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CDA IN THE PERCEPTION OF EU DIPLOMACY

Ahmed AL ZERKANI JASSIM KHUDAYIR*

Abstract: *This article provides a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of one diplomatic speech made by European Union (EU) diplomat who is directly or indirectly addressing Arab audiences. The speech was made by Catherine Ashton (Ashton, 2014) who is High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The purpose of this speech was created to the European Parliament in 2014, referring developments in the Arab Spring and Ukraine in particular. This speech's CDA is applied from the theoretical perspectives noted through my research.*

Keywords: *CDA; political discourse analysis; diplomatic speech; rhetoric; European Union (EU) diplomat.*

Research overview

This analysis of Ashton's speech begins with an analysis of the ideological square within the speech. The 'we' and 'they' distinction is examined, along with the underlying epistemological assumptions that are reflected through Ashton's articulation of sustainable development strategies. The examination then extends to the study of ingroup and outgroup dynamics evident in the speech. There is an inspection of how the binary opposition of 'Us' and 'Them' serves to construct a narrative that places the EU as a guiding, supportive actor, reinforcing a power dynamic that might carry underlying tones of Eurocentrism. Such as,

[...] following the Arab awakening we have played a key role in supporting Tunisia on the road to a stable and democratic future. It is a real success story, has huge potential and we will continue to work tirelessly - as we do with other nations of the region. Particularly at the moment in Egypt where we have a strong relationship with the people of Egypt and you know the particular role that the EU has played and I have played especially when you think of the events last summer and my visit to the then former president Morsi. I will surely be returning to Egypt as it prepares for presidential elections.

The speech is then decoded through a postcolonial lens, scrutinizing Ashton's framing of Tunisia's development and the subtle insinuation of Western superiority that has not often been applied to Arab politics (Allen, 2020; Bailey, 2019; Corm, 2020; Haklai & Rass, 2022; Nassar, 2020; Rouhana & Sabbagh-Khoury, 2019).

This discourse is examined from the perspective of historical colonial power dynamics. Exploring the role of discursive power and its influence in conflict resolution, the analysis then moves to Ashton's portrayal of the situation in Egypt. The analysis illustrates how the language used conveys the EU's power dynamics with Egypt and its stance on human rights and democracy. A constructivist perspective is next applied to comprehend the EU's approach to intervention in Libya. The discourse analysis around Syria leverages poststructuralist theory to understand the negotiation of power dynamics and the strategic use of language. This provides insight into how the EU positions itself

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as a key player in the Syrian conflict. Finally, the focus is on how Arab audiences could perceive Ashton's speech given the dynamics in the region (Allen, 2020; Bailey, 2019; Corm, 2020; Haklai & Rass, 2022; Nassar, 2020; Rouhana & Sabbagh-Khoury, 2019). The varied interpretations of this speech from the Arab perspective underscore the complexities of international relations and cross-cultural communication.

Applying the Ideological Square

The concept of the ideological square is essentially a tool for examining how political actors, through their speeches and discourses, present and promote their own positive actions or intentions (Us/Ingroup), while simultaneously demoting and denigrating the actions or characteristics of the Others (Them/Outgroup). In this speech, Ashton uses a clear distinction between the 'we' and 'they', which characterizes the ideological square. The 'we' is consistently portrayed as a guiding, supportive entity, evident in the phrases (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) "we have played a key role", "we will continue to work tirelessly", and "we continue to remain determined." This portrayal extends an epistemological assumption that the 'we' (which, in this context, is the European Union) is competent, dedicated, and involved in efforts for regional stability. The 'they', on the other hand, are the nations of the Southern Neighbourhood, which are seen as in need of guidance, assistance, or correction. References to the sentencing of Muslim Brotherhood supporters in Egypt, the instability in Libya, and the humanitarian crisis in Syria, among others, all contribute to a picture of countries in crisis, implicitly underscoring the need for intervention.

Ashton's articulation of sustainable development strategies, such as supporting Tunisia's democratic progress, urging dialogue in Syria, and offering support to Libyan authorities, reveals an epistemological assumption about what strategies are deemed suitable or effective for the 'they.' In this light, the speaker assumes a certain position of power and knowledge, framing the EU as the authoritative entity that can and should shape outcomes in the region. The ideological square is thus evident in the speaker's articulation of these epistemological assumptions: the EU, with its comprehensive approach and determination, is implicitly framed as a leading force for change and stabilization, while the Southern Neighbourhood countries are portrayed as areas needing this intervention. This dichotomy serves to highlight the EU's positive role and downplay any potential critique of its strategies or interventions in the region.

Ingroup and Outgroup Dynamics

The construction of ingroup (Us) and outgroup (Them) dynamics is a pervasive feature in political discourse and diplomatic speeches, and it is equally apparent in Ashton's speech. The speaker clearly differentiates between the 'we' (the EU) and the 'they' (the nations of the Southern Neighbourhood), thus constructing a binary opposition that serves to outline specific roles and responsibilities within the diplomatic sphere.

From the start, the speaker identifies 'we' (EU) as a stabilizing, guiding force, which is continuously striving to support and assist the nations of the Southern Neighbourhood in their pursuit of stability and democracy. Phrases like (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) "we have played a key role", "we will continue to work tirelessly", and "we are unique in foreign policy terms" all contribute to an image of the EU as a proactive and responsible actor, ready to deploy its resources for the good of others.

Conversely, the 'they' are depicted as nations in dire need of this assistance. Tunisia is portrayed as having "huge potential" (Ashton, 2014, p. 1), implying that it's not yet capable of fully realizing this potential without external support. Egypt is urged to ensure

“a right to a fair and timely trial” (Ashton, 2014, p. 1), indicating perceived deficiencies in their legal system. Libya is described as a nation struggling to “cement their democracy and create the functioning state”, thus highlighting its precarious situation and need for help. Further, Ashton refers to the challenges faced by these nations – Egypt’s court rulings, Libya’s civil unrest, Syria’s humanitarian crisis – as separate from ‘our’ challenges, thus constructing these problems as belonging primarily to the ‘them’, while ‘we’ (EU) step in as external supporters.

Interestingly, the speaker’s articulation of these ingroup-outgroup dynamics contains a subtle undercurrent of Eurocentrism, which aligns with postcolonial interests (Andrews, 2021; Blachford, 2021; Eriksson Baaz & Parashar, 2021; Hesselink, 2022; Said, 1978). The speech suggests an image of the EU as a saviour, implying that the Southern Neighbourhood countries are unable to handle their crises independently. This notion carries the risk of oversimplifying complex regional issues and underestimating the capacity of these nations to manage their own affairs. In sum, the diplomatic speech employs ingroup-outgroup dynamics to construct a narrative that places the EU as a guiding, supportive actor and the Southern Neighbourhood nations as beneficiaries of its assistance, reinforcing the dichotomy between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ in international relations discourse.

Decoding Postcolonial Interests

The postcolonial lens provides a critical perspective on how former colonial powers may continue to exert influence over former colonies or other less developed countries (Andrews, 2021; Blachford, 2021; Eriksson Baaz & Parashar, 2021; Hesselink, 2022; Said, 1978). Ashton’s speech offers some potential evidence of postcolonial interests shaping the EU’s perspective on Tunisia’s development. The speaker’s framing of Tunisia as a “real success story” (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) with “huge potential” (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) suggests a perspective that places the EU in a position of power or authority, making judgments about the progress of a sovereign nation. The phrase “real success story” (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) inherently implies that there is a ‘story’ to be told about Tunisia’s development and that the EU is in a position to tell it. This could reflect an underlying assumption of Western or European superiority, a characteristic often associated with postcolonial power dynamics. In describing Tunisia’s future as both “stable” and “democratic”, the speaker may be invoking Western-style democracy as the standard or ideal form of governance, which also speaks to a postcolonial dynamic. Democracy, as it is understood and practiced in Western countries, may not necessarily be the most suitable or desired system for all nations (Andrews, 2021; Blachford, 2021; Eriksson Baaz & Parashar, 2021; Hesselink, 2022; Said, 1978). By framing democracy as an inherent part of Tunisia’s successful future, the speech may overlook or devalue alternative forms of governance and societal organization, particularly in Arab countries.

Ashton’s mention of the EU’s role in supporting Tunisia on its road to a democratic future may echo the historical dynamics of colonial powers shaping the political and social systems of colonized regions. While this is not colonialism in the classic sense, it can be seen as a form of neo-colonialism, where power and control are exerted more subtly through political influence and economic dependence (Andrews, 2021; Blachford, 2021; Eriksson Baaz & Parashar, 2021; Hesselink, 2022; Said, 1978). Further, Ashton’s commitment to “continue to work tirelessly” (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) for nations like Tunisia could also be seen through a postcolonial lens. This language frames the EU as a benevolent actor generously offering its aid to less developed countries, reinforcing a dynamic of dependency. This dynamic could serve to maintain a certain

degree of control and influence for the EU over these nations, similar to traditional colonial relationships (Andrews, 2021; Blachford, 2021; Eriksson Baaz & Parashar, 2021; Hesselink, 2022; Said, 1978). Overall, while the speech does not explicitly evoke colonial themes, a postcolonial analysis reveals potential evidence of lingering colonial-style relationships and simplistic assumptions about Western superiority and the intrinsic desirability of Western-style democracy.

Discursive Power and Conflict Resolution: The Case of Egypt

In Ashton's Speech, discursive power and its role in conflict resolution can be seen in how the speaker frames the situation in Egypt and the EU's involvement in it. The speaker's language and choice of topics convey certain values and positions that reflect the power dynamics between the EU and Egypt, showcasing the EU's diplomatic efforts and its stance on human rights and democracy.

Ashton acknowledges the EU's close relationship with the Egyptian people, highlighting the EU's active role in supporting Egypt, notably through their interventions following "the events [of the Arab Spring] last summer" (Ashton, 2014, p. 1). The speaker's discourse implies that the EU is not just a neutral observer but a significant player in the region's politics, wielding the power to influence outcomes. Ashton strongly condemns the sentencing to death of 529 Muslim Brotherhood supporters, asserting the EU's stance on human rights, fair trials, and the right to legal and familial contact. These statements reflect the EU's soft power and its attempt to shape international norms and standards. By voicing this in a public speech, the speaker seeks to pressure Egypt's interim authorities to conform to these standards.

Yet, Ashton also carefully balances this criticism with condemnation of the bombings in Egypt, expressing condolences for the victims. This serves to position the EU as a neutral party advocating for peace and stability rather than siding with any political faction. This could be a strategic use of discursive power to maintain a diplomatic relationship with the existing Egyptian government while still advocating for human rights and democracy. The insistence on Egypt's need for stability and inclusivity highlights the EU's preferred approach to conflict resolution – an inclusive society that promotes diversity and dialogue. The speaker uses the discursive power to normalize these principles as universally desired goals, attempting to guide the direction of Egypt's political developments.

Finally, Ashton's commitment to return to Egypt and actively involve in its preparation for presidential elections reveals the EU's intent to continue exerting its influence over the process, subtly indicating a power dynamic where the EU has a stake and say in Egypt's internal affairs. Overall, the speaker employs discursive power to frame the EU's involvement in Egypt, assert its preferred international norms, balance diplomatic relationships, and influence Egypt's path toward conflict resolution and democracy.

Libya's Civil War: A Constructivist Perspective on Intervention

Ashton's discussion of the situation in Libya offers valuable insight into how constructivist principles might be applied to understand the EU's approach to intervention. Constructivism, as a theoretical framework, asserts that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces and that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas. Ashton references the "knock-off effects" (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) of Libya's civil war, namely the crisis in Mali, suggesting that instability in one region can rapidly impact

others, requiring a coordinated, international response. This perspective aligns with the constructivist understanding of international relations, where events are not isolated, but interconnected, often by shared ideas, norms, or perceptions. The speaker's decision to appoint a personal special envoy to Libya also demonstrates the EU's belief in diplomatic engagement and dialogue as a preferred method of intervention. This reflects a constructivist approach, which values communication and negotiation to build shared understanding and mutually beneficial outcomes.

The commitment to support Libyan authorities to "cement their democracy" (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) and to "create the functioning state" (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) represents a typical constructivist perspective on nation-building, mentioned,

[...] Again, I don't have to tell honourable members how worrying the situation is in Libya and I have met with some representatives in Libya yesterday who were here for the EU-Africa Summit. The knock-off effects of the civil war of course is fueling the crisis in Mali. We need to try and again deliver support to the Libyan authorities to allow them to cement their democracy and create the functioning state. We cannot allow terrorists again a foothold in that territory. That is why I will shortly be appointing a personal special envoy to engage specifically with the Libyan authorities and to focus again on bringing international attention and bringing international actors together to try and support the needs of the Libya people.

In this regard, it suggests a belief in the importance of shared democratic values and norms, the dissemination of which can contribute to the construction of a stable and peaceful society. Ashton's concern about the risk of allowing terrorists "a foothold in that territory" points to an understanding that these non-state actors can also shape the narrative and the course of events through their actions and ideas. The emphasis on international attention and support for Libya's needs underscores a constructivist belief in the importance of the international community's shared perception and understanding of the crisis then unfolding in that nation.

In conclusion, through the lens of constructivism, Ashton's statements on Libya can be interpreted as recognizing the role of shared ideas, norms, and perceptions in shaping international relations and guiding interventions. This understanding is reflected in the EU's approach to the Libyan civil war, emphasizing diplomatic engagement, international cooperation, and the promotion of democratic norms.

EU and Syria: The Interplay of Power and Discourse

In discussing Syria, Ashton navigates a complex interplay of power and discourse. The application of poststructuralist theory allows us to better understand how this negotiation unfolds in the speech and how discursive power dynamics are involved. Poststructuralism suggests that power operates through language, shaping our understanding of reality. It pays close attention to the construction and deconstruction of meanings and is often concerned with unmasking the underlying assumptions and power dynamics that influence discourse. When referring to Syria, mentioned,

[...] The situation in Syria of course remains terrible. The failure of international cohesion has prevented serious pressure being brought to bear on Assad to bring the conflict to an end. We continue to remain determined to support the efforts of the UN. In my discussions with Secretary General Ban Ki Moon yesterday we talked about the continuing support to try and get to a political solution. We continue to support the difficult work of Lakdar Brahimi. I share with him the appeal to the parties to return to the negotiating table.

[...] *We must continue to urge dialogue and to highlight the deteriorating humanitarian situation. The plight of 9.3 million vulnerable Syrians remains terrible. The risk of regional instability - in particular impacts Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq - and the growth of terrorist and extremist groups such as Al-Qaida. This is an ever-present problem. We will carry on our work and will provide humanitarian assistance - it currently stands at 2.6 billion Euro and we will continue to press all parties to allow unhindered access of humanitarian aid. And in our discussions with all countries who have something to do with this or a role to play in this we will continue to push for that.*

The speaker mentions the “terrible” situation and the “failure of international cohesion” (Ashton, 2014, p. 1). Here, the speaker is establishing a narrative of crisis and lack of unified action, which arguably sets the stage for the EU’s involvement as a mediator and helper. The underlying assumption here is that intervention - diplomatic, humanitarian, or otherwise - is needed and justified.

Ashton then speaks about supporting the UN’s efforts and dialogues with Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon. Here, the EU’s position as a collaborative and diplomatic entity is emphasized, strategically aligning itself with international consensus and legitimacy. The phrase “continuing support to try and get to a political solution” (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) highlights the EU’s stance as a peace-promoting actor. By reinforcing this narrative, the EU discursively empowers itself as a mediator and a constructive force. Mentioning (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) the “plight of 9.3 million vulnerable Syrians”, “the risk of regional instability” and “the growth of terrorist and extremist groups” serves to underscore the gravity of the situation and the need for action, indirectly justifying the EU’s involvement. By framing these issues as a shared concern, Ashton strategically uses discursive power to shape perceptions and solicit support for their approach. The commitment to “press all parties to allow unhindered access of humanitarian aid” (Ashton, 2014, p. 1) reveals the EU’s attempt to assert its influence on the situation, reinforcing its role as a normative power.

Ashton’s words about Syria reflect a careful interplay of power and discourse. Through a poststructuralist lens, we see how the speaker’s strategic use of language serves to position the EU as a legitimate, necessary, and constructive actor in the Syrian conflict. This underlines the importance of discourse in shaping power dynamics and negotiating roles within international relations.

Conclusion: Arab Perspectives

Perception of any speech is highly subjective and greatly influenced by a multitude of factors such as cultural background, political orientation, historical context, and personal experiences (Abdel-Raheem, 2020; Krzyżanowski, 2020; Latupeirissa, Laksana, Artawa, & Sosiowati, 2019; Paulson, 2019). Arab audiences could interpret Ashton’s speech in various ways based on these factors.

Some Arab audiences might appreciate the recognition and attention the EU is giving to the complex issues their countries are facing. Ashton specifically mentions Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria, highlighting the EU’s commitment to support their journeys toward stability and democracy. This recognition can be seen as an affirmation of the importance and relevance of these countries on the international stage. However, other Arab audiences might perceive the EU’s involvement and interventions as intrusive or overstepping boundaries (Allen, 2020; Bailey, 2019; Corm, 2020; Haklai & Rass, 2022; Nassar, 2020; Rouhana & Sabbagh-Khoury, 2019). Given the historical context of

colonialism and external interventions in the region, some Arab audiences may view the EU's stated commitments and actions with scepticism or resistance, interpreting them as attempts to impose Western models of governance and societal norms (Allen, 2020; Bailey, 2019; Corm, 2020; Haklai & Rass, 2022; Nassar, 2020; Rouhana & Sabbagh-Khoury, 2019).

The EU's pledge for humanitarian aid, particularly for Syria, might be appreciated by those affected directly or indirectly by these conflicts. Such commitment might be seen as a sign of empathy and solidarity from the international community. Ashton's assertion of the EU's unique position in foreign policy and its comprehensive approach to complex crises could be interpreted in two ways. Some might see it as a positive, appreciating the EU's multifaceted capabilities and willingness to leverage them for the region's benefit. Others might perceive this as a self-promotion or hegemonic discourse, positioning the EU as a superior power, especially given historical precedents (Allen, 2020; Bailey, 2019; Corm, 2020; Haklai & Rass, 2022; Nassar, 2020; Rouhana & Sabbagh-Khoury, 2019). Ashton's expression of concern over the sentencing of 529 Muslim Brotherhood supporters in Egypt, and calls for fair trials could resonate with those who value justice and human rights. However, it could also be seen as interference in domestic affairs. Ultimately, Arab audiences' perception of the speech could range from viewing the EU as a supportive ally to seeing it as an interfering entity (Allen, 2020; Bailey, 2019; Corm, 2020; Haklai & Rass, 2022; Nassar, 2020; Rouhana & Sabbagh-Khoury, 2019). The nuances of these perceptions underscore the complexities of international relations and cross-cultural communication.

Conclusions

CDA reveals that European diplomatic speeches that directly or indirectly address Arab audiences are discursively complex. The main conclusion that can be drawn from the selected discourse analysed in this article is that such discourse contains a tension between themes of (a) Eurocentrism, postcolonialism, and paternalism; and (b) egalitarianism and inclusivity. CDA reveals that each speech contains embedded assumptions, subsequently informing the discursive nature of power and identity in this type of speech, in which Europe is 'us' and Arabs are 'them'; this distinction is so strong that, even when the speechmakers explicitly intend to assist Arabs and Arab states, her speech can sound condescending, aggressive, racist, and postcolonial.

