



## ARTICLE

## Social information and information culture *a film analysis of " The boy who harnessed the wind"*

Viviane Holanda Cabral<sup>1</sup>  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3163-7894>

Luiz Tadeu Feitosa<sup>2</sup>  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6159-7985>

Lidia Eugenia Cavalcante<sup>3</sup>  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3190-6900>

<sup>1</sup> Universidade Federal do Ceará, Fortaleza, CE, Brasil. / e-mail: [vivianeholanda@gmail.com](mailto:vivianeholanda@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Universidade Federal do Ceará, Fortaleza, CE, Brasil. / e-mail: [tadeu.feitosa62@gmail.com](mailto:tadeu.feitosa62@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Universidade Federal do Ceará, Fortaleza, CE, Brasil. / e-mail: [cavalcantelidiaeugenia@gmail.com](mailto:cavalcantelidiaeugenia@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

Seeks to reflect on the theories related to the concept of social information and information culture, that is, production/construction, communication/veiculation and consumption/appropriation, in the light of film analysis of the narrative, based on a real story, whose plot reached the cinema with the title " The boy who harnessed the wind". The objective is to understand the role of the library as a generator of social transformation, based on the participation of the librarian/mediator as part of the process of mediation of information and construction of knowledge. To do so, the concepts of culture and social information were intertwined based on the social and symbolic role of libraries, which was configured as an essential condition to relate such theories within the scope of this study. In order to ground the theories presented and their interrelationship with the flow of social information, the three dimensions addressed by Cardoso (1994) are highlighted and a table is elaborated relating historicity, totality and tension of the information with excerpts from the film studied. In this way, the relationships between the knowledge produced and the role of the library in the appropriation of information are identified, based on the diversity of processes and daily relationships experienced by the characters of the work. We conclude by emphasizing how relevant is the power of social information built through access to knowledge.

### KEYWORDS

Information flow. Culture and information. Information mediation. Social information. School library.

## Informação social e cultura informacional *uma análise fílmica da obra "o menino que descobriu o vento"*

### RESUMO

Busca refletir sobre as teorias relacionadas ao conceito de informação social e cultura informacional, ou seja, produção/construção, comunicação/veiculação e consumo/apropriação, à luz de análise fílmica da narrativa, baseada em uma história real, cujo enredo chegou ao cinema com o título "O menino que descobriu o vento". Objetiva compreender o papel da biblioteca como geradora de transformação social, a partir da participação do bibliotecário/mediador como integrante do processo de mediação da informação e construção do conhecimento. Para tanto, buscou-se o entrelaçamento dos conceitos de cultura e informação social a partir do papel social e simbólico das bibliotecas, o que se configurou como condição essencial para relacionar tais teorias no âmbito deste estudo. Para fundamentar as teorias apresentadas e sua inter-relação com o fluxo da informação social, destaca-se as três dimensões abordadas por Cardoso (1994) e elabora-se uma tabela relacionando historicidade, totalidade e

tensionalidade da informação com trechos do filme ora estudado. Dessa forma, identifica-se as relações entre o conhecimento produzido e o papel da biblioteca na apropriação da informação, a partir da diversidade de processos e relações cotidianas vivenciadas pelos personagens da obra. Conclui-se ressaltando o quão relevante é o poder da informação social construída por meio do acesso ao conhecimento.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE**

Fluxo da informação. Cultura e informação. Mediação da informação. Informação social. Biblioteca escolar.



**JITA:** DE. School libraries.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Culture can be defined as a set of behavior patterns, of myths and beliefs, created by human beings, in a certain time and place, that are shared socially and that are displayed through our existence in the world (LARAIA, 1993). Culture allows for the reinvention of the senses, given that it is also possible to affirm that culture is a flexible, dynamic and plural, inventive and creative fabric (CERTEAU, 2014). In other words, we have the capacity to question our *habitus* as individuals in a contemporary world that is being constantly renewed by culture and that is a creator of identity references and identifications.

