso 2016: 20) makes sense only if the memories of socialism being rethought do not exclude or overpower its anticolonialist or feminist dimensions.

Yvone Kane lives on beyond the "truth" that the false prophet Elias announced (the name Elijah hardly seems accidental). The scene immediately following Sara's funeral has Gabriel appearing in Rita's hotel room, not to bring news of the pending arrival of the Messiah (as was the case for his biblical namesake) but rather news of Sara's death. Rita's awakening acquires a particular significance when she is shown asleep or quasi-asleep through various scenes in the film. Rita's position in bed evokes the first scene in the film, when we see her recovering in a hospital bed, seemingly as a consequence (immediate or delayed) of the loss of her daughter. Rita, living in a hotel room surrounded by the spectral iconography of Kane, the stories of spirits haunting the hotel, and the metonymical echoes of violence perpetrated in the not so distant past, asks Gabriel if he is one of the spirits of the hotel. Gabriel is no prophet, nor does he claim to be, and his answer to Rita's question ("Ainda não" [Not yet]) further highlights a commitment to life before – if not beyond – death.

Rita may not be strictly speaking, then, in conversation with spirits and ghosts, as Derrida proposed; but she seems to be at least very much open to the idea. And, in a sense, the deterritorialized Rita and Sara were always themselves ghosts, of course. Haunted by her failure to mourn, Rita haunts too; or in the words of Fisher, she does not give up the ghost and

[22] Sérgio Malange laments that he did not feel Yvone's death, busy as he was with his own survival; Yvone's companion in arms, Amélia Zuri, discusses her being wounded in battle, and how it is ironic that, in the end, it was she and not Yvone who survived; Rita's partner João is keen to survive by moving on ("Eu vou sobreviver. Tu faz o que quiseres." [I am going to survive. You can do what you want.]). Sara, on the other hand, when put on the spot by a Mother Superior positing life after death, is adamant that she will not survive.

the ghost does not give up on her. In the following scene, at the beach, while reminiscing over childhood memories with Gabriel, Rita casually remarks that she has never been to his house, that she does not know how he lives. Gabriel is taken aback since, earlier in the film, Sara had made a very similar remark, further adding that she would die without knowing how Gabriel lives, which in turn prompted Gabriel to joke that Sara is threatening to haunt him after she dies. In *Yvone Kane*, memory work and the work of (failed) mourning are intertwined; Rita is haunted and haunts by carrying lives beyond death: Clara, Sara, and Yvone – they all existed, as Rita says of Clara. There is no resurrection (of Yvone), there is no messianic arrival (Gabriel announces death); yet the recognition that they "did exist" means that what they did lives on. The film ends on a symbolic note, and on a symbolic burial, as the hotel's swimming pool is filled in at the end of the film. Rita leans out of the window to look to the horizon, while gesturing a friendly wave to the hotel owner who joins her workers in filling in the pool where the massacres were committed.

The filling in of the swimming pool, which means that the hotel owners who viewed the swimming pool as an asset can no longer pretend that what took place did not happen, finds a dramatic counterpoint in Rita's unearthing of the documents concerning Yvone Kane's death. When Rita, upon finally encountering Sérgio Malange, replied that she sought him in order to know the "fim da história" [the end of the story], it acts as a reminder that the news about the end of History were – as the popular misquote of Mark Twain goes – greatly exaggerated. Rita fades into shade as if finding out the truth about Yvone Kane and writing her story about it represents a necessary step**.** However, this necessary step does not imply forgetting, or simply starting over and letting go of the past. In the final shot, before image abruptly fades to black and the name "Yvone Kane" appears on screen, Rita's melancholic, no less political, gaze forces one to consider, as Cardoso would put it, how to remember.

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