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APPROACHING INTERTEXTUALITY IN TARANTINO'S MOVIES

Bianca DABU*

**“When people ask me if I went to film school, I tell them ‘No, I went to films.’”
Quentin Tarantino**

Abstract: *Intertextuality is defined as “a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (Kristeva, 1986:37). In other words, intertextuality is a term used to highlight the idea that all types of texts are intertwined through direct references or underlying significances that are discovered or perceived by various readers of the texts. Van Zoonen (2017:805) appreciated that currently the word text covers a wide range of realities and significances which interfere and co-exist mainly in modern visual arts and communication channels. Postmodernism in film began as a reaction to modernism and its way of favouring the “normal” approach of doing films questioning as well the stories and the techniques. Tarantino is often hailed as one of the quintessential filmmakers of postmodernism. For his entire career Quentin Tarantino has been at the centre of an artistic discussion about the intertextual references, allusions, quotes and recycled material that feature heavily throughout his work (Millea, 2012:15). Some critics argue that Tarantino’s postmodern approach is new and fresh while others consider that his popularity is built on an empty and meaningless pastiche of popular culture (Andrew, 1998:315-317). Sometimes Tarantino’s intertextuality is related to his fine craftsmanship of “stealing” from other movies. Plagiarizing or pastiching is the base he leans on when it comes to creation.*

Keywords: *text-intertext; intertextuality; vertical and horizontal film intertextuality; pastiche.*

Although intertextuality is an overdiscussed issue since the beginning of the 20th century when it was approached by Bahtin, it is referred to as a concept coined by Julia Kristeva (1966). Thus, intertextuality is defined as “a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (Kristeva, 1986:37). In other words, intertextuality is a term used to highlight the idea that all types of texts are intertwined through direct references or underlying significances that are discovered or perceived by various readers of the texts on both horizontal and vertical axes: “The word’s status is thus defined horizontally (the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee) as well as vertically (the word in the text is oriented towards an anterior or synchronic literary corpus)...”(ibidem).

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When Barthes¹ talks about the text and its relation with the author, he deals with the classical causality dilemma question: “Which came first? The author or the text?”² Everybody thinks that the release of a text is a process related to the creator’s vision on a certain topic. Thus, the author is before the text. Barthes (1977:145) states that *‘the Author ... is always conceived of as the past of his own book ... The Author is thought to nourish the book, which is to say that he exists before it.’* In fact, he explains, the authorship is the consequence of previous circumstances that influence the production of a text. From this perspective, the author is seen not as the creator but as the result of overlapped stages that contributed to his/her training over time.

Going further, Barthes also tackles the relation of the text with the targeted audience, as “*a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination*” (Barthes, 1977:148). Therefore, the reader or the viewer will interpret the text, in its turn according to this/her own cultural patterns. The reader or viewer (scriptor) will interpret the text through his/her own belief system and culture and in doing so the text will be subject to an infinite amount of interpretations, thereby creating his/her own connotational meaning based on life experience.

Considering the text is a multifaceted process, it is obvious that one text cannot exist disconnected from others. This “tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” (Barthes,1977:146) is an interaction between texts in the past and present that is referred to as *intertextuality*.

Plett (1991:5) makes an attempt to settle the content of *intertext* and the role of the author and the reader that make the intertext visible and communicable. At the same time, he tackles the difference between a text and the intertext:

“A text may be regarded as an autonomous sign structure, delimited and coherent. Its boundaries are indicated by its beginning, middle and end, its coherence by the deliberately interrelated conjunction of its constituents. An intertext, on the other hand, is characterized by attributes that exceed it. It is not delimited, but de-limited, for its constituents refer to constituents of one or several other texts. Therefore, it has a twofold coherence: an intratextual one which guarantees the immanent integrity of the text, and an intertextual one which creates structural relations between itself and other texts.”

In the same vein, Van Zoonen (2017:805) appreciated that currently the word *text* covers a wide range of realities and significations which interfere and co-exist mainly in modern visual arts and communication channels:

“[...] the word ‘text’ implies written signs or words on a piece of stone, wood, paper, screen or fabric; this could thus be books, newspapers, letters, WhatsApp-messages, magazines, subtitles, slogans on t-shirts and far more. ‘Text’ in critical versions of

¹ In the *Death of the Author* (1977), Barthes argue that what an author claims as his/her idea is the result of successive accumulations acquired from various previous texts. Anything considered a text (writings, photographs, films, music, visual arts all in all) encompass patterns of culture, language, philosophy and many more that the author borrowed from personal and social environments in order to use them in the construction of the text. “*We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning (the ‘message’ of the Author/God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash*” (Barthes,1977:146).

² The Author, when believed in, is always conceived of as the past of his own book:book and author stand automatically on a single line” divided into a *before* and an *after* (Barthes,1977:145).

media and communication studies also includes visual images and sounds, hence references to the 'television-text', 'film-text' or 'multi-media-text' are common".

In the '80s the emerging studies on intertextuality for media and communication emphasized the relation between intertextuality and the targeted audiences and in the 90's intertextuality stirred the attention of film critics once Quentin Tarantino appeared on the film market as a postmodern creator.

Postmodernism in film began as a reaction to modernism and its way of favouring the "normal" approach of doing films questioning as well the stories and the techniques. Tarantino is often hailed as one of the quintessential filmmakers of postmodernism as each of his iconic works and all together contributed to embedding a label of a new filmmaking style: *Tarantinoesque*¹: "Like Kafkaesque before it (...or Hitchcockian), it seemed to say everything and nothing at the same time" (Holm, 2004:19).

The American filmmaker Quentin Tarantino has been described as "the single most influential director of our generation." Having created seminal masterpieces like *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction* which shaped the evolution of cinema in the 1990s, Tarantino has continued to make critically acclaimed gems like his 2019 film *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* (<https://faroutmagazine.co.uk/quentin-tarantino-explains-how-to-write-a-good-film/>). Often referred to "auteur director" within the world of filmmaking and cinema production, he is a director whose film unique style and quirkiness make him a distinct voice from just about any other filmmaker working in the postmodern world today. At the same time, the mainstream audience can just feel the difference from the typical movies as Tarantino never uses the same tropes or plot devices as other filmmakers.

Nevertheless, characteristics of postmodern films (Chidwick, 2012) may be traceable in Tarantino's movies too:

- *playfulness and self-reference*: this means that the film will jump up and down to draw attention on itself and its mode of construction which helps the audience orient and focus;
- *pastiche* (tongue in cheek, rehashes of classic pop culture), *flattening or affect* (technology, violence, drugs, emotionless, unauthentic lives), *hyperreality* (augmented reality more desirable than reality itself), *time bending* (time travel as a way to alter reality), *altered states* (mental illness or drugs as a dark gateway to internal realities), *more human than human* (artificial intelligence, robotics and cybernetics to replace or enhance humanity);
- *generic blurring and intertextuality*: this represents the tendency to cross boundaries between different film genre and refer to other medium formats which creates a relationship with the audience;
- *popular and commercial media meets high culture*: this is where the film or other type of pop culture media meets high culture (literature, art forms, etc.);
- *fragmentation and the death of representation*: the use of fragments from other texts, genre and cultural influences;

¹ *Tarantinoesque*, adj. (1994). Resembling or imitative of the films of Quentin Tarantino; characteristic or reminiscent of these films. Tarantino's films are typically characterized by graphic and stylized violence, non-linear storylines, cineliterate references, satirical themes, and sharp dialogue (https://www.oed.com/dictionary/tarantinoesque_adj?tl=true).

- *uncertainty and the loss of context*: this can result in the shaking up previously understood beliefs and roles.

Approaching intertextuality in Tarantino's movies may be an endless endeavour as it is unanimously acknowledged that his exceptional vision on a topic is targeting various interpretations. In the same way that Kristeva dealt with the horizontal and vertical axes of a text, John Fiske, a Danish film theoretician made a useful distinction between primary, secondary and tertiary texts (*apud* Van Zoonen, 2017:802) and the relation between them.

“Primary texts are works of content that can be understood without reference to other works of content: they could thus be an individual book, television program or song [...]. In addition, primary texts also gain meaning because of secondary texts about them, for instance reviews by critics, actor or writer interviews, red carpet appearances, celebrity magazines, promotion material, merchandise and more. These secondary texts, moreover, do not only refer to the primary texts, but also to other secondary texts. Finally, in Fiske's scheme, the interpretations by audiences constitute 'tertiary' texts that range from individual appreciations, to family routines or fan gatherings”.

Fiske introduced two directions for interpreting intertextuality in cinema: vertical intertextuality (a film making a reference to a book/ song or vice versa) and horizontal intertextuality (reference on the same level – films to films).

Vertical and horizontal intertextuality are present in Tarantino's movies. The classical example for vertical intertextuality is *Jackie Brown* based on Elmore Leonard's crime novel *Rum Punch*, published in 1992 (Martynuska, 2023:30). All of the films Tarantino had directed before *Jackie Brown* had been based on original scripts he had written himself, so this particular movie was his first adaptation project.

As far as horizontal intertextuality is concerned one example could be the scene in *Pulp Fiction* (1994) where Marcellus stops in front of Butch's car and turns his head slowly to see Butch behind the wheel is directly taken from the movie *Psycho* (1960), directed by Hitchcock.

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBC77yCGEt4&ab_channel=LostTheater).

At the same time one should not overlook the fact that Tarantino references his own films mainly through lineage of characters (Castro, 2016, <https://screenrant.com/tarantino-characters-related-to-each-other/>):

- Mr. Blonde (*Reservoir Dogs*) is the brother of Vincent Vega (*Pulp Fiction*).
- Lee Donowitz (*True Romance*) is the son of Donny Donowitz (*Inglourious Basterds*).
- Crazy Craig Coons (*Django Unchained*) is a distant relative of Captain Coons (*Pulp Fiction*), etc.

For his entire career Quentin Tarantino has been at the centre of an artistic discussion about the intertextual references, allusions, quotes and recycled material that feature heavily throughout his work (Millea, 2012:15). Some critics argue that Tarantino's postmodern approach is new and fresh while others consider that his popularity is built on an empty and meaningless pastiche of popular culture (Andrew, 1998:315-317)

Sometimes Tarantino's intertextuality is related to his fine craftsmanship of “stealing” from other movies. *Plagirizing* or *pastiching* is the base he leans on when it comes to creation. In a very well documented presentation of Tarantino's activity, Nataniel Lee (2020, <https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals->

[cinema-homage-reference-2019-7](#)) provides evidence to support his affirmations. What makes the films of Quentin Tarantino so special?

“Many often cite his razor-sharp dialogue. The often graphic yet stylized violence. Or his use of nonlinear narrative structure. But what truly sets him apart from every other filmmaker is the way in which he steals from other movies. And that’s not just a figure of speech. In a 1994 interview with Empire magazine, Tarantino said, “I steal from every single movie ever made.” Tarantino’s visual references to movies have become his trademark”.

Therefore, many times Tarantino was called pastiche writer. Genette (quoted in Lacasse 2000:44) thinks that the parodist or the travesty writer gets hold of a text and transforms it according to this or that formal constraint or semantic intention, or transposes it uniformly and as if mechanically into another style. The pastiche writer gets hold of a style (...) and this style dictates the text.

Tarantino’s pastiche works in all his nine films and is a tribute to various film genres. Tarantino uses as many elements as possible from other works creating sometimes a very fine patchwork where everything can “be *disentangled*, nothing *deciphered* [...]” (Barthes, 1977:147). Thus, vertical and horizontal intertextuality are in a tight connection but nevertheless, difficult to decipher.

In order to detangle the elements of intertextuality in Tarantino’s films we rely on the following constituents: actors, pop-culture artists and references, music and musicians and movies (https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References).

1. Reservoir Dogs 1992

film genre: Mexican standoff, type of indie flick

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals-cinema-homage-reference-2019-7>)

The film was inspired by *City on the fire* (1987) by Ringo Lam, main inspiration for the plot (the last 20 minutes of the film are in fact the plot itself in Tarantino’s film according to Lee, 2020) *Au Revoir Les Enfants* (1987) by Louis Malle was the inspirations for the movie’s title, as well as *Straw Dogs* (1971) by Sam Peckinpah.

intertextual vertical/horizontal reference

(https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References):

Celebrities (actors, pop-culture artists/ references)	Charles Bronson - Name mentioned several times by Mr. Brown and Mr. White. Lee Marvin - Mr. Blonde correctly bets Mr. White is “a big Lee Marvin fan”. John Holmes - Name mentioned during Mr. Brown’s ‘Like a Virgin’ speech. Donald Trump - Name mentioned by Joe.
music and musicians	Madonna (Like A Virgin, Lucky Star, True Blue).
movies	The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3 (1974) - The concept of colour names as aliases (Mr Pink etc) given to the gang by Joe Cabot was originally used by the robbers in the above-mentioned film. A Better Tomorrow II (1987) - The black suits worn by the Dogs are a tribute to the John Woo action vehicle

	The Great Escape (1963) with Charles Bronson Mr. Brown mentions during 'Like a Virgin' speech.
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2. Pulp Fiction 1994

film genre type of indie flick

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals-cinema-homage-reference-2019-7>)

One important aspect about the title of the film is its significance. Pulp magazines and pulp novels ("pulp fiction" as a general term) had their origin in the United States, but they can be traced back in the UK 19th century "penny dreadful" weekly publications filled with stories of crime and horror. They were printed on inexpensive pulp paper and were significantly more affordable than serial novels by figures such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Charles Dickens (<https://www.thecollector.com/what-is-pulp-fiction/>). Pulp Fiction Tarantino's 1994 masterpiece is probably the most influential film of the 1990s although he has been accused of liberally borrowing ideas from other filmmakers (Bose, 2020 <https://faroutmagazine.co.uk/quentin-tarantino-pulp-fiction-dance-inspiration-fellini/>). There have been identified almost 100 films that are associated with elements traceable in Pulp Fiction (the entire list may be found at <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls084950274/>)

Intertextual vertical/horizontal reference:

(https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References):

Celebrities (actors, pop-culture artists/ references)	<p>Cary Grant - Jules says "It would have to be the Cary Grant of pigs".</p> <p>Lash La Rue - The Wolf asks Vincent "What about you, Lash La Rue? Can you keep your spurs from jingling and jangling?", a reference to the famous cowboy actor.</p> <p>Marilyn Monroe - Legendary film icon/sex symbol. Died in the early 60s. One of the costumed waitresses Vincent points out.</p> <p>Andy Warhol - Mia reference's Warhol's line about "15 Minutes of Fame".</p>
music and musicians	<p>The Beatles - Music Group. Referenced in the deleted scene where Mia interviews Vincent.</p> <p>Elvis Presley - Mia says "An Elvis man should love it", referring to JRS's.</p> <p>Suzanne Vega - Referenced in the deleted scene where Mia interviews Vincent. Vincent and Vic Vega (Reservoir Dogs) were named after Suzanne Vega, one of QT's favourite musicians.</p>
movies:	<p>Grease: Reference to cooties. Dancing. John Travolta movie.</p> <p>Psycho (1960): The shot of Marcellus turning his head to see Butch in his car is taken directly from Psycho.</p> <p>The AristoCats (1970): Uma Thurman was told to dance like Duchess from The AristoCats for her dance sequence.</p> <p>Taxi Driver (1976): The shot of Esmeralda's taxi license is taken from 'Taxi Driver'.</p>

	<p>RoboCop (1987): In the script, while Vincent is driving Mia to Lances, he is described as having one hand firmly on the wheel and the other shifting like RoboCop.</p> <p>True Romance (1993): Fabienne says “Any time of day is a good time for pie.” This line was first heard in True Romance, also written by Tarantino.</p>
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3. Jackie Brown 1997

film genre: type of indie flick

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals-cinema-homage-reference-2019-7>)

Quentin Tarantino’s semi-noir *Jackie Brown* (1997) is based on Elmore Leonard’s crime novel *Rum Punch*, published in 1992. The book’s title refers to a criminal intrigue that describes a deal with Colombians in the Bahamas (Leonard 138 and 264). When Tarantino retitled the novel from *Rum Punch* to *Jackie Brown*, the focus of the plot shifted from the unlawful act named “Rum Punch” to the main female protagonist, suggesting that she matters more than the crime itself (Martynuska: 30).

Intertextual vertical/horizontal reference:

(https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References):

Celebrities (actors, pop-culture artists/ references)	<p>Sid Haig, who previously appeared in several 70s Blaxploitation films got cast in the role of the judge that sentences Jackie to prison.</p> <p>Jack Hill- the director of the exploitation films Sid Haig and Pam Grier starred in.</p>
music and musicians	<p>“Longtime Woman” is sung by Grier for The Big Doll House (1971), and plays when the main character in that film is being locked in prison.</p>
movies:	<p>Foxy Brown (1974) - one of his favourite movies, which also starred Pam Grier and director Jack Hill</p> <p>Vampyros Lesbos (1971) – a vampire film directed by Jess Franco</p> <p>Pulp Fiction (1994) - Samuel L. Jackson says the line, “This is some repugnant shit”.</p>

4. Kill Bill volume1 2003/Kill Bill volume2 2004

film genre: is reminiscent of the classical Japanese samurai and Chinese kung fu movies, a revenge movie inspired by samurai flicks and Bruce Lee films,

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals-cinema-homage-reference-2019-7>)

Kill Bill is arguably the most genre-bending film of his filmography. With influences coming from Samurai movies, martial-arts films, anime, and blaxploitation, the movie is built like a tapestry of allusions, references, and homages (Viitanen, 2020:7). O-Ren’s story seems to draw especially strong connections to movies such as Joseph Manduke’s

Kid Vengeance (1977) and Giulio Petroni's *Death Rides A Horse* (1967), the latter of which is also visually referenced in the movie.

intertextual vertical/horizontal reference:

(https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References):

Celebrities (actors, pop-culture artists/ references)	The scene where Go-Go stabs a man in the crotch and asks him if he still wants to “penetrate her” is a homage to Chiaki Kuriyama’s infamous scene in another Japanese movie, <i>Battle Royale</i> .
music and musicians	The song “Flower of Carnage” is from the film <i>Lady Snowblood</i> (1973) directed by Toshiya Fujita Meiko Kaji stars in that film and sings the theme.
movies	Lady Snowblood (1973) directed by Toshiya Fujita a girl revenge movie that bears lots of resemblances O-Ren Ishii is largely inspired by this character. Shogun Assassin (1980) directed by Robert Houston. The bloody fight in the House of Blue Leaves is somewhat inspired from it. <i>Shogun Assassin</i> from 1980 is edited together from the first two <i>Lone Wolf and Cub</i> movies from the 1970s. The producer also added bizarre music and English voiceovers. BB and The Bride watch this in Volume 2 Reservoir Dogs - the Bride pulls a single blade razor from her cowboy boot which is a direct homage to Mr Blonde who pulls a razor from his cowboy boot in the infamous ear scene.

5. Death Proof 2007

film genre: the story of a B-Movie

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals-cinema-homage-reference-2019-7>)

Two 75-minute horror movies written by Quentin Tarantino & Robert Rodriguez put together as a two film features. Including fake movie trailers in between both movies.

From groundbreaking directors Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez comes the ultimate film experience: a double-bill of thrillers that will recall both filmmakers’ favourite exploitation films.

Grind House will be presented as one full-length feature comprised of two individual films helmed separately by each director. Tarantino’s film, *Death Proof*, is a rip-roaring slasher flick where the killer pursues his victims with a car rather than a knife, while Rodriguez’s film explores an alien world eerily familiar to ours in *Planet Terror*.

Segment “Planet Terror” (The zombie film) directed by Robert Rodriguez.

Segment “Death Proof” (The thriller) directed by Quentin Tarantino.

Fake trailers segment directed by Eli Roth, Rob Zombie, Edgar Wright.

(<https://www.filmaffinity.com/us/film745914.html>)

Tarantino is known for presenting things in non-chronological order during his films. However, this film is the only one of his films that runs chronologically, as if in real life, and the soundtrack works to emphasize this.

(<https://tarantinoandmusic.wordpress.com/death-proof/>)

Intertextual vertical/horizontal reference:

(https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References):

Celebrities (actors, pop-culture artists/ references)	The duck at the hood of Kurt Russel's car was inspired by the 1978 film <i>Convoy</i> directed by Sam Peckinpah with reference to Martin "Rubber Duck" Penwald character. Grindhouse – noun – A downtown movie theatre - in disrepair since its glory days as a movie palace of the '30s and '40s - known for "grinding out" non-stop double-bill programs of B-movies. double bill poster for the <i>American International Pictures</i> films Rock All Night and Dragstrip Girl .
music and musicians	The Morricone score 'Paranoia Prima' from the film <i>The Cat o'Nine Tails</i> (1971) is featured on the album, along with classic rock songs such as 'Baby Its You' by Smith and 'Down in Mexico' by the Coasters. https://tarantinoandmusic.wordpress.com/death-proof/ .
movies:	Torso (1973) Sergio Martino's giallo thriller, closer to a slasher film[...] focusing on sex, violence and tension (https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0069920/reviews) Zombie 2 Lucio Fulci's zombie film is a 1979 English-language Italian zombie film. It was adapted from an original screenplay by Elisa Briganti and uncredited writer Dardano Sacchetti. The producers finalized the title as <i>Zombi 2</i> to give the impression that it was a sequel to the unrelated American film Dawn of the Death (1978), which was released in Italy under the title <i>Zombi</i> (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombi_2).