Culture is socialization and it is related not only to the education that we receive in formal institutions, but it also comes from the social relations to which we are exposed in our everyday life (CERTEAU, 2014), through, and from, the “webs of significance” that we spin throughout our life. (GEERTZ, 2015).

In this context, we perceive libraries as a space whose relations with culture are strengthened based on the thought that it is a privileged space of knowledge and that it is necessarily democratic for the promotion, renewal, and appropriation of information that will be reproduced critically and that will be valued and disseminated as cultural mediation present at the heart of Culture itself. Therefore, it is a place to access symbolic goods that have been produced, culturally and socially, and also a place of redefinition of knowledge.

With the purpose of highlighting the power of transformation and social change that are possible to achieve with a library and its presence in a community, we have selected the film “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” in order to reflect on this theme. The title may be considered as a preview of the ending of the story, however, it is the journey of the main character over the course of the story that raises our interest to discuss the events. It is a fact that this cinematographic work can raise several social, economical, political, educational, and cultural reflections. For this study, however, we have decided to highlight the strong presence of the library and its transformational role, not necessarily ignoring the aforementioned aspects, which interweave culture, science, and the story of someone’s life, all of which are observed under conditions of precariousness and social inequality that are highly common in many countries, irrespective of geographic or socially historic boundaries.

The methodology applied in this work is that of film analysis, taking into consideration the critical reading of the plot of a movie that was based on real facts (autobiographical) that were experienced by William Kamkwamba in his youth, while he lived in a village in Malawi, Africa. The film was released by streaming platform Netflix, ten years after the release of the book, in 2009. This cinematographic production was chosen for this study because we identified a strong presence of the library in it, displaying its unarguable role in the scenes that show the protagonist’s production, propagation, and appropriation of information for the production of knowledge.

This study has the purpose of illustrating the power of change that a library possesses simply by making information accessible for all, even when a precarious situation is observed in its structure. Thus, we selected the film “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind”, which tells the story of a family of small farmers who grow grains and who try to make a living amid an economic resources crisis that is taking over their country, a crisis that was provoked by climate issues, such as excessive rain and excessive drought, but also by severe issues that were caused due to quarrels in the local politics. It is based on the true story of William Kamkwamba,

a young boy who couldn't attend school, for his family couldn't afford the tuition fees, and thus he seeks knowledge in a small library so that he can put into action his plan to help his family and their community overcome hunger and poverty.

## 2 FILM ANALYSIS AS A METHODOLOGICAL RESOURCE

Film analysis has been widely used as a methodological resource, especially in studies within the field of the human and the social sciences. It has contributed greatly in bringing forward important social, political, cultural, or educational themes. Penafria (2009, p. 1) argues that the objective of film analysis is “[...] to explain/clarify how a film works and to give it an interpretation.” Likewise, a review that is made by means of film analysis aims to evaluate and to make a value judgment of a plot, associating the value perceived in the production to a certain end, such as its contribution to the discussion on a theme, its cinematography, its narrative aesthetics, its veracity, among other factors.

According to Vanoye and Goliot-Lété (2009), a film is a cultural product that is situated within a social context and, in order to perform an analysis of the film itself, it is necessary to decompose its elements. However, it is worth noting that it is important to be careful as to not create another film — that is, the work that is being analyzed “[...] is both the starting point and the ending point of the analysis.” (VANOYE; GOLIOT-LÉTÉ, 2009, p. 15).

In order to achieve the objectives proposed in this study, which are aimed towards discussing and exemplifying the concept of social information built in libraries that are inserted in complex scenarios, we have selected this film, which illustrates in its narrative the capacity of a library, in spite of all the difficulties and limitations it faces, of being a space of mediation between itself and the daily life of communities, as well as illustrating its tactics of, and for the, construction of meanings in the community where it belongs. (CERTEAU, 2014; GEERTZ, 2015).

In order to deepen the theoretical foundation of this study, we based it on the work of authors such as Rendón-Rojas and García-Cervantes (2012), Cardoso (2014), Marteleto (1994), Cavalcante (2014; 2016; 2017), among other authors who approach with expertise the topics of information mediation, solidary information, and information and local development. The dialogical discussion was made in light of the concepts of culture and information culture proposed by Caune (2014), Laraia (1993), Certeau (2014), Geertz (2015), Feitosa (2016), among other scholars who approach the reflexive purposes of film analysis.

### 2.1 *The library that turns a dream into reality and the windmills*

“The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” is a British drama film that was exhibited for the first time during the 2019 Sundance Film Festival. This work was directed and starred by Chiwetel Ejiofor, and it is based on the homonymous memoir written by William Kamkwamba and the reporter Bryan Mealer, which is not yet available in Portuguese. The movie is currently available on a global streaming service. It was selected as an entry for Best International Feature Film at the 92nd Academy Awards in 2020.

The cinematographic work, which is 113 minutes long, tells the story of a 13 old boy's life, a boy whose name is William Kamkwamba, and who lives in a small village in Malawi, in the African continent. William is a young boy who grapples with hunger, extreme poverty, political negligence, and other issues that are intrinsic to a socio-cultural context and climatic conditions that are completely adverse. On the other hand, this young man stands out for facing

unfavorable situations with determination, perseverance, optimism, creativity, and a will to learn. William and his family — his father, mother, older sister, and baby brother — live in Kasungu, Malawi, a country that is also known as “The Warm Heart of Africa”, a reference to the warmth and sympathy of its people.

William is a young boy with a strong will to study and to learn, and, to do so, he needs to face the difficulties he has due to the financial situation of his family, whose only source of income is agriculture, which, in turn, is always subjected to the local climate situation. In order to help his family make ends meet, the boy works fixing radios for his neighbors, rummaging through a junkyard in search of electronic components that can aid him in his craft.

In 2002, a severe drought, which was caused by climatic seasonality, human actions, and by the local socio-economic issues, devastates the country. The Kamkwamba family, just like the other inhabitants of their small village, lose all of their plantation and face a very difficult year, with problems such as lack of money and a never-ending hunger. Although William’s curiosity about science is being jeopardized by the fact that he’s not enrolled in school anymore for not being able to afford the tuition fees, it receives a significant boost once William starts visiting the school library without permission, led by his strong will to learn.

The school library in the movie portrays very clearly the precariousness of several educational institutions around the globe, especially the institutions in places where political actuation is predatory and students are subjected to attending their lessons in classrooms that do not have the appropriate conditions to help their learning process. In this same situation, school libraries are looked at with disdain and are considered unnecessary spaces, and, most of the time, these libraries don’t receive any type of investment.

The drought gets worse and the protagonist’s family has even less food than before. Several members of their community either start fleeing to nearby cities in search of food or eventually die due to starvation or diseases that are associated with malnutrition. William, however, doesn’t stop trying to find a solution for the situation they are facing. It is in the school library, with all its precariousness — old, dusty, outdated books with torn pages and without the minimum conditions necessary for one to be able to read them properly —, that William seeks answers for the questions that arise in his observing, questioning mind that is driven by the will to learn. With the help and support of the school librarian (who is, perhaps, just a staff member who doesn’t possess a diploma to work as such), the young boy finds a book called “Using Energy” that would change his life forever. Kamkwamba learns about wind energy by himself. Based on the information he obtained from the book, William builds an adapted and accessible small windmill prototype using recyclable material made of a dynamo and an old bicycle. His gadget could generate energy, as well as being able to pump water out of wells — water that could be used for irrigation purposes. As innovative and likely to succeed as his invention was, William has to deal with a lack of credibility and trust, especially from his father, who doesn’t deem the boy’s gadget as useful and destroys it, which creates conflicts in their family. However, this obstacle doesn’t cause William’s perseverance to dim in any way and he continues in his struggle to make his community support him and understand that changes are achieved collectively and collaboratively.