6. Inglorious Basterds 2009

film genre: a fictional event during World War Two

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals-cinema-homage-reference-2019-7>)

Inglourious Basterds is a historical Macaroni Combat World War II war film pastiched after *The Inglourious Bastards* and directed by Enzo Castellari (1978) with a narrative focus on the power of cinema and its history, its namesake is a 1977 named, (Nashawaty, 2009:<https://www.today.com/popculture/quentin-tarantino-original-bastards-wbna32465195>)

Intertextual vertical/horizontal reference:

(https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References):

Celebrities (actors, pop-culture artists/ references)	Aldo Ray starred in both Hollywood studio films and classic exploitation films. The last name "Raine" is a homage to the character Major Charles Rane from one of QTs favourite revenge films Hugo Stiglitz is a homage to the German-Mexican real actor of the same name. Yvette Mimieux who starred in <i>Dark of the Sun</i> along with Rod Taylor who is playing Winston Churchill in <i>Inglorious Basterds</i> is most likely to have inspired the character Madame Mimieux.
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Music and musicians	<p><i>The Man With The Big Sombrero</i> song from the film Hi Diddle Diddle Diddle appears in the movie.</p> <p><i>One Silver Dollar</i> [Un Dollaro Bucato] - The Film Studio Orchestra (composed by Gianni Ferrio) from the film <i>One Silver Dollar</i></p> <p>Main Theme from <i>Dark Of The Sun</i> - Jacques Loussier from the film <i>Dark of the Sun</i>.</p>
movies:	<p>Other “men on a mission” World War II movies like <i>The Guns of Navarone</i> , <i>Where Eagles Dare</i>, <i>The Dirty Dozen</i>, <i>Five for Hell</i> and <i>Battle Squadron</i> have had an impact on Tarantino. Especially the Italian-made ones, which, like the Spaghetti Westerns, have garnered their own pasta inspired nickname: Macaroni Combat films. They are some of Tarantino’s favourites.</p>

7. Django Unchained 2012

film genre: a classic western premise into the modern age

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals-cinema-homage-reference-2019-7>)

Tarantino took inspiration for *Django Unchained* from the Italian movie *Django* (and even got Frank Nero, the original Django, to make a cameo appearance) and the 1975 movie *Mandingo*, which is about a plantation owner’s son who has an affair with a slave. As *Django Unchained* deals with themes like racism, slavery, and more, it has made viewers wonder if the movie is based on a true story or not (<https://screenrant.com/django-unchained-movie-true-story-history-accuracy-changes/>).

Intertextual vertical/horizontal reference:

(https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References):

Celebrities (actors, pop-culture references)	<p>Russ Tamblyn starred in the cult 1965 Western “Son of a Gunfighter”. His daughter, Amber Tamblyn is credited as playing “Daughter of the Son of a Gunfighter” in <i>Django Unchained</i>.</p> <p>One of the slaves is named D’Artagnan, who is also the main character in Alexandre Dumas’ book <i>The Three Musketeers</i></p> <p>The Cleopatra Club, a place for interracial couples, is named after the Egyptian queen.</p>
music and musicians	<p>The Braying Mule - Ennio Morricone, from the film <i>Two Mules for Sister Sara</i>. Directed by American Don Siegel, this film was in effect a partial response to Leone’s popular Italian Westerns.</p> <p>Un Monumento - Ennio Morricone, from the film <i>The Hellbenders</i></p> <p>Trinity Titoli - Franco Micalizzi, from the film <i>They Call Me Trinity</i> 1970 classic spaghetti western directed by Enzo Barboni starring Terence Hill and Bud Spencer.</p>

movies:	Django (1966) is the fourth spaghetti western directed by Sergio Corbucci. The seminal movie by Corbucci which in parts inspired Tarantino Don Johnson who plays Big Daddy was the star of the hit 80s crime series Miami Vice .
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8. The Hateful Eight 2015

film genre: western, wild-west show

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/quentin-tarantino-movies-steals-cinema-homage-reference-2019-7>)

The post-Civil War wester *The Hateful Eight* (2015) chronicles the fisticuffs and verbal barbs exchanged by a group of travellers trapped at an inn during a snowstorm (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Quentin-Tarantino#ref1228918>)

It was inspired by one Western movie than by Bonanza, The Virginian, High Chaparral.

intertextual vertical/horizontal reference:

(https://wiki.tarantino.info/index.php/Movie_References):

Celebrities (actors, pop-culture references)	Both Michael Madsen and Tim Roth starred in Tarantino's first movie <i>Reservoir Dogs</i> , which shares a similar "whodunnit" premise and also takes place in a singular location. Samuel L. Jackson has starred in most of Tarantino's movies.
music and musicians	The score for <i>The Hateful Eight</i> ; it is the first Western scored by Morricone in 34 years, since <i>Buddy Goes West</i> and Tarantino's first film to use an original score (https://deadline.com/2015/07/ennio-morricone-hateful-8-score-quentin-tarantino-1201474388/). The two previously worked together on Tarantino's <i>Kill Bill</i> movies and <i>Inglourious Basterds</i> , but Morricone was critical after <i>Django</i> was released, saying of the use of his song "Ancora Qui" that the director "places music in his films without coherence" (https://deadline.com/2015/07/ennio-morricone-hateful-8-score-quentin-tarantino-1201474388/).
movies:	The Great Silence (1968), director Sergio Corbucci. is one of the very few spaghetti westerns that take place in the snow. Cut-Throat Nine (1972) - Euro Western w/ Snowy backdrop / prisoners, including an opening with a nearing stage coach, and some other themes, like distrusting strangers meeting in a haberdashery, etc.

9. Once Upon a Time in Hollywood 2019

film genre: a slow character study about a man who struggles to change along with the times

The film centres on a washed-up actor (Leonardo di Caprio) and his stuntman (Brad Pitt), both of whom cross paths with Charles Manson in 1969 Los Angeles. The movie

received a standing ovation when it premiered at the Cannes film festival. In 2021 Tarantino published a novel based on the dramedy.

(<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Once-Upon-a-Time-in-Hollywood>).

Intertextual vertical/horizontal reference:

(<https://www.vulture.com/article/once-upon-a-time-in-hollywood-influences-references.html>):

<p>Celebrities (actors, pop-culture references)</p>	<p>Margot Robbie plays Sharon Tate in Tarantino’s film we see an actress watching what her character perceives as herself, played by the actual person the actress is playing.</p> <p>Bruce Lee, who also appears as a character in Tarantino’s movie, both in a great scene with Pitt’s stuntman and briefly in flashbacks training Tate.</p> <p>Steve McQueen (who also happens to briefly be in the film, played by Damian Lewis)</p> <p>Roman Polanski - When Rick Dalton notices that Roman Polanski and Sharon Tate have just moved in next door to them, he marvels at the fact that the director of this 1968 Oscar winner is living within reach.</p>
<p>music and musicians</p>	<p>Soundtrack tracklist is a great collection of music (36 songs displayed) from the era that director Quentin Tarantino uses to transport audiences to 1969 Hollywood. The music is similarly on point, reflecting the tastes of the time and infusing each moment with an energy to match any given scene’s mood.</p> <p>(https://screenrant.com/once-upon-time-hollywood-movie-soundtrack-songs/)</p> <p>“Treat Her Right” by Roy Head & The Traits - The first song in the <i>Once Upon a Time in Hollywood</i> soundtrack is playing in Cliff’s car as he drives Rick to an appointment, all the while Sharon and her husband, Roman Polanski (Rafał Zawierucha) arrive at LAX. Rick’s appointment is a meeting with Marvin Schwarzs (Al Pacino), a producer who wants Rick to star in some Spaghetti Westerns.</p> <p>“Mrs. Robinson” by Simon & Garfunkel - This hit song from Simon & Garfunkel is a period-appropriate tune but it also plays as a little joke referencing its famous use in <i>The Graduate</i>. In the movie, it references a young male character having a relationship with a much older woman. It plays on the car radio in Once Upon a Time in Hollywood as Cliff sees Pussycat for the first time, indicating that he is far too old for her.</p>
<p>movies:</p>	<p><i>The Wrecking Crew</i> (1968) flick directed by Phil Karlson’s</p> <p><i>The Great Escape</i> (1963) - Dalton reveals that he was on the shortlist to play the breakout Steve McQueen part in this 1963 classic</p> <p><i>Once Upon a Time in the West</i> (1968) directed by Sergio Leone is inspirational for Tarantino’s film.</p>

	<p><i>Lancer</i> (1968-70) - A large portion of <i>Once Upon a Time</i> takes place on the set of <i>Lancer</i>, in which Dalton plays a villain.</p> <p><i>Easy Rider</i> (1969) – a movie that was a part of the pop-culture firmament to such a degree that it makes sense that it would be referenced in a movie about Hollywood.</p>
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Conclusion

Postmodern movies try to make their audience aware of the fact that other movies are encoded with meaning that wants to control the thinking of the viewer in a way that it tells him what is normal and good. This can be seen rather well in Tarantino's films where he breaks the usual narrative, first by following the story of multiple very different characters and connecting them all in the end, as well as by telling a story in a nonchronological order. Tarantino's films bear the fingerprints of the artist who created them in a very specific manner with long sequences of dialogue, eccentric characters or cartoonish violence.

Tarantino may seem easy to follow at first sight. His razor-shaped dialogue or the abundance of dysphemisms and swearwords are catching elements. Film titles, the names of the characters, music, underlying violence, visual cues, etc. create a dynamic that absorbs the attention of the viewer. The creator is present in his films but the spectator is, as well.

The mingle of so many elements depicted by the filmmaker from various sources and introduced in film narration defines Tarantino's intertextuality.

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**OBSERVATIONS ON THE INTERPLAY OF DOMESTICATION
AND FOREIGNIZATION IN RETRANSLATING ENGLISH
LITERATURE INTO ROMANIAN. A CASE STUDY OF THOMAS
HARDY'S NOVELS**

Georgiana DIN*

***Abstract:** This paper explores the utility and cultural relevance of translation, addresses the limitations and difficulties faced by translators, discusses the complex, often complicated, issues surrounding equivalence, and examines the concepts of fidelity and translatability in the context of translating and retranslating a text. Translation and retranslation are often seen as bridges that connect different cultures and languages, and they are indispensable tools in our increasingly globalized world. These processes facilitate cross-cultural communication, make valuable knowledge and literature accessible to a wider audience and have a profound impact on culture, diplomacy and education. Foreignization emphasizes the retention of elements of the original or source text in the translation, while Domestication emphasizes fidelity to the original work, with the aim of providing readers with a similar experience to that of their original audience.*

***Keywords:** translation; retranslation; foreignization; domestication.*

Translation is an old and worldwide process that is crucial in human interactions in domains such as literature, intercultural communication, science, and many others because it allows individuals to access and profit from cultural, linguistic and scientific information generated in other languages.

The act of converting a written or spoken material from a source language to a target language in order to promote communication between two separate linguistic communities is referred to as translation.

The translation process is a complicated act that needs extensive language and cultural expertise, as well as communication skills and inventiveness. The ultimate objective of the translator is to deliver a target text that accurately represents the content and intent of the source text while adjusting it to the particular and demands of the target language.

As a result of the foregoing, the definition that generally incorporates the properties of translations may be the following: the act of translation is nothing more than a speech in two different languages with nearly identical content. We do not translate languages, but words and statements; we do not translate what a given language says as such, but what is stated with this language; we do not translate meanings, but we do, in general, translate what is marked with the assistance of meaning. Meaning is a tool, not an object of discourse. There is no direct translation between source and destination language meanings. That is why translation begins with *de-composition through language* and ends with *re-composition through language*.

The phenomenon of retranslation refers to the process in which a text that has already been translated from one language to another is subjected to a new translation into the same target language.

Retranslation can involve different results and effects. Sometimes the result of retranslation can be a more faithful and accurate version of the source text, correcting and

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improving the original translation. In other cases, retranslation may lead to different interpretations and adaptations, resulting in a translation with distinct characteristics and nuances from the previous version.

There are several reasons behind the need for retranslation, including reviewing and improving the quality of the original translation, changing perspective or context, the evolution of language and technology, as well as new approaches and subjective interpretations belonging to the many translators.

The idea of retranslation has been supported by several literary critics, translators, and translation theorists. Walter Benjamin, Lawrence Venuti, Antoine Berman, André Lefevere, Paul Bensimon, Yves Gambier, Andrew Chesterman, Kaisa Koskinen, Outi Polaproski, Siobhan Brownlie, and Isabelle Desmidt are among them. Walter Benjamin, a philosopher and theorist from Germany, was a supporter of the translators. He argues that translations are always subject to and influenced by the cultural and historical context in which they are performed, and that translation may provide new perspectives and interpretations of a work.

Lawrence Venuti, a critic and theoretical scholar from the United States, is well-known for popularizing the notion of translation as a means of bridging cultural and linguistic divides. Venuti has stated that translation may help to highlight these differences and provide an authentic viewpoint on the work.

Antoine Berman, a French literary critic, stated that translations should always be debated and that retranslation might introduce new possibilities and innovations to the area of literary translation.

André Lefevere, a Belgian thinker and translator, championed the concept that translations are always products of the cultural and linguistic environment in which they were created. He suggested that depending on changes in the target language's cultural and linguistic environment, retranslation might give a fresh and more relevant viewpoint on the work.

In a 1990 special edition of the journal *Palimpsestes*, Berman and Bensimon's position on retranslation, which serves as the foundation for the renowned Retranslation Hypothesis, was briefly reviewed.

According to Berman, translation is an *incomplete act*, and the only way to complete the translation process is to plan the retranslations over time. He confirms that translation deadlines have been set, necessitating new translations. The term realizing refers to a translator's ability to begin with accurate interaction between the translator and the source language, while maintaining the material's integrity. El also emphasizes the *failure* as an intrinsic that characterizes all translations, highlighting the way this *failure* is most visible in the first translation and how it reflects the translator's incapacity and resistance.

Initial translations, according to Bensimon, are the *naturalization of foreign works*, which aim to integrate them into the defined target culture. As a result, he envisions the original translations as a merger of two separate cultures, ensuring that the work is properly absorbed into the new setting. Later translations, on the other hand, preserve a cultural detachment from the native tongue while adhering to the letter and style of the source text. In an assessment, Gambier openly states that (...) *the first translation always tends to be more assimilative, it seeks to decrease otherness in the name of cultural and editorial criteria [...] Translation, in this sense, represents a return to the source text.*

Theorist provides a variety of initial points for testing the retranslating hypothesis, which states that retranslations are done to provide a better interpretation or for the reader to understand the language better.

The idealistic paradigm plays a unique function in translation theory by demonstrating the amount of dexterity that a translator may reach, which is directly proportionate to the quantity of texts analysed. Within the scope of the same, the initial plan and time axis, which have a substantial influence on the source text, must be positioned. The bigger the gap between the conception and translation of original works, the higher the quality of the translation.

According to Goethe the source text has three different eras of translation (apud Schulte & Biguenet, 1992). The first presents the *land of strangers* in which the author renders the translation in his own words. The second type of translation comes from a time when the translator made the mistake of pretending to place *him in a foreign situation, but in fact he only appropriates the foreign idea and represents it as his own*. The third is the highest age of translation, in which the aim of the translator is to acquire *complete identification with the original and ultimately approach an interlinear version and greatly facilitate our understanding of the original*.

Numerous theories have been developed based on the aforementioned assumptions. They can be presented diachronically as follows:

a) Only retranslations can become great translations; later translations tend to be closer to the original than earlier ones; later translators take a critical stance towards earlier translations, seek to improve them; the existence of the previous translation in the target culture affects the potential reception of the new one, and the translator knows this. (Chesterman, 2000).

b) Later translations tend to be more accurate than earlier ones. (Williams and Chesterman, 2004)

c) Retranslations provide a return to the source text following a purported absorption through the first translations. (Koskinen and Paloposki, 2003)

d) Compared to retranslations, first translations are more domestic. (Paloposki and Koskinen, 2004)

e) Initial translations are target-oriented and less accurate, whereas subsequent retranslations are source-oriented and more accurate. (Brownlie, 2006).

f) Retranslations are more oriented to the source culture than original translations. (Desmidt, 2009)

g) Retranslations increase translation quality from a diachronic standpoint. (Stewart, 2009).

h) The assimilative properties of initial translations necessitate source-oriented translations (Paloposki and Koskinen, 2010).

The notion of numerous translations, according to Koskinen and Paloposki (2003), is directing different versions to different sections of the public and classifying a text as either classic literature or children's literature. They define supplementation as the simultaneous action of texts and their interpretations on several levels, which reject the simplistic classification of materials translated first in assimilation and us translators who are directed towards the original text.

Foreignization and Domestication

The two approaches to translation, *Foreignization* and *Domestication*, are distinct philosophies in the management of the process. Foreignization emphasizes the retention of elements of the original or source text in the translation, while Domestication

emphasizes fidelity to the original work, with the aim of providing readers with a similar experience to that of their original audience.

Domestication is a form of translation that is tailored to the language and culture of the target readers, with the aim of making the translation easier to read and comprehend. This can involve making changes to the cultural references, streamlining the sentence structure, or even altering certain elements to suit the culture. Ultimately, the decision to adopt this approach is based on a variety of factors, such as the translation's purpose, the intended audience, the content, and the translator's preferences. It is essential to find a balance between preserving the original text and making sure that the translation resonates with the intended audience.

The degree of domestication or foreignization of a translation can be determined by the objectives and the context of the project. It is essential to understand and apply these two approaches in order to ensure a successful and appropriate translation. It is also important to assess the type of text used and the context to determine the degree of adjustment required. In literary or artistic translation, more flexibility and creativity can be allowed to preserve certain cultural and stylistic details (foreignization). Conversely, in technical or legal translations where accuracy and precision are of utmost importance, a more stringent adaptation (domestication) can be employed. It is also essential to adjust the translation to the target audience's language and culture.

The balance between domestication and foreignization can be affected by the objectives of translation. If the aim is to maintain the authenticity and cultural specificity of the original text, then a closer approach to foreignization may be appropriate. Conversely, if the purpose of the translation is to adapt and incorporate the text into the target language's culture and linguistic context, a closer approach to domestication may be appropriate. Regardless of the approach taken, it is essential to maintain a certain level of consistency and consistency in the translation in order to ensure clear and effective communication and to avoid any confusion or inconsistencies.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles: Some problems found in the Romanian translations

Thomas Hardy 1891	E.Cîncea,C. Ralea 1962	T. Fleşeru 2009	L. Lazăr 2011	C. Jinga 2019
love	Mîndruţi	iubire	scumpo	iubito

Bensimon and Berman's Retranslations Hypothesis states that the first translation is capable of adapting the text to the standards and conventions of the targeted language and culture. The theory of A. Lefevre states that translations are always a product of the cultural and language context in which they are produced. The first translation is based on the current vocabulary of the twentieth century, while the others appear to be up-to-date from a linguistic perspective. The translation of the word *love* as *scumpo* appears to be unsuitable to the context and vulgar.

Thomas Hardy 1891	E.Cîncea,C. Ralea 1962	T. Fleşeru 2009	L. Lazăr 2011	C. Jinga 2019
grove	păduricea	poieniță	tăpșan	crâng

The word *grove*, which in Romanian can be translated with the basic meaning, *pădurice* or *dumbravă*, which we find in the original text, which was translated in different ways in the four translations analyzed.

The most appropriate translation of the word in this context is *crâng*, because it comes close to the basic meaning. The most inappropriate translation is *tapșan* because it deviates from the idea of trees, according to the dictionary it means the coast of a hill or a mountain, the other three translations respect the semantic principle, having almost the same meaning in both the source language and the target language.