The village is getting emptier, and food is getting scarce. The Kamkwamba family is now having only a meal per day. Their oldest daughter flees with her science teacher, claiming that now their family “would have one less person to feed”. They leave a dynamo that is used in their bicycle as a gift for William, so he can continue working on his project. The boy convinces his friends to help him build a larger-scale windmill, however, in order to finish the project, William needs his father to donate his bicycle, which is the last bicycle left in their village and is also the only means of transportation for their family, so he can remove its components. William’s father still thinks that his son’s project is useless and the boy’s friends abandon the

project. The father is feeling completely hopeless and feeling like a failure for not being able to provide for his family. However, after William's mother interferes, the man begins seeing some hope in his son, thus he offers his bike to William and helps the boy in executing his project. Below, we have transcribed a beautiful scene from the film that illustrates the scene described previously:

01:34:41 – William – I'm sorry, papa.  
01:34:43 – Trywell – Sometimes it's dreams, and sometimes it's just lies.  
01:34:52 – William – It's not a dream, papa. I'm not dreaming.  
01:35:03 – Trywell – That's why he didn't leave the land to me. He didn't trust me. He never did. He knew I'd fail. Like I have. [Trywell is referring to his father's inheritance, which he left for another son]  
01:35:24 – William – You didn't fail me. Never. I went to school.  
1:35:43 – Trywell – Water?  
01:35:46 – William – Yes, sir.  
01:35:51 – Trywell – From wind?  
01:35:54 – William – It can work, if you help me.  
01:36:11 – Trywell – Okay.

This way, from a boy's will to learn and from the knowledge he acquired by reading books, a windmill was built out of material found in the trash, a dynamo that was gifted by William's sister and the science teacher, components that were taken from the family's bicycle, and the help of William's friends and the remaining inhabitants of their village. Thus, with everyone's assistance, the real-size windmill that was built starts irrigating their plantation and agriculture starts providing food for their community again, and hunger is no longer a reality for those people. This is William's story about a hindrance that was overcome with persistence, creativity, innovation, and, above anything else, information — without which William wouldn't have been able to think and plan the construction of the windmill.

The school library carries a strong symbolic power regarding knowledge and the access to and appropriation of information. It also enables viewers to observe the contrasts between material precariousness and professional performance. This ambience, which goes beyond the dramatic appeal that the film features in a moving way, can be seen as an excellent reflection not only on the educational practice, but also on the place of the library within a social and pedagogical context and the modes in which the mediation of information happens. During the act of mediation which is illustrated in the dialogue between the librarian and William, both of them are being transformed, given that information is, at the same time, both a facilitator and a means of transformation.

The library, for the young Kamkwamba, becomes a place of freedom, diverging from the hierarchic structure of the school and from the strict principal's discourse. It is a real and ideal place to access the symbolic goods that are produced through knowledge. It is based on this relationship with the library and the librarian's mediation that William is able to create something in a place that had only known hunger and drought before; something that was developed through the complex process of symbolic creations, of meaning and senses derived from knowledge; something unsustainable, that could be easily ignored or forgotten, if only it wasn't interconnected to the social, historical, and cultural context.

### 3 CULTURE AND INFORMATION: DEVELOPING MEDIATION FOR KNOWLEDGE

Looking at information practices under a cultural point of view allows us to comprehend that, among both of them, there are subjectivities that are inherent to the places where reality is built and knowledge is created. Knowledge and its symbolic interactions circulate in these spaces of cultural appropriation through the cultural practices that are executed between individuals.

As Feitosa (2016, p. 102, our translation) argues,

Culture is a process through which mankind creates something where there was nothing before. This something comprises all of the complexity of symbolic creations, of the senses and meanings that we give to things and to the world. A “something” that can’t be sustained unless we understand the cultural processes as mediation mechanisms between ourselves and the phenomena.

The aforementioned affirmation helps us to understand the subjectivities of culture that were identified in the film that was analyzed, once we perceive this term as a set of behavior patterns, of myths and beliefs, that are created by individuals in a specific place and time, and that are shared socially. Culture interacts with the socialization and education that we receive, not only in school, but also the education we receive from our parents and from the environment in which we are inserted. Thus, it is important to perceive culture as a flexible fabric, in which we are the dynamic agents who are capable of developing our everyday life through symbolic systems that are able to give meaning to our lives and also to establish tactics and mechanisms to modify them. (CERTEAU, 2014).