Thomas Hardy 1891	E.Cîncea,C. Ralea 1962	T. Fleșeru 2009	L. Lazăr 2011	C. Jinga 2019
'Good night t'ee,' said the man with with the basket. 'Good night, Sir John,' said the parson.	-Bună seara, spuse omul cu coșul. -Bună seara, sir John, îi spuse pastorul.	-Bună seara, sfinția ta, zise omul cu coșul. -Bună seara, Sir John, răspunse prelatul.	'- Nă seara dumitale, rosti bărbatul cu coșul. -Bună seara, sir John, răspunse parohul.	- Bună seara. sfinției tale, spuse omul cu coșul. -Bună seara, Sir John, răspunse preotul.

The writer used authentic regional dialects in his characters' dialogues to create authenticity and highlight their social and cultural origins in rural Wessex. Translators must decide how to render the dialogues in such a way that they are believable and may reflect the characteristics of the characters, without making them inaccessible to readers.

In Romanian, *good night* can be translated by *noapte bună* rather than *bună seara*. The translators tried to give meaning of the regional dialect *good night* and translated it using the *foreignization* strategy.

No.	Thomas Hardy 1891	E.Cîncea,C. Ralea 1962	T. Fleșeru 2009	L. Lazăr 2011	C. Jinga 2019
1.	Phase the Fifth — The Woman Pays	„FAZA A CINCEA FEMEIA PLĂTEȘTE”	„Partea a cincea: Femeia plătește”	„Etapa a cincea Ispășirea”	„Partea a cincea Femeia plătește”
2.	Phase the Sixth— The Convert	„FAZA A ȘASEA POCĂITUL”	„Partea a șasea: Convertitul”	„Etapa a șasea: Căința”	„Partea a șasea: Convertitul”

Translators must take into account the fact that certain terms in the English language may have multiple meanings depending on the context in which they are encountered. This lack of clarity can result in inaccurate translations. For example, in the third translation of the text, the author, Letiția Lazăr, opted to employ the domesticating approach; however, this resulted in the virtual loss of the original meaning of the words.

In these post-2000 translations, the domesticizing strategy was employed, which enabled the target text to be more comprehensible to Romanian readers. The initial translation renders the titles of both chapters through the foreignizing strategy, as the target text remained consistent with the original text.

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TRANSLATING INTERTEXTUALITY IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. "ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND" BY LEWIS CAROLL

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Abstract: *Translation and intertextuality are text-related terms that have received a lot of attention over the past decade. A literary text is not simply the product of a single author, but of his/her relationship to other texts (both written and spoken), and to the structure of language itself. When texts are read, it's not just meaning that's created, but an entire network of textual relationships made up of everything we know, and all existing texts (whether we're familiar with them or not). After all, it is the reader who establishes the connections.*

Keywords: *translation; reader; context; children literature*

Translation

Translation is a complex rewriting process, an ongoing practice that never touches completion or perfection and in which are mixed two or more cultures. To translate means to render a text from one language to another. This text can be written or oral. Translation has been carried out in different forms.

A large number of definitions were given by different writers with linguistic interests. Translation. 1 the act or an instance of translating. 2 a written or spoken expression of the meaning of a word, speech, book etc. in another language. (*The Concise Oxford English Dictionary*)

The first of these two senses relates to translation as a process, the second to the product. This immediately means that the term *translation* encompasses very distinct perspectives. (Hatim; 3)

Basically, translation is the activity of interpreting the meaning of a text in one language (source language SL) and creating a new equivalent text in another language (translating language TL).

Translation studies is the field of study that deals with the theory, description and application of translation. As it studies translation not only as interlingual transfer but also as intercultural communication, it can also be described as an interdiscipline which touches on other diverse fields of knowledge, including, comparative literature, cultural studies, gender studies, computer science, philosophy, rhetoric, linguistics and semiotics.

Additionally, some select prominent theories of Translation are of: Dryden, Catford, Susan Bassenet, Andre Lefevre and Lawrence Venuti.

Dryden, a famous poet, dramatist and critic who translated classics like Ovid's *Epistles*, *The Sylvae*, *Examen Poeticum*, *Virgil*, developed theory of translation elaborately.

In the preface to Ovid's *Epistles*, Dryden presented three types of translation: *metaphrase* which refers to turning an author word by word and line by line from one

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language into another, *paraphrase*-refers to translation with latitude and *imitation* which refers to presenting rewriting the text as he sees fit.

Dryden compared the role of the translator with the portrait painter because the portrait painter ought to paint a portrait, having a resemblance with the original.

Intertextuality

In this article I will also introduce the concept of *intertextuality*. I will briefly present the ideas of the main theorists who postulate what intertextuality is. The five literary linguists we will look at are: Julia Kristeva (b. 1941), Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913), Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975), Roland Barthes (1915–1980), and Gérard Genette (1930–2018)

The term *intertextuality* was created Julia Kristeva. It is defined by the French semiotician as the relationship between one text with other texts. By the term “intertextuality”, the literary critic and the feminist psychoanalyst means “the way in which one signifying practice is transposed into another”. (1984) Kristeva explains the term ‘intertextuality’ with the term ‘transposition’.

The term inter-textuality denotes this transposition of one (or several) sign system(s) into another; but since this term has often been understood in the banal sense of “study of sources,” we prefer the term transposition because it specifies that the passage from one signifying system to another demands a new articulation of thethetic – of enunciative and denotative positionality. If one grants that every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an inter-textuality), one then understands that its “place” of enunciation and its denoted “object” are never single, complete, and identical to themselves, but always plural, shattered, capable of being tabulated. In this way polysemy [multiple levels or kinds of meaning] can also be seen as the result of a semiotic polyvalence – an adherence to different sign systems (Kristeva 1984: 59–60).

Intertextuality is a set of relations between texts, which can include direct quotations, allusions, literary conventions, imitation, parody, and unconscious sources among others. (Simandan 2:34-2:45)

Intertextuality also concerns the reader’s assumptions and the context itself. The process of extracting meaning of a text is called interpretation and is accomplished by the reader who try to extracts it from a literary text. However, the contemporary literary theory has a new perspective upon the above idea. It is believed that literary works are developed from systems, codes and traditions established by previous literary writings. Thus, it is essential for the meaning of a literary work all these: systems, codes and traditions from different fields (art, music, film), culture in general.

Reading means than interpreting one text, it involves the reader’s ability to discover relations among texts and tracing these relations represents, in fact, discovering the meaning, that is interpretation.

Graham Allen, Associate Professor in Modern English at University College Cork, Ireland writes in *Intertextuality* - a book providing the reader with a terminology of intertextuality:

The act of reading [...] plunges us into a network of textual relations. To interpret a text, to discover its meaning, or meanings, is to trace those relations. Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts” (Allen, 2000: 1)

A text derives its meaning not from the writer's work; meaning becomes something that exists in the network of textual relations and can be discovered between a text and all the other texts, to which the text refers and relates. However, the reader/interpreter cannot obtain a constant meaning of a text because the meaning is produced between the texts and because the meaning is always evasive and elusive. Thus, we can mention the idea that "every text is an intertext" (Leitch, 1983: 59) or an intertext is "a text between other texts" (Plett, 1991: 5).

As readers, we encounter different types of texts every day and in other languages, too. Thus, we need to decode symbols that create words and produce meaning, an automated process with the connections we make when reading. Texts are dynamic and usually evoke to other texts. This means that every time a reader meets a new text, it will contain something (a name, a place, an expression) that will influence his/her interpretation.

We can speak about an interconnectivity and interconnection between texts that is known as intertextuality. When texts are read, not only the meaning is created, but an entire network of textual connections, made up of cultural background and experiences of the reader.

For example, when we encounter the traditional expression "Once upon a time..." we know for sure that it is related to the children's stories and we are going to experience fantasy texts with kings, queens or animals that can talk, dance etc. It is also an element which makes the readers to remember all the texts beginning with this short expression.

Children's Literature and strategies of translation

Children's literature or juvenile literature includes books, poems, stories, magazines that are written for children. This genre covers a wide range of works, including acknowledged classics of world literature, picture books and easy-to-read stories created exclusively for children, fairy tales, fables, folk songs and other primarily orally transmitted materials intended for and used by children and young people.

Translation of children's literature is rapidly gaining significant field within Translation Studies worldwide. Being a relatively new area of study, it is constantly becoming a field of interest, attracting scholars and professionals alike.

Translated literature from all around the world helps a child to question things and to stimulate independent thinking.

The child being interested in reading a translated book from another culture, attempts to make sense out of it by activating cognitive skills such as thinking, analysing, making comparisons. (Josipovic, 2017:13).

Key expectations in the translations of children's literature are naturalness and readability. Also, the translations are expected to be ideologically and educationally in line with the target literary setting.

Translating for children is not an easy job and the main reason is the sensitive audience, whose view of the world around them differs greatly from that of an adult. Their experience and knowledge are limited and that's why children need professional and experienced translators to give them right guidance.

When discussing translations for children a translator should consider the following issues: cultural context adaptation; ideological manipulation; dual readership-adults and children; characteristics of orality; relationship between text and image-

illustrations should support the text's content because in the course of the translation process the original illustration may no longer be appropriate for the translation.

Strategies in translating Children's literature include:

- Omission and deletion linked to the ideological objective of conveying appropriate values to children, as well as the objective of making a text more understandable to young audiences.
- Purification strategies to align translated texts with the values of the target culture by eliminating elements considered inappropriate.
- Substitution strategies to give children intelligible texts, this is what Klingberg termed adaptation to cultural context and Venuti domestication.
- Explanation strategies, which include rewording or paratextual clarifications, and simplification strategies, which at the macrostructural level alter genre affiliation, structure and chapter organization, and at the microstructural level assume the form of using short sentences, replacing concrete language with abstract language, loosening ironic elements, and so on.

However, a translation is only considered successful when its audience, in this case children, approves it. A translator has to keep in mind that children do not care for improving their education nor their literacy, but rather as Bamberger states:

The realm of children's books knows no frontiers. Children do not care where books come from, they do not read them because they are foreign books, as adults often do, but regard them as stories of adventure, fantasies and so on. So, making children happy is one of the goals set for the writing and translation of children's literature. (Josipovik: 2017:15)

Analysing two translations of *Alice in Wonderland*

Lewis Carroll has been translated in multiple languages. The most recent researcher in *Alice* translations, Viatcheslav Vetrov, argues that:

...no language imposes on its speaker something like national interpretation of literary work, that is the reading of a text or even some details in it that would be shared by the whole of the respective language community. (2021:12)

The narrative work is centred upon a very smart and well-mannered girl who repeatedly asks questions and interacts with birds, animals, flowers, magical creatures, animate playing cards and chess pieces. During her adventures Alice undergoes herself magical transformations of size and shape, a genuine recipe for comic adventures. Yet, the book is far from being a comic narrative for children, certain adult interest about a demand of more accurate translations.

We are trying to render some difficulties in translating *Alice Adventures in Wonderland* into Romanian. The first one is the usage of the 2nd person, which in English the universal form "you" is used for singular, plural and for polite forms. Romanians uses "tu", "voi" and the more polite "dumneata" for singular or "dumneavoastră" for plural. And the translator has to decide how Alice, is supposed to address when she meets different characters.

Gender is another problem when translating Carroll's novel. As we know, English has no grammatical gender, while the compulsory gender of Romanian nouns may generate translation problems when animals get human features. If we take as example the Caterpillar (*Omida*, feminine gender in Romanian) from the novel, the

character is endowed with masculine features: smokes like a hookah and talks like a masculine don. Romanian translators of *Alice* have to appeal to a skillful scheme and to preserve the gender's characteristics from the English version and translate the character as *Domnul Omidă*.

Last but not least, awakenings, dreams and nightmares are also transformable and can be translated into Romanian, language whose fantastical stories are full of magical animals and transformations. Conflicting dialogues and characters themselves can also encounter difficulty to be translated, as they belong to the Carroll fantastic world. Transposing the Carrollian characters into Romanian an inevitable semantic loss occurs.

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SELF-ANALYSIS OF RETRANSLATION: THE CASE OF A RECENT TRANSLATION OF SHAKESPEARE'S "SONNETS"

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Abstract: *I undertook the critical analysis of my own retranslation of Shakespeare's Sonnets in an attempt to show that retranslation, even if (arguably) rather didactic, is meant to shed new light on the writer's work, and also give new meaning to the reader's perception of it. Issues of faithfulness, equivalence, style and translational strategies were practically and critically addressed, as well as the main sources of the pitfalls that the translator is faced with; also, there are self-reflective notes on the main achievements that the new version displays.*

Keywords: *retranslation; equivalence; faithfulness; strategy; literary style; difficulties*

1. Introduction. The translation of Shakespeare's sonnets is by no means a unique initiative or a really special publishing project in this country – at least in the shape of a bilingual edition with extensive footnotes (most of them referring to cultural, historical, mythological, etc. allusions in the text, as well as to particular details or exceptional vocabulary issues – more specifically of the author's language –, other notes providing explanations of the more difficult terms, with their exact meaning in the sonnet in question, or else referring to the literality of certain terms, etc.).

In translating Shakespeare's sonnets (Manea 2022), I wanted to test not so much my skill as a translator or my knowledge as an English teacher, but primarily my knowledge as an informed reader of classical texts. First and foremost, I sought to render or transpose the 'facts' or the 'scenario' of each sonnet – often going as far as attempting to achieve the (quasi)literalness of the message itself. I have tried to avoid being influenced by other translations – although I admit that I have always had in front of my eyes Teodor Boșca's (1974) and Nicolae Chirică's (1976) epitomical versions. I scrupulously used Shakespeare's dictionaries (Alexander Schmidt, C.T. Onions), as well as some more recent lexicographical and critical material (e.g. www.shakespeares-sonnets.com), in order to be absolutely sure of the meanings of the terms in the specific contexts in which they appear. For the few cases where the meaning of a word or phrase was disputed, debatable or admittedly obscure, I made the decision that seemed most appropriate to me (e.g. for sonnets 112, 124, 134, 135, 143).

The translation essentially proposes appropriate Romanian equivalences for a 16th-17th century English poetic text, with very few incidental attempts to 'domesticate' the language of the Romanian version, but not in a contrived or exaggerated manner. I had to work quite a bit on finding apt renderings for the more difficult metaphors, epithets, similes or complex word combinations, as well as for several occasional puns. It has to be added that, in many places in the poems, the Shakespearean style seems conventionally metaphorical, when pathos or some rigid, cut-and-dried poetic images prevail (cf. also the long tradition of the sonnet as a literary species, featuring conventionalized concetti).

2. Retranslation was therefore assigned the difficult task of trying to mediate the disclosure of the literary work, as it was written in the original, for the culture of adoption. The idea that the first translation also contains various mistakes/errors/flaws/shortcomings naturally leads to the need to correct them (as far as

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possible), and the hypothesis of the 'ageing of the text' should (also naturally) impose the need to update the language of the existing translation, which implies re-editing and/or amplifying the text.

Unfortunately, translators are not usually familiar with (many of) the previous translations of the same source text, and lack of coordination and communication between the publishers responsible for bringing new translations to market greatly adds to the difficulty of the task. Likewise, the problem of identifying the criteria for evaluating (re)translations is rather thorny: is it faithfulness to the source text, stylistic coherence, the quality of the language used, conceptual or ideological correctness, literariness? So the answer to the question, which is often asked (not only by laymen), "Which version is better (or the best)?", is by no means easy.

The concept of retranslation is, as most people know, evocative of the image of a cultural palimpsest. It manifests itself in the multiple translations of a source text into the same target language, as well as the possible revised translations. Some revisions involve substantial changes, which can sometimes be said to overwhelm, nay completely undermine, the contribution of the first translator, going as far as a very extensive and thoroughgoing rewriting.

The theories of retranslation can basically be reduced to the general observations that literary translations "grow old / obsolete" or "age", that there is no such thing as a perfect translation, but that it is legitimate to pursue that goal, be it like a *fata morgana*, and that the historical and naturally conflicting nature of the norms in the target language (or host language) may constantly require the act of retranslation.

Vanderschelden (2000) presents the following five reasons justifying retranslation: (1) the already published translation is not satisfactory and cannot be effectively revised, (2) a new edition of the source text has been published and has become the reference standard, (3) the existing translation is considered stylistically outdated, (4) retranslation fulfils the function of filling certain gaps in the territory of the host language, and (5) retranslation is justified by a different interpretation of the original text.

As I willingly (yet partly) acknowledged in the foreword to the aforementioned bilingual volume, I undertook the retranslation of the sonnets written by the national bard of Stratford-upon-Avon on account of the mere (sic!) appeal exercised by their lasting fame, their century-old cultural echo and human fascination, but also, in a way, as an "authorized" or professional admirer (definable as an insider of the field of English literature) of the personality of Shakespeare and his creation.

In literary translation, the professional's dexterous, diligent finesse and intuitive ingenuity, defining their workshop-type mastery (which is at least attempted and pursued earnestly), are (co-)essential. More often than not, the translator's intervention is associated with a high level of awareness of the professional act undertaken, nay self-censorship.

3. **The difficulties** that I had to overcome were, of course, mainly related to the poetical-suggestive language used by the poet (which may at times be rather stilted or even lyrically encoded), not only to the archaic, obsolete or historical meanings or terms that I rendered into Romanian. I sought to recreate the necessary "poeticalness" of the poems either by choosing Romanian terms which are widely recognised as "poetic" (some of which are actually archaic or obsolete), or by coining original, (hopefully) poetic word combinations (e.g. "stihu-acesta ce te va-nviețui", "dulce-frageda ta palmă", "ci-n duh trăi-voi îndoit", "dulceața, nicicând-săturătoare"). One can recognise in the translation of Shakespeare's sonnets the concern (which was by no means obsessive) to avoid

neologisms in favour of older words (which are largely conceived of as “purely vernacular”), sometimes popular or even regional terms (e.g. a aldui, crug, ir, meleag, năvălit, spornic la cuvânt, stih, stihar, stihuire).

But the most serious challenge seems to have originated in handling prosody – rhyme, meter, rhythm, stanzaic form. The rhymes typical of the target text are mostly predictable and simple; only rarely are there “rich rhymes” or imperfectly rhyming pairs. In order to “fit” the semantic-poetical content of the English original into the versification and morpho-phonematic structure characteristic of the Romanian language,

I conceded that it was mandatory to adopt a meter two syllables longer than that of the Shakespearean sonnet (13 to 14 syllables instead of 11 to 12 syllables), as some Romanian or foreign authors of sonnets had actually done (e.g. Vasile Voiculescu, Michelangelo Buonarroti, etc.). The rhythm of the stanzas was, in the vast majority of cases, achieved correctly. In translating the verse in this volume, I have chosen to use, as far as possible, the (most) “methodical” (if not “scientific”) translational option, mainly by consulting the best historical dictionaries of Shakespeare’s language, including several professional web sources (see the final bibliographical list), striving for a kind of “constructive”, evocative literalness, and also for a type of literariness respectful of the original text. As a matter of fact, there is widespread agreement that the translator is constantly endeavouring to observe and render the specific marks of the author’s language and/or period of time, the rigours of dictionary meanings, the requirements and rules of style and the expectations of the audience (plus the language variant that is, or seems to be, preferred by the audience). Added to all of the above is the constraining (nay, occasionally, unforgiving) ‘grid’ of prosody: rhyme, stanzaic structure, and especially meter and rhythm; occasional fluctuations, concessions, even some slight slips and shortcomings are therefore inevitable – even inherent.

So, the translator’s action is put to the test by the need to achieve a stylistic balance that makes the translated text primarily readable, and above all to avoid an appearance of artificiality, in a poetic format that is acceptable to the widest possible audience – which does not mean that the translation made should look limitative, overtly demonstrative or predominantly didactic.

I wanted, among other things, to “empower” the Romanian readers (both young and old) with some of the most widely celebrated fragments of Shakespeare’s work, on which they can meditate – not only from the point of view of the poetic, philosophical and psychological and human content, but also from the standpoint of the author’s language and poetic style. The Romanian version, which is provided alongside the original text, aims to achieve naturalness – that is to say, to stay within the limits of semantic, grammatical and stylistic accuracy. Comparing the two parallel texts, it is quite infrequent to find cases in which the fundamental requirement of an acceptable piece of translation (viz. “no loss, no gain”) has been violated, even in part. However, the “literariness” of the Romanian versions is quite different from one sonnet to the next – so the solutions found by the translator have different degrees of stylistic-literary adaptation.