Etymologically speaking, the word “culture” comes from the idea of cultivating — as in cultivating the land. This same sense of the word embraces other semantics and symbolisms, such as the symbolic ordenations of “cultivating” religious ceremonies and other “webs of significance”, which are proposed by Clifford Geertz (2015). However, a broader definition of culture was synthesized by the British anthropologist Edward Tylor at the end of the 18th century, as highlighted by Laraia (1994). There used to be a German word, “*kultur*”, that was related to the spiritual aspects of a society, and there used to be a French word, “*civilization*”, which referred to the material conquests of a society. Tylor joined both these words in a single expression in English, *culture*, which encompasses the complexity of both (*kultur* and *civilization*) in one word.

Tylor, besides translating the concept of culture to a broader sense, was able to point out the separation between culture and the innate acquisition process, that is, “[...] a transference through a biological mechanism [...]”, as the determinists wanted to. This theory reveals that, in fact, plenty of our behavior patterns are related to learning itself, and not to a biological instinct. This also shows how the organic can overcome nature, distancing individuals from animals. Laraia (1994) explains that we have overcome our natural adaptation process; animals develop their wings while we develop airplanes, that is, human beings are the only species that are able to create their own adaptation instruments, which is precisely what distinguishes us from other animals.

Marteletto (1994, p. 132) highlights that culture is an “open term, always subjected to new approaches”, because it is woven in the social practices and in the historical context, with the goal of “reaching its specific senses” and of organizing the social practice. As affirmed by Caune (2014, p. 61), “cultural phenomena are experienced by the individual, but their meanings are only valid within a social and historical frame.” Thus, we can say that, “in order to realize

the meaning of a symbol, it is necessary to know the culture that has created it.” (LARAIA, 1993, p. 57)

Taking into consideration the different cultural contexts in which individuals are inserted and are constantly giving new meanings to culture and its contemporary assumptions, we can understand that it is necessary to relate this term to the concept of information and to its different modes of appropriation within a social context. By displaying several concepts of information, Capurro (2007) is arguing that information is a “constitutive force” in the sense that it gives shape, as a mutant term, to knowledge, to discipline, et cetera. What happens is that, in the conceptual approaches, we highlight our inseparable need for the “functions that we give”, in a “socio-cultural context”, to the word ‘information’. Thus, we can deduce that information is an interconnected socio-cultural phenomenon, “something that is built, disseminated, and reverberated through the relations that come from human dynamics.” (MENDONÇA; FEITOSA; DUMONT, 2019, p. 2)

Feitosa (2016, p. 99) argues that it is necessary “to situate information processes within the cultural contexts”, given that they are “threads that belong to the same weaving loom.” Information is woven “through the socio-cultural experiences” (MENDONÇA; FEITOSA; DUMONT, 2019, p. 8), where meanings “change and interchange”, revealing “the ambivalent space of languages whose meanings are being constantly updated, as well as the phenomenological character of the information that is produced, disseminated, and received, which is always creating new semiosis” (FEITOSA, 2016, p. 109).

Marteletto (1994, p. 132-133, our translation) affirms that information is,

An answer that is given to individuals through a specific cultural tradition, in which we live and feel safe. In this sense, it is a symbolic expression materialized in institutions, discourse, and practices of a truth. It is also the element that gives continuity to the past, which is reworked and reinterpreted in light of the present time that organizes individuals and constitutes the principles of our identity, in which our theory and our practice are guided.

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Thus, it is possible to think of culture and information in the context of their subjectivities and interlocutions, even if both terms each have their singularities. Studies within the field of Information Science, for instance, highlight both concepts and their usage under the point of view of mediation, be it cultural mediation or mediation of information, linking both of them to the term ‘appropriation’ and distancing them from the mere reception of the consumption of information, as well the consumption of cultural goods, in order to link them to social practices (CAVALCANTE; NUNES, 2017).

In this manner, it is important to perceive information as a “creator of the plural and the multiple” (MARTELETO, 1994, p. 134), not attached to a reproductive and normative sense, as well as being “subjected to intersubjective interpretations and relations which, in turn, are improbable, given that culture spins webs of meaning out of the complex threads that not only affect human relations, but also allow themselves to be affected by them” (MENDONÇA; FEITOSA; DUMONT, 2019, p. 13).

Feitosa (2016, p. 108, our translation) completes this thought by affirming that,

It is necessary to focus on the human being and in her individual particularities; her identity inclinations; her role in the development of her culture, identity, memory, and tradition. However, the focus of science and its transdisciplinary investigative bias must also include the social side of the individual; her life in culture; the necessary means to ensure her survival. It is necessary to pay more attention to human transcendence than to the permanence of the “caged epistemologies”.



Although it is important and necessary to assign concepts to socio-cultural phenomena, it is through practice that these phenomena are developed, which allows them to shed light on the ethnographical possibilities in order for us to perceive individuals in their *habitus*; in order for us to perceive individuals in their everyday lives.

#### 4 INCURSIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL INFORMATION AND REALITY

Based on what has been exposed so far, the social, cultural, and historical perspective is present in the essence of the broad and interdisciplinary concept of information. Therefore, we are able to comprehend that information has an indisputable relevance in the field of social relations, as Paulo Freire always highlighted in his works, such as “Education, the practice of freedom” and “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”, published in 1965, “The Importance of the Act of Reading” (1982), “Pedagogy of Hope” (1992) and “Pedagogy of Freedom” (1996), works that value the transforming power of education, supported by the right to have access to information and to culture.

In an anthropological reading of information, its process of development as an object of study is only complemented when the symbolic and material structures of a certain cultural universe are concretely taken into consideration, as well as the practical relations and representations of individuals, which are becoming increasingly mediated by an information mode that is competent of being in a society. (FREIRE, 2006, p. 59, our translation)

We identified the historical, socio-cultural perspective in the photography of the film “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind”, which utilizes visual resources, such as colors and lighting used to convey both the poetic and aesthetic beauty of a place, which are quite common in literary works, and the precariousness that is observed in the everyday life of the village. These phenomena come from the climatic adversities and also from mankind’s political and economical actions, which the film aims at displaying and that give notoriousness to the film due to the reality of what is being featured. These characteristics are also identified in the school library, whose scenario isn’t much different from the local reality. On the contrary, it reaffirms that political and economical disputes are reflected in schools, in teachers’ performance, in the way that students perceive education, and in the way that knowledge isn’t valued enough.

As we observed previously, the symbolic and material structures, the practical relations and the representation of subjects, that is, the customs, values, myths, and taboos, are phenomena that are interconnected to the process of information, being essential in the construction of a socio-informative reality.

Rendón-Rojas and García-Cervantes (2012, p. 35) also emphasize the importance of becoming aware of the convergences and needs of the information flow, which are “elements and moments of social dialectics” and they give as an example “the place that is occupied by an information professional in the social structure, the place that society gives to libraries, and the place that libraries give to individuals.”

Las entidades de información son un espacio democratizador que ofrece espacios de comunicación con otras personas, contemporáneas y del pasado, para construir posibles escenarios. Por tanto no son sólo un fenómeno social y cultural, sino también un importante segmento de la red de comunicación, y su comprensión es esencial para el profesional de la información, cuyo propósito es la de comunicar la información y el saber. (SHERA, 1990 *apud* RENDÓN-ROJAS; GARCÍA-CERVANTES, 2012, p. 33)

In this perspective, social information integrates the “process of daily communication that takes place between individuals and involves social interactions and exchanges.” Therefore, we must pay attention to the necessity of contextualizing “an individual’s place of speech” within the semantic field, where the subject’s socio-informative and problematic needs converge. (CAVALCANTE, 2016, p. 7).

While talking about social information, Cardoso (1994, p. 107-108, our translation) argues that,

[...] Indeed, “social” qualification, insofar as we can consider any information production / organization / consumption process as “social”, given that it happens between groups, segments, social classes, - that is, the development and appropriation of information only occurs within a society, within social relations.