I must mention and openly admit that I have not in the least sought to verify, supplement, add new nuances and hints, update or reinterpret any of the theories concerning the retranslation of (usually famous) literary works – typically expressed as retranslation hypotheses –, although my own experience as a translator of literary texts might entitle me to the status of a researcher in this very interesting and challenging field.

4. A sketchy analysis of the Romanian version. To begin with, I think I should qualify (and basically disclaim) the manner in which a fairly knowledgeable young academic analyst such as D. Baicu (2022) defined me as “a (re)translator whose intention

is to create valuable content for a specific readership in a certain time period [...who] establishes a connection between other similar texts written in the receiving culture, specifically a prosodic connection to Vasile Voiculescu's rhythmic structure in some of his poems [...and], in accordance with historicity, in this case the prevailing aesthetical norms, Constantin Manea's retranslation has the capacity to reinforce the Romanian culture by setting his retranslation up for positive reception in a new historical moment". He rightly notes, however, that "[the] prosodic choice extends the limit of words in a line, thus creating a larger framework, within which a translator has more room to render the original meaning more accurately without having to sacrifice too much of the poetical principle"; yet, he adds, "there are a few cases where the heptameter rhythm interferes with the poetical logistics and forces the translator to render the original English word in a redundant manner, by using two synonymic words to translate one, e.g., *În ce chin tu te-ai preface, dor și despărțire*".

In the hope that I was not (too) mistaken in equating (and adapting) a number of poetic concepts or Shakespearean metaphors, by either excessive respect for the letter of the original, or by a (compensatory) attempt at poeticization, by either somewhat redundant explications, or by relatively contrived, unnatural expressions – dictated, no doubt, by the pressure of the prosody –, I think I did not (irretrievably) missed the marks of literariness. Be it said parenthetically, one should mention again the translator's "audacity" (or, possibly, "sin") in having used the 13 and 14 syllable measure, instead of the 11 or 12 syllables customary for sonnets in the Romanian poetic tradition (e.g. "*S-a stins viața falnicei Veneții*"), and also in other European literatures (e.g. „*Pour l'enfant, amoureux de cartes et d'estampes*"). The extended measure of 13 and 14 syllables was used by Vasile Voiculescu when writing "*Ultimele sonete închipuite ale lui Shakespeare în traducere imaginară*" / "*The last imaginary sonnets of Shakespeare in imaginary translation*" (as in "*Și nu mai ești de-acuma trupească o făptură*"), and also by Michelangelo (e.g. "*L'immagin viva in pietra alpestra e dura*"). It is well-known fact that English has predominantly short – generally one-syllable – words (e.g. "*This were to be new made when thou art old, / And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold*"), unlike the Romanian language.

Here are the main observations I myself was able to make concerning the manner in which my own translation testifies to the (desired) dovetailing of content and form in the process of rendering Shakespeare's sonnets into Romanian, with as few cases of loss or gain as possible, while stylistically synchronizing the two texts, and trying to preserve as much of the poeticalness of the original as possible.

(1) Notes on form: (A) Phonetics.

(a) Use of hyphenation, which is specifically meant to fit the (phonetic) words into the same line: "*Astă ruin-ntreagă-mi inspiră-o cugetare*"; "*und-orîșicare ochi vrea (...)*"; "*Să-i stea-n slujbă,-n aurit colind*"; "*L-acest întreg meleag (...)*".

It can sometimes heavily influence the grammatical form or regimen of words – as the translation tries to secure extra space usable in the same line: "*Certatu-m-ai pentru păcatul de a fi tăcut*". However, there are few cases when the Romanian morpho-phonetics of the verse seems to be affected by such hyphenated forms, e.g. "*Și chipu-i va zbârci; zorii-i vor fi călătorit*"; "*Și cum orișice stare o-amenință pieirea*". At times, this heavy hyphenation, resulting in improbable sound-and-spelling conglomerates, may look rather odd or awkward, though: "*Ce cuveni-s-ar să-ncerci*"; "*bine mi-e-aici dorul primit*"; "*Aici-întâlni pruncii (...)*"; "*Fragezi acum, ce-ndată-n negru-amurg s-or prăvăli*"; "*cămara ceascunde-ntr-însa strai de preț*"; "*nu m-a face-a-i da crezare*".

(b) Using the apostrophe for the sake of brevity, e.g. “zilnic văzând re’nturnarea”; “La tine-n suflet s-o primească, făr’ veșminte”; “Icoana făpturii tale în vr’un tom învechit”; “Schimbările ce-mpresur’ carnea omenească”; “Nori și eclipse tulbur’ și lună, dar și soare”; “când eu în țăr’n-oi putrezi”; “În harul din’untru ori în mândrețea de-afară”; “Ce-ai pe-afar’, de dinafar’ primește-ncununare”; “Decât cel’lalte vechi, la care scribii senchină”.

Compared with the (usual, i.e. widely accepted) standards of Romanian usage, the use of the apostrophe can sometimes seem excessive, e.g. “al nost’ și-al lumii-ntregi sfârșit”; “la tot frumosul dinafar’”; “Să-și vadă, jun’, fiu-ager”; “L-ajută”.

Yet, on the whole, the benefits of using apostrophes in observance of the rules of prosody are evident, e.g. “nu-și face dintr-a altui’ podoabă, verde”; “acele frumuseți căror’ azi le este crai”; “Pe-atât e-n inima-mi, n-adânc, înfipt de bine.

Semantic or intonational accentuation was often achieved through graphical stress, viz. diacritics, used to mark or emphasize meaning: “se vór cele-ncântătoare”; “Punându-mi, mort, podoabe, mái mult spre-a mă slávi”; “De-oricè demn de citit de dai”; “Și orișicè ai face”; “Pentru-un astfèl de timp”. In most cases graphical stresses were used for the sake of disambiguation, either (1) grammar-wise, e.g. “cu mine însumi mă voi război”; “ar lăstări”; “refă-ți puterea, altfel s-o auzi”; “firea ce te-a zămislit pică-n visare”; “Nu te învinui că de-amoru-mi tu îți faci folos”; or (2) semantically, e.g. “doar comedii [i.e. ‘theatrical performance, show’]” (vs. comedie [i.e. ‘comedy’]).

However, diacritics were used mostly for the sake of prosody (namely, metre and rhythm), in order to mark either (1) vocalic quantity, e.g. “Căștig îmi va da vîața prin astă stihuire”; “Laude-se de-a stelelor (...) ocrotire”; “oare ce laudă s-ar cuveni”; “Și, chiar de vrêun alt condei (...)”; “vrêun gând bun de-al tău”; “Ci lasă-l să rămână neatinș de zborul tău”; “se cuvine de la tine luat”; “cu ea dēodată”; “fiindcă va vesti”; “Când fîița-ntreagă (...)”; or (2) stress and tone (i.e. accentuation), e.g. “Înfipt-au pene-n plus în aripi de cărturari”; “(...) -mi blēstem traiul ce îmi fu sortit”; “Ești l-a fiecărui hoț mârșav bună plăcere”; “bronz etern robit e de-a armiei năvală”; “Pricina ăstui dar lipsește dinspre mine”; “Să se-aleagă-astă pricină”; “oceanul hūlpav malul năpădind”. Sometimes, however, the diacritical spelling can indeed look overcharged, e.g. “Iar mâinî s-o ascuți pân’ la vechea sa putință”.

(B) Grammar (especially morphology) was also overstrained at times, e.g. “Atunci jura-m-aș: chiar frumusețea e smolită”; “Că-ntinată putut-a fi atât de nefiresc”; “Ce țarmurii-i desparte, unde doi logodnici vin”; “Cât la chipu-ți, îndoliați, ochii-ăști se potrivesc”. In one or two cases the grammar implications of that accentuation pressure conduced to forms that are generally considered rather substandard in modern Romanian, e.g. “la leu gheara-i tocește”; “ăst drept s-apuce, la ochi le stă în cale”.

(C) Syntax proper, and especially word order, were frequently upset in the Romanian version due to the same prosodic pressure, e.g. “Al tău de aur ev”; “Ar cere-a unei pene lucrare mai dibace”; “Ca de orfan nădejdi, ca de părinte-un rod lipsit”; “Lâng-a’ dragilor mei duși trofee, amintire”; “Ca să-și împartă prada dulci icoanei tale”; “să măncovoi sub, greu, păcatul meu”; “Că și, posac, Saturn râdea în dansul săltăreț”; “ca, blândă, iubirea”; “ochii-mi treji fapte să nu-ți mai vadă, mișelești”; “Vremii, și orele-i, și-oglanda-i, capricioasa”; “Să nu-i tocească fin vârful plăcerii minunate”; “ca, fără soț, o soață”; “Nici marmura, nici de-aur a’ prinților morminte”; “chit că rodu-i ia, al vieții”; “decât pot născoci cei doi, ai tăi, stihari”; “să-ți aducă a mea de-amor solie”; “de miere a verii răsufare”; “ce toți se-ntrec a îl cinsti”; “Și-n ochii urmașilor cândva ce vor veni”; “la tine rău e, însă, folosit”.

However, it is very infrequently that this unlikely, lyrical concocted prosody-driven syntax triggers rather shocking instances such as the following lines: “Cum steaua fixă-i de-atâta, pentru năieri, folos”; “Nădăjduiesc să n-aflu de-a-ntârzia pricină / Logodna-a două inimi pure”; “Căzând ca niște demoni în neagra, din iad, tină”.

(D) Notes on prosody. (a) The prosodic device of enjambement (or run-on line) is not very frequent in the original (though I have not devoted this issue a statistic survey proper), yet I had to use it quite a lot in my version, e.g. “(...) mai mult dect mahnitul tânguit / Al clopotului să nu jeleşti”; “Iar cel ce-n ajutor te cheamă, rimă veşnică / Să-ţi scoată”; “ca să nu poată rostire / Să-ţi facă-n vers (...); “(...) de două ori sperjură / Eşti: rupt-ai credinţa (...); “(...) pentru-a egalului sălaş, vădeşti / Tu pildă! (...); “(...) o pot, iubind, ierta / Greoiului meu cal (...); “mândra-ţi juneţe, care pe-o greşită / Cale te-am pins (...); “ochii-mi să te necăjească / Par, sădeşte-ţi milă-n suflet (...); “(...) de furişata goană îţi va spune / A clipelor adaose-ntr-al veşniciei şir”; “m-oi face că îmi eşti / Străin, şi-oi pieri din cale (...); “fecior fermecător, ce ţii în mâna-ţi coasa / Vremii (...); “zi c-o mulţime te iubeşte / De-amici”.

(b) Some more special types of rhymes can be found, albeit rarely, in the English variant (though, again, I must confess that I have not devoted the issue a statistic survey proper), and yet I had to make use of those types of rhyme in just a few cases.

1/ The so-called precious (or rich) rhyme e.g. “(...) deşi din plin e!” and “(...) amorul pentru tine”; “(...) care „Urăsc” grăit-a” and (...) -n starea-n care eram, cumplita”; “(...) chipu-ţi zugrăvit e” and “(...) drept geam potrivite”, “(...) doară cât în tine scris stă” and “(...) pe-a faimei listă”.

2/ There were imperfect (or slant) rhymes – which also occurred in the Shakespearean original (in addition to the so-called eye-rhymes, e.g. gone and alone): “când de tine-n vers eu cant” and “(...) ţie slavă înălţând”; “Hai, urăşte-aşa, amor, acum ştiu ce ai în gând” and “şi acum orbit eu sunt”; “asta-mi va fi slava: tăcut că sunt” and “(...) dar deschid mormânt”; “gându-acesta mă ucide: că nu-s eu gând” and “(...) doar din apă şi pământ”. Some rhymes of this type can be said to be more than imperfect: “nu le desparte” and “şi singur de mine-or fi purtate”.

(2) The semantics of the Sonnets can be rather difficult in places, so I had to search out the ‘suspicious’ terms or phrases, and find appropriate Romanian equivalents for such difficult lexical items, e.g. “If my slight muse do please these curious days” – rendered as “De muza-mi face-n plac ästor zile de-ifos pline” (see curious: “careful, accurate, scrupulous” (Schmidt). However, I was sometimes compelled to use rather redundant expressions, e.g. “Tuşe silnic trase-n condei retoric şi pompos” (in order to render “What strained touches rhetoric can lend” – see strained: “forced, constrained” (Schmidt). At other times semantic redundancy occurred in the guise of translatorial gain: in phrases originally meant to add poeticity and/or fit the context, e.g. “Viu tu vei fi în ochi de-amanţi, ca şi-n äst vers de preţ” (cf. “You live in this, and dwell in lovers’ eyes”); “Şi-amuţindu-mi gura, când de tine glăsuieşte” (cf. “To make me tongue-tied speaking of your fame”).

(3) The stylistics involved by the poetic equivalence that I proposed is frequently (and typically) torn between vernacular Romanian expression and neology (very much in keeping with the essential concepts of domestication and foreignization – see Venuti 2004).

A) Vernacular expression includes either (a) lexical items or (b) grammatical forms.

(a) The lexicon, e.g. “Şi cum fetia-i, mârşav, drept târfă socotită”; “de ce frum’şeţea, biata, să cate, ocolit”; “Cată acum să mă-ncovoi sub, greu, păcatul meu”;

“Cătând adânc în bezna unde orbii doar zăresc”; “Și stihul își revarsă cu-a ta oblăduire”; “Ce întru pomenire mereu te va-nsoți”; “Cum dorul curat mi-e”; “Când potrivnicu-ți pârâș ți-e ție avocat”; “aș fi-ndat’ adus aici, făr-osebire (...)”; “Cum poate muza-mi să n-aibă rost de izvodit”; “E vlagă și-i probă de dibace judecată”; “M-or ține de nebun”; “În vorbele-mi curate și-n grai nemincinos”; “cum aș putea rara-ți vrednicie (...)”; “am știre de-a mea mare vrednicie”; “Nestăpânita pizmă s-o pună sub zăvor”; “(...) și se-ascund de felurime?”; “când semuii găsesc”; “drept rost al semuirii”; “te păstrezi pe tine nesmintit”; “Din astre nu-mprumut al minții cumpăt”; “Doar comèdii marea scenă ochiului vădește”; “Ori vrăste să îi scrii cu vechiul tău condei hain”; “Părâtul dă tăgadă că spusa-i e așa”; “Pe el îl are doar: comoara-i s-a gătat”; “Se uită la durerea-mi și, blânde, mă milese”; “Penelul vremii ori condeiu meu de-ncepător”; “Piară-acei ce Firea să odrăslească nu-i născu”, etc.

(b) The grammatical forms, e.g. “pieirea-mi fu-n amor”; “ajutor preaminunat găsii în stihuire”; “Nu te-ncuiai în dulce-mbrățișare-n al meu piept”; “Și ce-n amor pierdii îmi varsă-amărăciune”; “din suflet c-o iubii se poate spune”; “Mi-a părea că stau pe loc”; “Și-așa, prin ăst județ al lor, se hotărăște”; “Câștig ieșind pe rând din cea potrivnicie”; “Femeie-i cela rău, cu chipul zugrăvit pieziș”; “Așadar, mă juruiesc”; “Că nu voi zorul de tine ce mă-ndepărtează”; “Că, orișunde-ai fi, pe-acea doar îi fericești”; “pot din nou să-mi spun cel dor cumplit”; “cu trebi călătorese”; “și cinstea că-i hoată s-a vădi”; “nimic rău n-a socoti”; “De s-a-mplini dorința, ferice-s înzecit”; “pân-atunci când singur ți-i meni acel județ”; “Ferice-s cei de-au har ce face cu puțință”. A number of rather special cases can be distinguished, based on their sheer form, e.g. “ele / Cu toatele dau zor”; “amoru-mi iubire-i idolească”; “ține-și rangul mai presus”; “Că ‘napoi trimitu-i – și-apoi mă întristez”; or because they are regional or dialectal forms, e.g. “o mamă n-o lași să se-alduiască”; “Dar astăzi stihu-mi beteag e, deloc înfloritor”.

A similar category is distinguishable from the angle of phonetics, e.g. “iar eu să nu cunosc nimică”; “Ia dară seama la (...)”; “Și amoru-ți socoata de pe urmă-și va fi-ncheiat”; “Că drèsuri ți-ar lipsi, văpseli, nicipând nu am văzut”; “Și-n chip nou jelescumi, iarăși, timp scump ce-am risipit”; “Se găsesc unul pe-altul și-i pierd totdeodată”. When the reason for using such rather extreme vernacular forms is not the need for a good rhyme (e.g. “Amorul e un far neschimbăcios (...) / (...) de-atâta, pentru năieri, folos”; “ca un zăcaș ce supus șede (...) / (...) nu îl voi crede”), contextual explication (e.g. “La searbăd chip” – cf. “Where cheeks need blood”), conventionalized folksy or colloquial expressions (e.g. “Buieștrașul ce mă poartă, de-amoru-mi istovit”; “Răspunde cu greu geamăt (sărmanul dobitoc!)”; “Când vei citi ăst vers, tu sub privire-i prefira”; “cu-al soarelui sfințit, (...) spre-amurg dispere”; “chipul de nu ți-ar coperi”; “ar putea-n cinstire să o ție”), it can be said to be the need that a translator of literature feels to forge ‘poetical bites’ of their own (e.g. “Fără vreo foaie de zălog de-aici mă va răpi”; “O, aste păcate nărăvite”; “Nu te-ntrista când cea cumplită zăticnire (...”).

A.1) Most of the terms likely to be employed in order to achieve ‘poetization’ in period/classical poetry are therefore old(er), obsolete / superannuated / disused terms, so basically archaic terms, e.g. “ruinând a evilor trecută fală”; “de ce oare-n boleșniți trebui să trăiască”; “Amăsurat cu forța grelei tale gelozii?”; “Au cine-l va opri”; “Ci fie-a’ mele cărți (...)”; “să fii cuprins tu ești făcut”; “Vorbele-nchinare, stiharii ce le folosesc”; “ce scriu ceilalți stihari”; “prin el și prin acest stihar”; “frumosul ce-i de stihar iubit”; “Duce pe valuri catarg umil”; “Da’n boiu-ți o găsi”; “să trăiască, într-un nou vâleat”; “De te stingi după vâleatu-mi”; “cată noi doi să fim și să rămânem doi”; “să ies unde tu m-oi cerca nu îndrăznesc”; “mă-ntorn iarăși pe cărare”; “Se-ntoarnă iar, după cugetare-ntemeiată”; “să ia aminte că m-am băjenit”; “Nici spada lui Marte și nici pojarul arzător”;

“Prihana s-o cinstească prin făptura lui”; “al primăverii-n floare singur olăcar”; “Iar eu voi bea, ca un zăcaș”; “să lauzi un ir vindecător”; “Irul umil, ce-n piept rănit se potrivește!”; “Când via frumosul și murea-n felul florilor”; “al iubirii-adânc orând”; “Chipul i-e stampa vremii”; “dupăolaltă sună”; “Haru-ți dă zăpis”; “Spre tine-n hagialăc de credință năzuiesc”; “acesteia-i slujește de privaz”; “icoană tocmită-n privaz”; “Pe largu-i sân se-arată, avântându-se”; “Cum ar putea, avanului berbece-al zilelor?”; “În contul tău, un hronic întreg voi însemna”, etc. Some instances of archaisms may indeed sound rather exaggerated or stridently poetical, e.g. “Și își râd profeții triste de-a loruși prevestire”; “Și spre cărare de părelnicii minți tari răznesc”; “O! putear-ar arăta, privind ‘napoi, acea istorisire”, or even slightly obscure / encoded for today’s (younger) readers, e.g. “Cuvintele-nchinate ce stiharii folosesc / Despre ce-au scris” (cf. “The dedicated words which writers use / Of their fair subject”).

B) Conversely, using neology is virtually unavoidable in translating poetic pieces belonging to such a cultural vein as the Sonnets. Neologisms are necessary in view of the very subject-matter of the Shakespearean poems (e.g. “Iar prisma-i pentru pictor supremă măiestrie”), but also within the context of the very intellectual pursuit we are referring to (e.g. “ce deja fost-a cheltuit”; “ce-amoru-a creat cu mâna sa”; “Amoru-ți pur ca să nu pară mai puțin curat”; “ale vieții șiruri, ce viața repară!”; “Ăstui foc tu-n mine-i vezi finala strălucire”; “nu mi-e că ea îți aparține”; “Cor pustiu, unde cântări auzeai”; “Flori ce-au decât pictura-ți mai multă-asemănare”; “subiectu-ți dulce, prea desăvârșit”; “de-atâtea ori te-am invocat”; “în drojdia celui din urmă gest al tău”; “muritoarea lună și-a-ndurat eclipsa ei”; “zăresc doar lucruri ignorate”; “Chemat l-acei bilanț de motive-ntemeiate”; “tu nimicirea s-o satirizezi”; “cei care aste zile contemplăm”; “cade-n grea melancolie”; “Unica-mi grijă”; “Iar aste elemente iuți (...)”; “Pe ei – ca stil, pe el – pentru iubire-o să-l citești”; “povestea unui suflet fals și rău”; “așa tușe divine!”; “Tăcerea nu-ți scuza, c-ai har din plin”; “Tezaurul răpindu-i, de primăvăratăc mai”; “Pledând prea mult pentru păcat”; “lăsând grele miasme-n norii mai de jos”; “Ce multe leghe-s de aici până la iubitul tău!”; “Să sar leghe fără număr când ești dus departe”; “Și mă corup eu singur motivându-ți fapta rea”; “în stihu-mi distilat”; “pe foi imaculate”; “piatra înnegrită de-a vremii maculare”; “Spre slăvile științei crasa-mi ignoranță”; “Lasciv har”; “De-astrala-i alchimie gârle, pal, se poleiesc”; “Când opuri ce te slăvesc (...)”; “De mine (preaprofanul) să nu fii păgubit”. Only once did I use a neologism instead of a more common, older term (also changing the description of the referent in the process), when I considered the new term more poetic and more evocative, both contextually and etymologically: “Cum heliantul tinde spre-a astrului privire” – to render “But as the marigold at the sun’s eye (...)” – see marigold: the flower *Calendula officinalis* (Schmidt).

A brief parenthesis would be, I think, in order, just to revisit poetization and its numerous tribulations, challenges and quirks. I endeavoured to provide as much poeticality as I possibly could (e.g. “prin fereastra vârstniciei tale”; “sonul strunei”; “Rechemând icoane-apuse ale celor ce-am trăit”; “Subțiri de nu-s (...)”; “calm-unduiosul cânt”; “să fiu isteț ca el și mai cuprins în fapt”, etc.). In retrospect, I can say that a certain gradient is clearly visible – which goes from rather bland, conventional poetization (e.g. “preaminunat avar”; “Ți-ai dosit lucirea-ntr-a lor păclă fumegoasă!”; “De va propăși, iar eu, vânturat, de-o fi să mor”; “Ca să-ți pot da, prin astă crudă dezunire”; “să viețuim în răzlețire”; “Când în morțiul nopții, frumoasă umbra ta (...)”; “De preț alint, tu, azi – preacrâncena-mi durere”; “ăst gând mă împresoară”; “Sleiesc, în alt răsunset, de laudă cântare”) to a superior level of personal artistic achievement – may I be excused for the apparent lack of modesty (e.g. “Mă mângâi cu vrednic-curăția ce-o vădești”; “Ori de-i schimbarea-n crugu-i veșnic învârtită”; “Ele-s prezent-absente și-n pripă adiază”; “gureș-

minciñoșii moși”; “Încât din bogat prea-plinul tău sunt împlinit”; “Dar ram încarcă muzica sălbatic-brută”; “Ce-i așa sfânt-hărăzit, de pată fără-frică?” – cf. “But what’s so blessed-fair that fears no blot?” (cf. blessed-fair “happy as well as beautiful” (Schmidt). At the same time, I am fully aware that some of the expressions that I coined to enhance the poeticity of my versions may be censurable, though not really laughable: “Și binele e slugă,-nrobit de-ai răi de sus”; “De la aste-ncete forțe neprimind nimic alt (...); “Netrebnic răznită Muză”; “să rupi, silit ești, o făgadă îndoită” (in fact, there is no such noun in Romanian, corresponding to the verb a făgădui, so I made it up by analogy with tăgadă < a tăgădui).

What, in translation studies, was dubbed gain vs. loss is virtually unavoidable in translating poetry, and my variant of the Sonnets can show it in a few places, e.g. “Folosu-și arăta-vor, nemurind în cartea ta” (cf. “Shall profit thee, and much enrich thy book”). This was nevertheless not always the case, since I also risked being repetitive or redundant for the sake of poetic expression, e.g. “Și sapă vrăste-vrăste pe fruntea cea frumoasă” – cf. “And delves the parallels in beauty’s brow”; “Fii oriunde-ai vrea! Ți-e dreptul, cartea, așa de tare” – cf. “your charter is so strong”; “Sometime all full with feasting on your sight” – cf. “Te văd și plin mă simt ochi de-ospăț și prăznuire”. Speaking of which: Shakespeare actually cultivated this type of lyrical intensification – through the use of either repetitive or qualitative redundancy (which I, regularly and dutifully, tried to render into Romanian), e.g. “mândră de mândra-i pradă” (“proud of this pride”); “Cum forma umbrei tale-ar forma dulce pictură” (“How would thy shadow’s form form happy show”); “dezvățul spre-a-l dezvăța” (“to correct correction”); “O, cu cât îmi pare frumusețea mai frumoasă” (“O how much more doth beauty beauteous seem”); “Oare duhu-i, de duhuri ‘nalte să scrie învățat” (“Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write”); “Pe cel mai dulce-amic cu robie-l înrobește?” (“But slave to slavery my sweet’st friend must be?”); “Puteri puterii dă-i” (“Use pow’r with pow’r”); “Și-atunci umbra-ți la umbre le-oferă strălucire” (“Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make bright”); “Un sine-așa prins de sine-i un rău desăvârșit” (“Self so self-loving were iniquity”); “Ia-mi toate iubirile, da, toate, iubire” (“Take all my loves, my love; yea, take them all”); “Când îndoieli n-aveam de-a firii-ndoielnicie” (“When I was certain o’er uncertainty”); “Iar arta de la tine cu har e hăruiță” (“And arts with thy sweet graces gracèd be”).

(4) The standards of Romanian expression ought to be scrupulously observed, without any doubt, although certain expressions in my Romanian version of the Sonnets could face deserved criticism if analysed more closely, e.g. “S-ar cădea și tu – de ce nimic nu prețuiește”.

5. Conclusion: In view of such analytic observations and clues as the above ones, I consider the effort to retranslate Shakespeare’s sonnets as a modest (but honest) cultural contribution, the value of which lies at least in being constructive, if not necessarily original or evincing poetic mastery.

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VOICES IN TRANSLATION. FINDING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN CULTURES

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Abstract: *The aim of this article is to offer a brief skim of the vast literature on the topic of the relation between translation and culture. Through translations we gained access to the cultural and literary heritage of a multitude of other nations in today's "global village". The analysis pinpoints the evolution of translation theories, from the early studies in which translation was seen as the mere replacement of textual material to the comprehensive view in which language is the core of the iceberg that we call culture and the unbreakable connection and constant mutual influence between the two.*

Keywords: *translation; intercultural awareness; globalization*

Culture seems to be a notoriously difficult term to define, with more than 150 definitions and no agreement among researchers regarding its nature. The classic definition of culture was provided by the British anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor in 1870 and it underlined the core values contained by most subsequent definitions: "Culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (apud Spencer-Oatey, 2012: 1-2).

To understand the connections and the differences between cultures, it is important to mention the first study regarding languages and the way they influence our worldview or cognition. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis was presented in 1929. The theory, also known as the *theory of linguistic relativity* or *linguistic relativism*, is named after the American anthropological linguist Edward Sapir (1884–1939) and his student Benjamin Whorf (1897–1941). Sapir presented his "new principle of linguistic relativity" (Whorf 1956: 214) as a fact discovered by linguistic analysis. According to him, language is the symbolic guide to culture as our language shape our perception of the world.

When linguists became able to examine critically and scientifically a large number of languages of widely different patterns, their base of reference was expanded; they experienced an interruption of phenomena hitherto held universal, and a whole new order of significances came into their ken. It was found that the background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade. Formulation of ideas is not an independent process, strictly rational in the old sense, but is part of a particular grammar, and differs, from slightly to greatly, between different grammars. We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds—and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way—an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is, of course, an implicit and unstated one, but its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot

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talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement decrees. (Whorf, 1956: 212–214 apud Scholz et al.¹)

Analysing the Sapir-Whorf theory, Werner and Campbell (1970: 398 apud Rubel and Rosman, 2020) conclude that “human beings speaking different languages do not live in the ‘same’ real world with different labels attached: they live in different worlds – language itself acts as a filter on reality moulding our perceptions of the universe around us.”

In 1962, Marshall McLuhan coined the term “global village”, emphasizing the idea that the world is a community in which distance and isolation have been dramatically reduced by electronic media.² It designates the ability to connect and trade ideas instantly among the nations of the world.

Cultural globalization refers to the standardization of cultural expressions around the world. Watson (2024) believes that globalization, which has been “propelled by the efficiency or appeal of wireless communications, electronic commerce, popular culture, and international travel” and considered “a trend toward homogeneity that will eventually make human experience everywhere essentially the same”, is far from creating anything akin to a single world culture.³ Thus, globalization “is not uniformity but interaction, interdependence, and elements of unity in a vast sea of diversity”. The phenomenon is not new as “world cultures have interacted and learned from each other for thousands of years through the processes of acculturation, adaptation, diffusion, and assimilation”, but it has been accelerated in the age of globalization under the influence of the rapid spread of commodities and ideas, making the local global and the global local. (Ahmad, 2013: 7). Nederveen Pieterse (2019) as well argues that globalization in fact leads to the formation of a global *mélange* culture through processes of cultural mixing or hybridization, in which identity is preserved, albeit transformed.

Translation is the process through which we have gained access to the cultural and literary heritage of a multitude of other nations. Addressing the issue of translation, E. Nida states that

Since no two languages are identical either in meanings given to corresponding symbols or in ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages... no fully exact translation... the impact may be reasonably close to the original but no identity in detail” (Nida, 1964 apud Rubel and Rosman, *op. cit.*: 8)

However, the translation must make sense and convey the manner and spirit of the original and should have the same effect on the receiving audience as the original had on its audience. (Nida, 1964 apud Rubel and Rosman, *ibid.*: 9)

Translation was used in the instruction of Greek and Latin as a means of ensuring that new vocabulary had been acquired, but often students were worried that too creative an effort would be penalized with a bad mark and would settle for as close to a word-for-word translation as possible. (cf. Anderman, 2007: 7)

J.C. Catford (1965: 20) defines translation as “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)”,

¹ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/linguistics/whorfianism.html>

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/global%20village>

³ <https://www.britannica.com/science/cultural-globalization>

a mere transaction between two languages, or a somewhat mechanical sounding act of linguistic “substitution” (cf. Trivedi, 2005)

However, in the same 1960’s, there was a cultural turn in translation studies,

an inevitable result of the need for greater intercultural awareness in the world today. It is greatly to be welcomed for it offers the best chance we have to understand more about the complexities of textual transfer, about what happens to texts as they move into new contexts and the rapidly changing patterns of cultural interaction in the world we inhabit. (Bassnett, 2007: 23 apud Khan, 2020: 13)

Researchers realized that translation is “rather a more complex negotiation between two cultures. The unit of translation was no longer a word or a sentence or a paragraph or a page or even a text, but indeed the whole language and culture in which that text was constituted” (Trivedi, *op. cit.*), a theory described by Bassnett and Lefevere (1990).

Language is the core within the body of culture and a translator who treats the text in isolation from the culture do this at his or her peril. (cf. Bassnett, 2014: 25) Translation is not individual because the individual mind operates in a cultural context and when we translate it is not simply propositional knowledge ascribed to the individual mind which is involved, but the communication of cultural knowledge. It is a social act, involving social relationships, transforming as well as crossing boundaries. (cf. Silverstein, 2020) Nevertheless, as Baker (1996: 17 apud Katan, 2014: 1) emphasizes, many researchers have adopted a “cultural perspective ... a dangerously fashionable word that almost substitutes for rigour and coherence.”

Scholars began to realize that literary texts were constituted not primarily of language but in fact of culture, language being in effect a vehicle of the culture. Translation preserves and transfers across borders and boundaries the rich tapestry of traditions from around the world, but there are many concepts that remain unknown outside national borders, consequently lacking designation in other languages. Trivedi (2005) discusses about the items considered problematic in translation, often described as “culture-specific” –

for example, *kurta*, *dhoti*, *roti*, *loocho*, *dharma*, *karma* or *maya*, all items peculiarly Indian and not really like the Western shirt, trousers, bread, religion, deeds both past and present, or illusion. But then the realization grew that not only were such particular items culture-specific but indeed the whole language was specific to the particular culture it belonged or came from, to some degree or the other. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, to the effect that a language defined and delimited the particular world-view of its speakers, in the sense that what they could not say in their language was what they could not even conceive of, seemed to support the view that the specificity of a culture was coextensive with the specificity of its language. The increased valorization of diversity and plurality in cultural matters also lent strength to this new understanding of language and culture in a way that earlier ideas or ideals of universalism had not.

Anthropological studies have shown that culture undergoes a constant evolution influenced by human activity, which, in turn influences translation and interpretation. But the influence is mutual, since translation and interpretation as well can influence culture and its evolution. (Seel, 2018: xx, xxi) Tymoczko (2014: 170 apud Khan, 2018: 13) explains that translation challenges what is socially established, expands or overturns what is known and fosters rebellion against the constraints of local ethical, ideological

and political standards and hierarchies. Translation can reshape entire cultural systems by introducing new ideas.

In the 19th century, Schleiermacher, the German theorist who wrote *On the Different Methods of Translating* (1831), noted that a translation could be done either by bringing the author to the language of the reader (domestication) or by carrying the reader to the language of the author (foreignization). (cf. Rubel and Rosman, 2020: 7) Michael Cronin (2000: 150 apud Bassnett, 2007: 22) speaks about the similarities between translators and travel writers, both engaged in a dialogue with languages and with other cultures, transforming otherness into an acceptable form for consumption by their target readers.

Lefevere (1999: 76 apud Bassnett, *ibid.*: 20) asserts that Western cultures have constructed non-Western cultures by translating them into Western categories, a process that distorts and falsifies

This brings us, of course, straight to the most important problem in all translating and in all attempts at cross-cultural understanding: can culture A ever really understand culture B on that culture's (i.e. B's) own terms? Or do the grids¹ always define the ways in which cultures will be able to understand each other? Are the grids, to put it in terms that may well be too strong, the prerequisite for all understanding or not?

Anderman (2007) is just one of the researchers who draws attention to the importance of giving speakers of other nations and cultures an authentic voice in translation, underlining the difficulty of transferring the social, cultural, and political milieu in which these speakers are rooted.

Phenomena in the physical world, fauna and flora, puns, idioms and proverbs, historical, geographical and cultural references as well as references to food are some of the most difficult aspects to translate. As regards the rendering of historical and geographical references, Costa (2020: 4) notes that although footnotes are not favoured by publishers of foreign fiction, sometimes, the unfamiliarity to the reader of place names, personal names and terminology makes it necessary to include even a glossary.

Concerning food references, Pedersen and Andersen (2007) analyse the Danish translations of *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) originating at different points in time spanning the period between 1875 to 2000 and discover that one of the most prominent stumbling blocks, besides style, related linguistic problems and allusions, is the untranslatability of culinary references. They mention the taste of one of Alice's magic potions, a combination of "... custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffy and buttered toast", delicacies that at the time when the early translations were done were unknown in Denmark. The functional equivalent of "turkey" at that time should have been *andesteg* "roast duck". None of the translations seems to reflect the qualities of the original, mostly because the translators did not take on the challenge of cultural adaptation. A good translation, in their opinion, should have departed more from the source text, but the authors admit that in this case, the story might not have been about Alice, but about Marie, a different girl, a strategy employed by one of the translators. (cf. Anderman, 2007: 4)

Recently, a new term has gained prominence: *cultural translation* is currently used in a range of disciplines – both inside and, perhaps especially, outside translation studies itself – and in very different ways. (cf. Buden et al., 2009)² As Conway (2012)

¹ As Bassnett (2007: 19) defines them, "the grids are constructs, they reflect patterns of expectations that have been interiorized by members of a given culture".

² <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14781700902937730>

indicates, it is a concept with competing definitions coming from two broad fields, anthropology/ethnography and cultural/postcolonial studies.

In anthropology, it usually refers to the act of describing for members of one cultural community how members of another interpret the world and their place in it. In cultural studies, it usually refers to the different forms of negotiation that people engage in when they are displaced from one cultural community into another, or it refers to the displacement itself.[...] For anthropologists, foreign cultures are “carried across” to domestic readers in textual form, as described in articles and books, while for cultural studies scholars, what is “carried across” is not so much culture as it is the people who leave their place of origin and enter a new locale, bearing their culture with them. (Conway, 2012)

In a nutshell, translation can no longer be conceived and treated separately from culture. There is a mutual influence between the two, because translation is not individual; the individual mind operates in a cultural context and translation involves the communication of cultural knowledge. In their turn, translations can also have a powerful effect on a cultural system, challenging what is socially established and reshaping entire cultural systems by introducing new ideas.

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THE INTERPLAY OF VOICES AND DISCOURSES IN THE 2020 MOTION PICTURE SONGBIRD

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Abstract: *In this paper, we are approaching the first post-Covid 19 film production, Songbird, in order to analyse the voices and discourses that can be detected in this dystopic thriller film, in the broad sense of the terms. By this, we mean not only the collective voices or discourses of mainstream weltanschauungs, such as those of the authorities or of the subdued working classes that toe the lines imposed by the government, or the special immunes', but also the individual ones, of the characters or the blurred-lines specimens', as well as the subtler, figurative ones, such as the voice of technology that may be considered itself a character à la rigueur, especially in this context. By voice we understand identity and complex perspective, but also, more literally, language in use, which means that the analysis will encompass both aspects and will therefore apply a complex lens of cultural studies, imagology and linguistics. From a cultural standpoint, the motion picture provides us with feedback related to the perception of and reaction to a global crisis such as the one triggered by the virus while it was still unfolding, its reception being also informative with respect to people's expectations about the development and conclusion of the disaster. These outlooks implicitly constitute, as well, voices or discourses to be considered as relevant.*

Keywords: *film; voices; discourses; identity; technology*

1. Introduction

We are looking at the film *Songbird*, the first one to be released after the Covid-19 pandemic, to examine the voices that compose the picture of a society against the background of a significant crisis, and their projections for the upcoming time interval in which the crisis has already become long-term. The action of the movie is placed in the near future with respect to the vantage point of its production in 2020, namely in 2023, in Los Angeles. To the above-mentioned end, we are going to study the social layers presented in the motion picture, according to their discourse in both the linguistic sense and as far as mentalities go, to draw conclusions on this society of the future as imagined at the time of the newly changed situation having reached a global calamity.

2. The authorities

From the very beginning, the landscape and its organization are telling of the situation of separateness and division that humanity has come to be in, both physically and metaphorically. The opening scene is permeated with voices making announcements that are being broadcast – warnings against the danger posed by the virus, updates on the situation, and measures and restrictions imposed by the authorities. The plethora of foreign languages that these voices speak in is the first symbol of the divided social scene, as here the harshness of the messages and the multitude of linguistic expressions are not meant to suggest solidarity, but estrangement, separation and fear. We only hear bits and pieces of these announcements, catching a phrase here and there, English is intermittently introduced among fragments from other languages, and what we see in the meantime on the screen is the presentation of cinema production companies for the movie that we are watching in between which there is the recurrent image of a video signal breaking up with the visual representation of static, all of which create the impression of scatteredness,

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insecurity and even unsafety. This symbolism created auditorily by the anchors' news is subsequently further supported visually by the fragmentation of the physical landscape in the opening scene. The panoramic view from the camera at the beginning of the film shows a young man riding a bike on a desolate highway in Los Angeles that is overgrown with untrimmed vegetation, dirty and permeated with roadblocks carrying written notes such as: "Maximum penalty", "Stop", "Do not enter" (Bay et al., 2020). Disconnectedness is indicated chromatically as well: the roadblocks preventing fluidity of traffic are typically yellow, like the bands used by the police to seal a crime scene, and the notes trying to impose clear boundaries to anyone outside a piece of property are red; the example of one in which there is a drawing of a hand holding a gun additionally reinforces the idea visually in an even more radical way.