For this study, we decided to highlight the three dimensions proposed by Cardoso (1994) and we elaborated a table that relates *historicity*, *totality*, and *tensionality* of information to excerpts of the film being analyzed. Thus, we can identify the sets of knowledge, information practices, and knowledge that was produced. We can also analyze the diversity of processes and daily relationships between the characters.

**Table 1 – Social Information Dimensions**

Dimensions proposed by Cardoso (1994)	Social Information	Film “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind”
1. Historicity of the individuals and objects	As a phenomenon, information comes from the accumulation, enlargement, and comprehension of knowledge/experiences/knowledge about oneself and about the social context over time.	At the beginning of the film, it is already noticeable that William (the protagonist) has some knowledge about energy generation. He fixes radios in order to help his family, thus he understands how energy works. Throughout the story, he develops new knowledge by attending school, by observing the dynamo in his teacher’s bicycle and by searching for information in the school library. However, his will to learn and his search for information also have a motivation that is found in the social context and reality of his community, which are getting worse due to a severe drought that is increasing the community’s hunger, death rates, and decreasing their hopes for rain.
2. Totality of the social phenomena	Society is seen as an “organic structure”, in which it isn’t possible to isolate the social phenomena from the context in which they take place.	Every action has its consequence. The act of selling pieces of land for predatory wood extraction provokes floods and soil erosion, crop loss, and food shortage, which, in turn, causes hunger, exodus, and conflicts. William is forced to

		<p>abandon school and his sister runs away with their teacher, who is actually her boyfriend, with the purpose of alleviating her parents from the burden of having yet another person to feed.</p>
<p>3. Constant tensionality</p>	<p>It is socially present, influences the relations and the production of meanings regarding the “social” in a land of disputes for hegemony and power relations, notably marked by the social, economical, and political issues.</p>	<p>Politics is featured as a sort of background for the plot, which is rather common in unequal social and economic realities. From the beginning of the film, we notice this in William’s father’s speech: “Democracy is just like imported cassava. It rots quickly.” The conflicts also occur between families, who do not always agree on selling their land. The disputes become increasingly fierce throughout the story, the climax featuring a visit from the president, who denies that there is a food crisis happening. The leader of their village, in turn, is physically harassed after reporting the problems faced in their community during the president’s visit. During most scenes, William can feel the tension caused by the conflicts around him. Sometimes as a spectator, and other times trying to act effectively.</p>

Source: Authors, based on Cardoso (1994)

When we intend to problematize the *historicity* of individuals based on their daily struggles, we glimpse at social information as an essential element, given that it is responsible for establishing the relations that are inherent to the construction and appropriation of knowledge. In this study, specifically, we consider the spaces of daily life as the *locus* of analysis — paying extra attention to the village and to the experiences of individuals and their practices, especially in relation to family, agriculture, religion, politics, and culture. We return to the topic of subjectivity of culture and information that has been previously addressed. When we reflect on the information subject, we are dealing not only with her individual insertion in a specific historical context, but also with her relations with a certain object and reality. That is, the presence of the subject can occur in an effectively emancipatory, or even alienating, manner, depending on how the individual is inserted in the social context and on her positioning about confrontation, about conscience, and about comprehension to produce meanings. This affirmation is verified when we observe the actions of the film’s protagonist (William) in comparison to his father’s positioning, as well as the positioning of the other kids in his community.

Rendón-Rojas and García-Cervantes (2012, p. 31) bring forward a discussion on the “*Epistemología de la Identidad Comunitaria-Informacional (EIC-I)*” using an analytical corpus

of knowledge construction and relating it to the identity of subjects in a community and, thus, constituting a communitary identity that takes place in face of the relations they have with the information universe.