The presence of the authorities is consequently the first to be sensed. It starts with literal voices, the ones in the broadcasts. Then, the physical elements pertaining to the landscape are part of the discourse of separation induced and demanded by the officials, theoretically for the safety of the population, but also functioning as a form of oppression and control that turns the presence of the government into one of a big-brother, dictatorial type. So far, we have seen the road blockages as one element reinforcing this imposed order. Throughout the film, we realize that some pieces of machinery are also resorted to as means to ensure order (something that will be detailed in the section bearing on technology below). Enclosures, "partitioning" and advanced technology have always been used to create control and domination, to subdue others (Foucault, 1991: 141-3). These are part of the discourse of the officials, and presented as necessary and serving the interests of the people.

Let us analyse the vocabulary in the broadcasts and official announcements to understand the voice of the government more thoroughly. The initial ones consist in the following words and phrases in English: "wave intensified", "lockdown", "experts", "reporting Covid-23 has mutated", "quarantine zone", "Q-zone", "to house", "mortality rate has risen", "56%", "few immune people are able to leave their homes", "immunity passes" (Bay et al., 2020). From a helicopter, the officials play messages recommending people to observe the lockdown: "Curfew is now in effect. All unauthorized citizens must stay indoors" (*ibidem*). Then, images of special teams in hazmat suits collecting the ill appear on the screen, mixed with scraps from news and medical reports, statistics of deaths, police interventions and angry interviews, with comments such as: "real news" is worse than "fake news"; the "antibody test" is presented by an ordinary man as a hoax, his vocabulary revealing his anger, as he is cursing, since the authorities have said nothing but to "stay home" and "wash your hands" for the past three years; "New data confirms the virus attacks the brain tissue"; a young woman talks about "weird rumours" on "institutional corruption at the Department of Sanitation", pointing to a silent message she has made to appear on the screen saying "Garbage men have a license to kill now ... we are ALL at risk"; intervention teams that "will be arriving in four to six hours" are shown, so the recommendation for the infected is "you must not attempt to leave your home"; the "immunity bracelet" is introduced by a teenager in a video; the "global death count" has surpassed "one hundred and ten million"; another young man expresses his conviction that it is "the end of the world", while another teenager invokes the idea that it "feels like the apocalypse"; another angry viewer describes what people do in radical terms – people "sit home, like gerbils, in our bullshit cages"; people are warned that "Noncompliance will be met with severe penalty"; the "lockdown is in full effect"; those who disobey regulations "will be shot on sight" (*ibidem*).

The film portion above is a kaleidoscope of voices mixing scientific insights, the police state orders and voices of common people reacting to the situation. The rapid succession of images and statements, the way in which some are cut, incomplete, so that we do not hear the whole sentence, but only a fragment from it, the fact that they are a blend, coming from different sources and shuffled, intermingled and very different in nature, in terms of tone, vocabulary and as speech acts enhance dramatic effect and render the idea of chaos. This manner of presentation also conveys the feeling of conflict, opposition, belligerent sides, of a rift created between the government and the people. We have decided to introduce these inputs from various voices altogether like this, in the order in which they are conferred to us, precisely to catch this impression of fragmentariness and pandemonium. In analysing them in what follows, in order to extract the general discourse and attitudes of the parties involved, we shall deal first with the messages coming from the authorities, and in the following section with those of regular people.

The authorities have at least two distinguishable voices: the scientists' or medical experts' one, which delivers informative alerts describing the evolution of the virus, and the voice of the government that makes its presence felt mainly through the imposition of the safety measures. Among the terms put forward by the first voice mentioned above, there are words and phrases related to the virus. Nouns and noun phrases – “wave”, “experts”, “Covid-23”, “mortality rate”, “immune people”, “antibody test”, “virus”, “brain tissue”, “death count”, “strain”, “outbreak”, “caseload” – refer to the virus itself, the people involved, the activity and effects of the virus evaluated with the help of statistics, which are implicitly needed in order to conclude, for instance, that there is a wave or how many people have died, which all involve counts. Hence, numerals and percentages are consequently bound to appear in the descriptions: “56%”, “one hundred and ten million”. The dire situation is illustrated using verbs that have the semantic trait [+increase/+escalation] in common: “mutated”, “intensified”, “risen”, “attacks”. These terms are descriptive, as insights provided by science are supposed to be neutral, factual and as accurate as possible.

The other voice, of the government as an active body taking measures and reinforcing them, is manifesting its will resorting to terms that involve actions. Therefore, the specific vocabulary entails something active, dynamic, prescriptive, rather than the passive, descriptive terminology above. A significant part of the nouns and noun phrases corresponding to this voice have or entail this “do” ingredient in them: “lockdown”, “quarantine zone”, “curfew”. The use of the initial “Q” for quarantine, or simply the noun “zone”, as recognizable signifiers hints at the way in which the situation has been perpetrated into a familiar status quo that the citizens have gotten used to, to such an extent as to immediately and with priority associate the letter or the simple noun (that could otherwise refer to any zone, not this one in particular), with the respective state of affairs and reality. Throughout the film, the regular mandatory procedures or actions are designated by similar noun phrases: “thermal scans”, the “temp test”, “TempCheck” or “virus check” should be performed every morning, and within a certain time interval (*ibidem*). Another subcategory among these nouns includes those which mention objects that have an official significance “immunity passes”, “immunity bracelet”, which have an implicit trait pointing to free dynamics/movement/circulation in their semantics. Finally, there is a portion of the nouns that points to deviant behaviour and attached penalties: “unauthorized citizens”, “noncompliance”, “severe punishment”. The harshness of the regulations determines the appearance of modals of obligation and verb phrases that involve violence: “must stay indoors”, “will be shot”. We notice the strictness of the

punishments, which points to a martial law, totalitarian regime. All the actions referred to have an oppressive and punitive implication, even the verb “to house” used in connection with the quarantine areas, as the collected infected do not have a choice in the matter and are forced to stay in these facilities, presumably until the end of their lives, given the severity of the virus and its effects. The adverbial “in (full) effect” is meant to draw people’s attention to the seriousness of the measures, to their mandatory nature and to give it weight. When a case is detected inside a building, it changes its status to a “condemned” one, an adjective sending to criminal behaviour – as if getting sick would be a crime – and connoting an attached penalty as a result (*ibidem*). The discourse of the authorities is generally meant to instil fear of both the virus and the state, and to determine complete compliance and obedience from the population. The main body implementing the law is the “Department of Sanitation” (which used to handle garbage), and it soon becomes obvious that the sanitation refers to obliterating the ill as if they were some pest, which is the first subtle sign of the way the state derides its citizens (*ibidem*). The authorities despise the citizens, making no effort to conceal their inconsideration or to keep up appearances, being brutal and deprecatory especially with the ones having the special privilege of immunity, whom they call “munie scum” (*ibidem*). The “stay safe” phrase that has been on people’s lips during the actual Covid-19 pandemic in real life is completed in the film by the oppressive authorities in the form “stay safe, sane and sanitized” (*ibidem*). The alliteration and the hint to possible mental issues give us the feel that the state mocks the people, and resorts to a rhyme-like expression as if it were addressing simple-minded individuals or toddlers, who would get excited at a limerick, as if a catchy phrase would acquire brainwashing qualities, making everything seem lighter or normal, a tactic that would fool low-IQ persons. This disrespect and aversity is mutual, the people hating the government back, as we shall see in the following section.

3. The population

The first client receiving a delivery from Lester through Nico in the film addresses the courier in less than ceremonious or polite terms: “You’re late, asshole!”, followed by a refusal to pay a tip and a request for another courier upon the next delivery (*ibidem*). This rudeness is part of the aggressiveness and dehumanization that people seem to display as a result of the modified, restrictive life conditions. Unlike the way it has happened in real life with the virus pandemic context in which people have managed, in the first stages of the disaster, to be solidary, helpful and encouraging with one another, manifesting positivity overall, the movie clearly presents a gloomy development of these into a much darker mood once the virus mutates to a 2023 version and the lockdown persists for so long. In this key, *Songbird* is indeed pessimistic, dystopic and displaying a misanthropist stance. This client’s aggression is representative of the voice of a part of the subdued population, the one that has had enough and reacts according to instinct in a crude manner.

The property in question is covered with warning signs: “Warning, keep out, we don’t call sanitation” (this one accompanied by the image of a hand holding a pistol facing the reader), “Private property, no trespassing”, “No trespassing, armed response”, “Aerial photography and video surveillance in progress”, “Trespassers will be shot” (*ibidem*). The notes requiring strangers to keep out a private property are not something unusual or unspecific to a crisis situation, as they are regularly used, in their simpler forms, to warn against intrusion in real life, but the extra, dramatic added element is the gun and the concept of shooting the trespassers, which is overtly present in both the form of the drawing and as verbal notification. Hence, the act of gunning is being threatened

redundantly and obsessively in more than one forms. In unexceptional situations in everyday existence the shooting may be implied as an action to discourage criminals, but not expressed ostensibly, brutally and directly like this. Also, the increased number of the notes protecting the same property is significant, the five above being used for the same one. There is consequently a clear intention of delimitation, boundary creation and belligerent split, a clear-cut creation of sides, of declared opposition, with all implications owned. Clearly, cohesion and solidarity among the population is lost and replaced by an internalization of the partitioning discourse of the authorities, at least among some of the members of the ruled masses.

Further evidence as to the anger imbuing the masses against the authorities can be found in the previous section in the enumeration of bits of testimony from regular people who describe how they feel or what they think about the context. From the linguistic turns above, we may conclude that discontent with the government is generalized, often accompanied by distrust, and frequently deviating into crude anger accompanied by coarse words (the f-words, “shit”, “bullshit”). Irony, sarcasm and a tinge of humour are detectable in the overall angry approach, in a metaphorical characterization of people as “gerbils”. The term designates something from the animal world and could be considered specialized, as it denotes a special type of the two thousand species of rodents divided into families like the “Capromyidae, Castoridae, Cricetidae, Erethizontidae, Muridae, Sciuridae and Dipodidae”, the family Muridae (the largest) containing the subfamily of the rats (the most numerous) and that of the gerbils (“Types of Rodents”, n.a., 2023, on *Orkin*). Gerbils would not appear among the first enumerated as examples by regular speakers of English and not even by specialists explaining this animal category to the wider audience, the typical, “illustrative” examples being mice, rats, guinea pigs and squirrels (Helzner, 2023). The use of this unusual term may signal the subtext that the population is intelligent, educated, informed, thus unlikely to give in to the manipulation performed on them by the authorities. Besides this subtle hint, the grounds for the metaphor would be the similarities between the condition of the locked up human beings and that of gerbils living underground, away from the light of day, as well as the fact that people are toyed with by the authorities, because gerbils are also frequently kept as pets (gerbil, Collins, 2023). In the same sarcastic cue, a man jokingly suggests the incompetence of the authorities in finding a remedy for the deadly strain of the virus that kills in only forty-eight hours, and the officials’ “barbaric” treatment of the people in the Q-zones in his characterization of these concentration camps: “Well, we know what the Q stands for. Quick death.” (Bay et al., 2020)

The sense of gloom reaches a paranoid stance in which some people view the situation as the “end of the world” or “apocalypse” – noun phrases denoting the extreme end of all ends. People’s distrust is reflected by nouns such as “fake news”, “institutional corruption” and “weird rumours”. The adjective “weird” is informal and subjective, which, together with the swear words, send us to the idea that, despite the obvious dictatorship traits of the state, the population still has some freedom of speech that they manifest using recording devices, the internet and/or social media. However, there is loss of freedom in general and of this liberty of expression in particular as well, since the girl that discusses rumours feels that a part of her message (the one saying that representatives of the police collecting the infected are authorized to kill them), should be put on the screen and literally pointed at with her index finger, rather than uttered.

The population is aware of the measures that they need to observe, and utter them in synthetic and unpretentious terms: “stay home”, “wash your hands”. The manner of describing them is informal and using accessible, unspecialized terms. This

simplification of expression also contains implied criticism addressed to the government, because these simple actions are all that they have been able to come up with in all these years, a disgruntlement directed at their failure to provide a cure.

If we sum up all the ingredients that make up the collective voice of the people subdued by the totalitarian state, which we have presented at large above, what we find in it, in the order of the weightiness of the ingredients, would be: anger, violence/aggressiveness, discontent, criticism, distrust, pessimism occasionally verging on paranoid tendencies. The negativity and ill feelings are directed mainly at the authorities, rather than the situation resulting from the presence of the virus itself. Interestingly, the population appears to manifest in very moderate amounts the fear that the authorities are trying to inspire, nor act according to fear.

The population overall is divided into labelled categories, which makes room for inequality, loss of rights and liberties and preferential treatments. The immunes are the only ones preserving their free circulation liberties. They are also the ones to draw the envy and hatred of the others, especially from those who have forgotten to be humane and civilized. Nico points it out when he mutters to himself, as a result of a client's rude remarks over the Intercom, that the client just hates him because of his rare and special state and deriving status. These feelings are visible in the police officers' reaction to Nico and how they characterize him disparagingly (see above). Some members of the population are in awe of the immune, naming them "mythical creatures" and "legends" (*ibidem*). This perception of such fortunate individuals as special is enhanced linguistically by the treatment of the adjective as a noun, which underlines the importance of the persons displaying this feature by the transformation of the feature into an individualizing element that is relevant enough to name and create a category in itself, identifiable through this unique, distinctive trait. There is even a short version of the term, namely "munies". In Harland's view, marked by his inflated ego, the munies, a category he belongs to himself, are "untouchable", "not human anymore", "gods", a characterization that goes beyond respect or awe right into the pathological sphere in which he has lost touch with reality, as for him the interest lies in the "godly power" and control that this condition helps him exercise, and for which he sees himself as being better than others in the sense that he is above them, instead of simply considering himself fortunate, being thankful and enjoying this status like a normal human being would; the special state feeds his arrogance and narcissism rather than a positive side of his personality (*ibidem*).

The existence of the black market is a form of protest against the authorities, and a survival tactic in the confinement situation the people find themselves in. Nico dreams of getting "black market passes" for him and Sara to escape to other areas where the number of cases has dropped or gotten to zero (*ibidem*). Still under the table, Nico gets a part that he needs to fix his motorbike. However, illegal transactions are not only performed by everyman. In the case of regular people, it is done in revolt or as an attempt to escape the dominance of the system and get a bit of extra freedom or treats. In the case of wealthy people, such as the Griffins, one of the most influential families in the area, it is done to get rich or as a manifestation of a God complex. Mrs. Griffin pays Nico extra money just because she likes him. Emmett Harland, the head of the Department of Sanitation, and therefore a representative of the state, hands out immunity bracelets for a price himself.

4. Technology

Technology is needed and used by the people on a large scale, as expected in a scenario that has imposed rigid, unnegotiable physical boundaries. However, its usages differ, as it is no longer resorted to only voluntarily mainly for communication and work, but also oppressively by the authorities, in a weaponized manner turned against the people, as a form of control. The simple, ordinary devices, such as mobile phones, have received virus-combat-and-detection-specific applications, such as the one taking people's temperature every morning, but also some that are state-of-the-art, and yet not invented, such as the scan that is able to give a diagnostic whether one is infected with Covid or not as a result of a facial analysis made through the phone display in three seconds. The transformation of the scan into a mandatory practice to be deployed daily makes it a tool of domination and persecution. At the beginning of the film, a helicopter hovering the area making sure protocols are kept is also an element of technology used by the police state, which always resorts to a form of enhanced surveillance of the population.

As for technological pieces that serve people's needs, we may enumerate communication devices, starting with the phone or laptop, but also household machinery. An example would be the sanitation boxes using UV lamps installed at home entrances, in which any delivered object is quickly and handily disinfected, in about five seconds, and which seem to be ubiquitous, so a measure that has probably been taken on a large scale if not imposed as a rule. As far as positive-context usages go, the phone and video call are the means through which Sara and Nico keep their communication open. An instance of a funny way to use them is when Nico keeps his video call open while pointing the phone to a video projector on which an old romantic movie is playing, and in this way Sara can watch it together with him. This example is a touching one, as romanticism is achieved with the use of technology, along with a sort of complex mirror of mirrors captured with more screens involved in the process in a kind of palimpsestic writing of more filmed love stories.

5. Individuals

The male protagonist, Nico Price, works as a courier, which makes natural the use of terms related to this job, i.e. occupational. To compose a glossary, these words and phrases would be the following: "held up", "pick-up", "waiting for about fifteen minutes", "ten minutes late", "it's a left on ...", "turning left", "check mark", "going right", "delay", "(high) priority drop", "all the way across town", "the court", "GPS", "drop-off", "special delivery", "mapped out", "grid" (*ibidem*). As expected, some are nouns that describe the actual activity of dispatch, such as "pick-up", "drop-off", "delivery", nuanced with adjectivals that express the idea of needed rapidity or particularity, like "priority" or "special", and others are verbs that indicate the notion of movement and dynamic, such as forms of the verbs "turn" or "go". Most terms are related conceptually to the dimension of space and time, designating: places or locations – "town", "court", "a left on", "mark"; entailing the organization of space onto precise coordinates for the identification of exact points (the concepts of a map, grid or GPS); indicating duration (the verb "wait") or a number of minutes, in which case numerals appear.

Sara, Nico's girlfriend, addressed by him initially as Miss Garcia, is a young woman of Hispanic descent. Besides her name being typically an "Iberian surname" (García (surname), n.a., 2023, on *Wikipedia*), there are some other linguistic elements in the scene of her introduction which reinforce this origin. She calls her grandmother Lita

as a term of endearment, which is most likely short for *abuelita*, meaning grandmother in Spanish and, moreover, a diminutive form that highlights Sara's affection for her. In her video call with Nico, the grandmother intervenes to greet him in Spanish: "*Hóla, Nico ¿como estás?*", and Sara teaches Nico what to reply "*Estoy bien, ¿y tú?*" (Bay et al., 2020). The bits in Spanish are recurrent, as Lita talks to Sara upon other occasions in the film. Lester, the character who runs the delivery service company, is African American. This melting pot micro society is intentional, the purpose being to suggest a feeling of equality before risk and danger, i.e. the levelling before potential death, and from this the importance of solidarity and universal values such as kindness, courage and generosity.

Michael Dozer, aka MD is a war veteran who has fought in Afghanistan and who is confined to a wheelchair, which makes him a "pro" at lockdowns, which he got familiar with "long before it was fashionable", as he contends with self-irony in a discussion with May (*ibidem*). He wins his bread sending on missions his drone, which he has named Max. Similarly, Nico has called his motorbike Cielito. In both cases, the humanization of objects is a clear sign of the loneliness and lack of social interaction and human touch permeating the whole society because of the prolonged lockdown and martial law state.

May earns her existence as a singer streaming online, and she is Griffin's lover. There are more contrasting sides to her personality. On the one hand, she is a sweet young woman who likes to share joy to others by singing old tunes that remind them of better days, thus keeping their hopes up for a better future. On the other, she likes to dress for her incognito rendezvous with William, which exposes a dark side of hers. However, the innocence in her prevails as she leaves William and is able to develop an interest in and form a bond with Dozer that goes towards a romantic involvement despite his condition of being immobilized in a wheelchair, which means May is not just about appearances and displays profundity and a pure heart.

Emmett Harland is the person in charge of the Department of Sanitation, so a representative of the authorities, the only one we are shown for whom a personality gets outlined in this collective character. Instead of being an honest person who inspires trust, he is exactly the opposite: megalomaniac, as he is excessively emotionally attached to and fond of the power and control he has over the others, a narcissist, thinking himself godly because of his immunity, corrupt, as he hands out immunity bracelets on the black market and over a whim, and a psychopath incapable of empathy and enjoying to scare others and instill fear.

We notice that in some characters' cases, it is as if there are more voices inside them, usually contrasting ones. We are not referring here to the complexity of a regular individual and to the way in which people have more facets of a personality depending on the social roles that they assume in their daily existences, but to more marked and unusual contrasts. Some of the characters display opposing sides, as if they were schizoid selves unable to harmonize these aspects in one single person into a homogenous whole. We witness this especially in the characters May and Emmett.