De manera muy general podemos decir que el objetivo de la epistemología social es identificar las fuerzas e influencias sociales que institucionalizan las creencias en comunidades, y determinan o condicionan las formas de producción, organización, circulación y uso del conocimiento. (RENDÓN-ROJAS E GARCÍA-CERVANTES, 2012, p. 31)

*Totality* is one of the categories in Marx's (1988) dialectical method. When we report to the studies on social phenomena and social information that are present in this text, we are guided towards the comprehension of the events in this film analysis. Once again, we resort to William's protagonism in the film, for one cannot fear the conflicts with those who possess the power, as Marx (1988) affirms. That is, if reality is being developed, it certainly goes through transformations that are inherent to the insertion of individuals in this development, which is the driving force of the battles waged by social groups throughout history, not only for their resistance and confrontation, but also for their alienation and acceptance.

In this sense, we highlight Certeau's (2014) idea about the force of "anonymous creations" that are present in people's daily lives, and that possess strength and "vivacity", in spite of not being immediately capitalized by the social systems. It is not by chance that William, within his "ordinary culture", synthesized the struggles and the pursuit of solidarity that is seen in everyday life as a tactic.

William doesn't allow himself to be shaken by the adversities that he grapples with, fighting different battles in order to carry out his role as an individual in a community and to develop a process of emancipation and overcoming, aiming at social transformation. Thus, totality allows us to observe the social phenomena wholly, and not in an isolated manner. It is a fact, however, that the concept of totality that is being employed in this work is complex and broad, for dealing with a structured whole or with a set of facts doesn't necessarily mean that we have knowledge on the entire reality (KOSIK, 1986), given that totality is composed of parts that are somehow connected between themselves, when it comes to society. As seen in the movie, we are able to highlight the relations that are present within the climatic, economic, and political issues and the way that they are interconnected.

In the social field, tensionalities are constantly identified, especially among social groups and the struggles for power, be it in politics or religion, or the fights for economical and/or social matters, to name a few possibilities. Therefore, disputes establish conflicts that, most of the time, are necessary in order to avoid that dominant agents carry out their hegemony that leads to domination and to exploratory processes that are rather common between distinct social classes, for instance. The motivations that lead to tensionalities can be of different order and legitimacy, such as the ones that were observed in the film that we analyzed, which originated from economical and geopolitical conflicts of internal nature (between individuals of the same community) or of external origins (political leaders and enterprises).

In this analysis, when we discussed the three dimensions of social information: *historicity*, *totality* and *tensionality*, in face of what was proposed by Cardoso (1994), we aimed at articulating elements that are expressed in the social reality of the film "The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind", which come from the daily fights, from the social and cultural practices, and from the production and appropriation of knowledge and its meaning in the dynamics of the historical construction of individuals in their everyday lives.

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

By analyzing the film “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” under a perspective that was developed in light of the concepts of culture and social information, we aimed at reflecting on the symbolic power of libraries as a place of production and appropriation of knowledge, even if it represents a system of adversities that are originated from the tensionalities observed in the harsh reality of countries where social, economical, and political conflicts are part of a totality of historical dynamics in contexts of social inequality.

In the analysis of the film, when we show the school library as a place where one can get access to knowledge, a place that is apparently free from the hierarchized structures and from the traditional political discourse that is observed in the school, we intend to show that it is a place that must be necessarily democratic for the promotion and appropriation of information. And, unarguably, the role of the mediator of information, who weaves the threads of social and cultural experiences, helps give another shape to the fabric of the reality present in the village and in the film’s protagonist’s, William Kamkwamba, future.

In this context, the school library, as the pioneer, the beginning of a cycle, must fundamentally be the one to enable an unrestricted research — not only physical, but also symbolic — that is guided by the student’s curiosity and mediated by the disengagement from dogmatisms. Metaphorically speaking, the school library is a “time bomb”, ready to explode, for it possesses the basic element for the formation and development of an individual’s action and reaction, in spite of political volition: information.

The story of the boy who harnessed the wind not only represents the change that took place in that specific African community in Malawi; it also brings forward important reflections on social, cultural, educational, economical, and political matters that, in the 21st century, are still far from being extinguished from the world. For uncountable families, a child’s attendance to school equals to a life-changing dream, a spark of hope; for other families, it represents something unattainable, for they have accepted a place of domination that was imposed on them and they do not question the inequalities that are the result of a capitalist political-economical system that only intensifies poverty and alienation.

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