6. Conclusions

The film has presented an interest as it is the first movie production to be released after the outbreak of the pandemic. Critics have commented that the perspective is a pessimistic one. Inasmuch as the scenario relies on a prolonged crisis that is not only yet unsolved in 2023, but also, moreover, having gotten worse, as the Covid mutates into a deadly version for most of the population, which kills in forty-eight hours, and is highly transmittable and airborne in an accentuated manner, this appreciation is true. However, the message in the end preserves hope and envisages a context in which the air becomes

breathable again, so a decrease in severity and power of the virus. What is unquestionable is the absolute poor opinion of the people with respect to the authorities. Given the severity of the situation, an implicit incapacity of the official organizations is brought into light, as the government and the specific bodies have failed to fight effectively with the pathogen with a vaccine. What is more, they are depicted as not only impotent, but also malevolent and disrespectful, resorting to both oppression and mockery. The regime has all the negative features assignable to a bad state: it is useless, totalitarian, disrespectful and corrupt. All these ingredients determine a strong public reaction that often involves anger. Freedom of speech is the only one preserved, mainly due to technology. As far as technology is concerned, it is used as both a positive and negative tool, the latter mainly in the hands of the authorities as a repressive means. The multitude of the voices in the film, especially visible and prominent in the broadcasts from both the authorities and regular people, which permeate it, plays a special role in creating the effect of adversity (of opposing sides at war), of chaos, and of heightened dramatism. It also conveys the idea that life itself has moved online, is led with the help of technology, and there is a certain despair and struggle of the people to continue their existences that comes along with the realization that communication with the help of technology, in a mediated and less satisfactory manner, is all they have.

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SHIFTING GUILT AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE SUN NEWS WEBSITE: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION

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Abstract: *Online news websites are considered as one of the main media sources to stay tuned with recent news and perspectives nowadays. Therefore, the way gender is pictured on such websites contributes directly in the way men and women identify one another and in the way they are defined in the real life and in various societies. The current study, thus, tries to investigate the means by which guilt and responsibility are shifted on women in certain news articles. To do this, a critical discourse analysis study is conducted. Approaches such as Fairclough's three-dimensional approach and Halliday's linguistic tools are adopted to analyse and discuss the data. Data is randomly selected from a well-known news website named "The Sun". One of the main findings of the study is that although this age is considered a revolutionary age with regard to gender issue, news websites still adhere to the old-fashion principle of shifting guilt and responsibility on women, both covertly and overtly.*

Keywords: *CDA; gender; responsibility and guilt; The Sun; discrimination.*

1. Introduction

Although languages are generally defined as systems for communication, they are also essential tools for constructing, changing, and emphasizing certain values, attitudes and beliefs that all together shape the social reality we engage in. This fact points out the importance of discourses in shaping the social life, and thus the whole world. Further, as Berger (2016:4) states, taking the essentiality of discourses in social life construction into account, the importance of critical discourse analysis studies comes clear. As a result of raising the awareness among scholars on this regard, recent studies have started to focus more on critical discourse analysis investigations aiming generally at uncovering how languages and discourses construct identities, sociopolitical aspects and social relations- specifically those of male/female relations, i.e. gender relations. Therefore, gender issues are one of the main social issues that usually attract critical discourse analysis studies. The reason can also be related to the fact that gender bias against women is a topic that has been largely of a specific interest to both scholars and the public. Also, literature documents wealth of data on the negative stereotypes established along the history against women, one of those is shifting guilt and responsibility against them. Furthermore, the increase of public sphere's interest to social media platforms alongside with the increase of controversies on gender discrimination issues in this age have worked as two additional reasons for calling for more critical discourse analysis investigations of gender issues specifically on media.

The current study aims at the following: (1) identifying the ways guilt and responsibility are shifted from men to women in media discourses (specifically The Sun news website), (2) attempting to stand against such discriminatory practices and reduce gender discrimination in general as the general aim of CDA reads as "to set things right" in societies, and (3) increasing consciousness and awareness of everyone to the power of

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language in its the various forms of discourses, specifically media discourses, viz. to increase awareness on the role of media in constructing gender issues.

The current study hypothesizes that there are instances of explicit and others implicit guilt and responsibility shifting for the favour of men on certain contents, which tackle social problems such as violence or domestic issues, relation issues and others, on media. It also hypothesizes that those linguistic and ideological attitudes of shifting guilt and responsibility take different forms and are established in various ways, linguistically and thematically. Accordingly, the current study tries to answer the following question: What are the main linguistic and thematic means employed to establish shifting guilt and responsibility towards women on The Sun news websites?

In order to confirm or disconfirm the hypotheses of the study and to reach answer for the question, the current study is going to do the following, after presenting a precise theoretical background on the topic: (i) randomly select articles from The Sun news website (ii) conduct a linguistic and ideological analyses and discussion on the selected articles, and (iii) present the main findings. These steps, on the one hand, are going to be done following Fairclough's (2010) three-dimensional approach to critical discourse analysis supported with set of tools from systemic functional linguistics. Data, on the other hand, is taken from the Sun news websites.

2. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical is a term that has been investigated in various ways with regards to the use of language and the autocracy of power in societies. It is a concept especially crucial to studies of power, resistance, hegemony and ideology in various disciplines of language. Locke (2004) defines "critical" as a habit by which a situation, a person or an object is evaluated in respect to set of defined rules, values and principles. Critical, as Wodak (2001) claims, is not used in its negative sense in CDA. It is not merely matter of criticizing; it is rather a matter of warning others on observing and thinking critically when it comes to public issue, i.e. without easily accepting things as taken for granted. So, the term critical seeks scepticism rather than negativity. It works on pushing a person to be a sceptical reader or listener.

Roger (2004:3) asserts that within any critical study or approach, the analysts must only aim to "disclose power dynamics and demonstrate inequalities embedded in society". As a result of the advancement of critical studies, CDA appears as a new field of study that adopts a critical direction. Van Dijk (2003) says that CDA focuses on "how the mental deception of social groups affects social structures" and criticizes it.

Van Dijk (1998) also indicates that CDA is a kind of study that investigates power relations in discourses and, therefore, uncovers discrimination, bias and inequality communicated in the use of language. It, thus, investigates dominance and hegemony of a group over another. For Fairclough (2001:125), CDA is a social science that takes a critical direction in warning people on the issue of being confronted and controlled by certain form of social representation.

3. Discourse Analysis and Media

For CDA, discourses are not only written or spoken texts; they are also social practices. Saying that a discourse is a social practice reads that discourses are the grounds to exchange, reflect, and construct social realities. So, this claim correlates with the fact that discourses are homes for ideologies and power struggles. They establish power relations of inter various groups. O' Donnell and Henriksen (2002:89) assert that, on media specifically, social issues of all sorts are reflected and enacted in a discursive manner.

They add that the discursiveness in the discourses has to do with the ideological reflection of the producer and the power they serve or controlled by. This makes discourses and specifically media discourses of a vital significance to CDA.

Discourses are intensively established on media. Media refers to the technologies, websites and online and offline platforms that convey messages from and to people all around the world. It is known in this age as “social media” or “mass media. Media is of different types. Examples of the media platforms, which are the most famous nowadays, include news websites, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc. In this respect, Bhat (2015:28) argues that the emergence of media or what is defined as modern communication platforms, has made the world and the societies as a whole to become “a simple hostage at the hand of media”. Bhat (ibid) points out that, in the age of social media, people should ask themselves and one another how much they are being brainwashed, manipulated, managed, and massaged by the naturalized ideologies promoted on media. Macarro (2002:13) takes a similar vein asserting that people as individuals “are all influenced” and the opinions are shaped, reinforced and altered by the exposure to and engagement in media content. This point highlights the importance of such studies of CDA as the one at hands. Media discourse is seen as a vital means and tool for establishing the processes of exchange, creation, information management, selective actualization and depiction of social, political, religious, cultural, economic and ideological reality. It is a weapon of social influence (McGregor, 2003). Further, media, as being one of the mostly used platforms to exchange discourses, is of high importance to gender studies as well. Therefore, such studies of gender issues on news websites are of essential importance, both linguistically and socially.

4. Fairclough’s Three-Dimensional Approach

Fairclough is one of the prominent figures in the field of CDA. He brings the thoughts of Lancaster school into the field of CDA. CDA, according to Fairclough (1995), is an interdisciplinary field of study. In his new three-dimensional approach, Fairclough (1995) emphasizes that the purpose that CDA seeks to achieve is to explore systematically any relationship of victims within discourses. That is, it explores how a group takes over another in certain social environment. Further, language from Fairclough’s (1989:24) perspective is “a kind of social practice”. Therefore, he goes with the idea that analysts and scholars should focus on both texts and their social context. Based on such perspective, he puts forward his new three-dimensional approach. It is where he emphasizes the relationship of texts, interactions and social contexts.

Therefore, he suggests an approach that consists of three stages. Those stages are: description (textual analysis), interpretation (discursive practice) and explanation (social practice).

4.1. Description (Textual Analysis):

This deals with the linguistic elements of a text. That is, it is the formal elements of the texts that are investigated. Those elements include choices with regards to vocabulary, grammar and structuring. For analysing those elements, Fairclough adopts Halliday’s systemic functional linguistic tools as the toolkit for analysis. He justifies the move by stating that systemic functional linguistics “theorizes Language in a way which harmonizes far more with the perspectives of critical social science than the other theories of language” which makes it the most appropriate choice for the CDA purpose. (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999:134)

4.2. Interpretation (Discursive practice):

The second stage deals with presenting interpretations on the relationship between the production and the consumption of a discourse and the discourse itself. Fairclough (1989:26) clarifies that “interpretation is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction with seeing the text as the product of a process of production and recourse in the process of the interpretation”. This means that discourses are seen as more than just texts with linguistic features. They are seen as discursive practices.

4.3. Explanation (Social practice):

The explanative stage is the stage where the cultural, historical and social contexts are driven into consideration. Fairclough (1989:26) states that “explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context with the social determination of the process of production and interpretation and their social effects”. In this stage, the unrevealed details of the discourses under investigation, specifically those related to power and ideology, are uncovered on the base of investigating two sorts of contexts. Those are: the institutional context and the social context of the text (Fairclough, 1995:)

5. Halliday’s Linguistic Tools

It is known that much of Fairclough's analytical tools are driven from Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Therefore, the current study adopts some of the tools of SFL as the base for the linguistic analysis. Some of those tools are:

5.1. Transitivity: is a reflection of the ideational function in Halliday’s three metafunctions. It provides various ways for representing agents, processes or actions, and patients in different ideological ways. Transitivity identifies “who is doing what to whom in what situation”. It also shows “how certain things are foregrounded over others and why” (Halliday,1985:101). Halliday (ibid:103) presents six classifications of transitivity processes, which are summarized in a form of a table by Mohammed (2019: 28).

5.2. Lexical Choice: supposes that any choice made in constructing sentences or expressing ideas implies that there is an alternative choice which is intentionally cancelled. This idea itself implicates that there are certain reasons and intentions behind choosing lexis rather than their alternatives. The reasons are defined by CDA as being ideological. Van Dijk (2001:99), therefore, states that lexical choices reflect “beliefs” and shape “the opinions and attitudes of recipients”. Fairclough (1989:116) earlier insists that social relationships among people shape (and are shaped by) “a text choice of wording”.

6. Gender

Eckert and McConell-Ginet (2003) say that the kind of person that one gender can be is defined by the linguistic resources used by them and the ones used to describe them. Further, language is said to be contributing to gender studies both as a mirror and a tool. So, language works as a mirror to reflect societies in general and gender in particular. It also works as a tool or a means to shape and construct societies and people as well. These two functions are discussed by Talbot (2010) in terms of two views. Those are: the weak view of language function and the strong view. The two views aim to discuss the essentiality and the importance of language and gender studies.

The weak view, on the one hand, argues that language functions as a mirror reflecting how language use and specifically linguistic choices are resulted from “social divisions on gender ground” (ibid:15). On the other hand, the strong view promotes for the second function, that language is a tool. The view states that gender divisions and identities are constructed by language use.

In order to help approach gender studies in various ways, two main theories dominate the fields on how to define gender and its issues. Those theories are:

6.1. The biological theory: this theory discusses gender in terms of their biological sex. Some of the main assumptions raised from this theory are the following: (i) Men overpower and outsize women; (ii) Language individualization does not require deep considerations; (iii) Language uses include gender polarity; (iv) Gender role is totally contextual; (v) Gender role is a statistically reached fact, etc.

6.2. The social constructionist theory: this second theory tackles gender related issue in its sociopolitical status. That is, the social contexts where gender interactions happen are central to this theory. So, this theory assumes the following: (i) Contexts play vital role in defining gender roles; (ii) Identities of gender are voluntarily constructed; (iii) Gender identities of men and women are chosen by themselves through their social interactions and preferences; (iv) Men and women exchange styles and the exchange occurs in accordance with the contextual needs of the interaction; (v) Men and women have no one particular style of language, etc.

7. Data Analysis and Discussion

Examining The Sun news website, some articles published in 2022 are found to be structuring their news in a linguistic form that shifts guilt and responsibility on women and implicitly justifies or underestimates the abuse done by men. The first example of such articles is the one entitled “Cops called to Katie Price’s home over domestic violence ‘incident’ hours before split with Carl Woods announced”. It is published on the 23rd November 2022. The article is supposed to be covering an incident related to a domestic violence exercised on Katie Price, the title of the article itself suggests this as well. Katie is a famous English media character and a model. However, the article focuses the coverage on the way Katie is claimed to be cheating on her ex-boyfriend, the abuser, making the claim against her as the main story.

Although the title of the article suggests that the article is going to be on an incident of a domestic violence, it generally sheds light on two main ideas/themes in its coverage to the incident. On the base of the space given to and the supporting arguments given on each theme, one theme is identified as the main story and the other as the secondary story - which must be taken as less reliable. The two stories or themes in the article are (1) domestic violence and (2) cheating. Both themes are accusations raised by the couples against one another. The first theme (the first accusation) is supposed to be directed to the ex-boyfriend- the male character in the article. The second one is directed to the female character, which should be the victim as the title and the background information suggest. However, examining the lexical items and the structuring of the sentences, it is obvious that the male character is presented as the victim while the female one is identified as being the one responsible for the consequences. For instance, in the below lines quoted from the article:

- (1) “Carl was furious after discovering texts from another man on Katie’s phone.”
- (2) “He’s demanded Katie return her engagement ring but she’s having none of it”
- (3) “ revealed she had been texting ex-boyfriend Kris Boyson from daughter Princess’s phone in March”
- (4) “I found out yesterday that Katie cheated on me.”
- (5) “Katie cheated on me”
- (6) “She’s admitted that she cheated on me”
- (7) “She slept with somebody else.”

In the above quotes, it is clear that the theme of cheating is repeated six different times showing a kind of emphasis on the idea. The lexical item (cheated/ cheating) is repeated three times. It is also supported by the lexical item (texting-twice) and the lexical item (slept) one more time.

With regard to transitivity, the identificative, behavioral and the verbal process and the circumstances attached to them when it comes to Katie are also full of negative senses. In one context, she is presented as denying the possession of her engagement ring, i.e. stealing it, as in (2) above. She is also presented as someone with no regrets as in:

(8) “hasn’t even apologized”

In another context, she is presented as being a bad mom as she makes use of her child’s phone to cheat on her boyfriend (ex-boyfriend), as in (3) above. Further on her identity as a mother, one of the lexical items selected by the author to refer to Katie is (the mum-of-five) imposing her personality as a mum.

As to the evidence to support Katie’s claim on domestic violence, very few reference is made to that. Even more, the few references done are all less supportive than they should be. Her arguments are presented as claims with no evidence. Even the state of having no evidence is explicitly declared more than one time. As in the following two quotes:

(9) “There is no further information at this stage”

(10) “Charges against Carl..... were dropped due to a lack of evidence”.

The above two lines directly show that the claims of domestic evidence are weak and have nothing to support them, although in other lines it is mentioned that some people confirm that the “things have been rocky between them” and many “rows” have occurred. On the other hand, the evidence presented on Katie’s cheating is supported by claims presented by the boyfriend himself in form of facts. Further, the claims on cheating are noticeably given more space than the space given to Katie’s claims.

Further, the mental processes of Carl and the circumstances attributed to them are structured to make him look like a victim who goes through a lot and deserve some sympathy. For instance:

(11) “Carl was furious”

(12) “He’s been increasingly jealous”

(13) “There’s no easy way for me to say this”

(14) “I’m just going to have to focus on rebuilding myself and get my life back”

In another article published on the 18th May 2022, shifting guilt and responsibility is noticed too. The article is entitled “TERESA Giudice’s fiance Luis Ruelas has been called a “liar” after he broke the silence on past domestic violence accusations”. The article is mainly talking about the character and the personality of a famous businessman, namely Luis Ruelas, and his new marriage. Luis Ruelas has many recorded accusations against him related to domestic violence. The article itself states that the allegations are not only presented by one of Luis’s exes; they are raised by most of them:

(15) “A lot of women that you’ve dated seem to have unkind things to say about you. Is any of it true?”

(16) “Is there a domestic violence record against you?”

Luis replied: “Two incidences have come up recently”

The above two quotes from the article indicate that the accusations are more than just allegations. However, the article seems mainly interested with two main things: (i) normalizing and naturalizing the allegations rise against him and (ii) improve his (Luis’s)

reputation. By doing so, guilt and responsibility are normally shifted from the abuser (the male character- Luis) to the victim (the female characters- his exes).

The author of the article seems to naturalize and normalize the allegations by exploiting certain lexical items and grammatical structuring rather than others. Clear examples are lexical items such as (unkind things), (emotionally abusive), (arguments), (toxic relationships) and (if I, the only guy) in the below quotes from the article:

(17) “you’ve dated seem to have unkind things to say about you.”

(18) “Were you emotionally abusive to your girlfriends”

(19) “We were basically in toxic relationships”

(20) “those were arguments with my wife over my children, we were getting divorced”

(21) “If I’m the only guy that basically had an argument with his wife and she calls the police. that’s the extent of it.”

In (17), the author describes the allegations on violence and abuse as “unkind things”. The use of such noun with such a modifier reflects nothing other than underestimating and softening the situation. In normal cases, abuse and violence allegations are not alternatively called “unkind things”. Also, in (18), the use of (emotionally abusive) as a lexical item to identify the kind of allegation pragmatically implicates that the allegations less serious and important than physical abuses when compared. This comparison and interpretation is triggered when the next question on hitting and its answer (no) is considered.

In (19), blame is explicitly shifted on women. The speaker overtly describes the relationship he had with his exes as toxic. This implies that the problem is in the personality of the exes, not him. In another context, he indicates that he himself has been emotionally abused by his exes!

(20) and (21) presents the lexical item (argument) into the ground. The use of this lexical item indicates another direct underestimation of the allegations and the problems the speaker had with his girls. The speaker puts those incidents in a form of “arguments”, no more, and asks the audience to take the situation as simple as he does.

The other dimension that the article works on is, as mentioned earlier, Luis’s reputation. A perfect way to improve a man’s reputation with regard to relations and marriage is to present a new shiny image on him on the same concern. Therefore, the article introduces Luis’s new girlfriend and planned-to-be wife as living evidence on his nice and lovely character. At first, the author describes the feelings of the new girlfriend using certain lexical items that emphasize how nice and good person is Luis:

(22) “Teresa is still looking forward to becoming Luis’ wife”

The lexical item (looking forward) in the above quote reflects a high positive impression on Luis’s character as a man, a boyfriend and a husband. Then, in another line, the lexical item (amazing) is used to express the environment surrounding their marriage plan:

(23) “Wedding plans are going amazing.”

Moreover, the author successfully creates an analogy using two main lexical items and set of descriptive words. The analogy is created by refereeing to Teresa’s ex. The kind of relationship she had with her ex is compared to the one she has with Luis, specifically with regard to planning marriage and wedding:

(24) “I remember my first wedding; I did it by myself. But he’s involved, and I love that,” she added of Luis.”

In a third article, published on 19th September 2022, an obvious shifting guilt and responsibility is noticed as well. The article is entitled “I want a second chance at love with somebody else – my wife treats me like dirt”. It covers a personal problem

between married couple. The article totally covers the voice of one person, which is the husband. Wife, as being a main participant in the story, is not given a voice at all. Instead, it is the husband who is given the right to talk and describe the wife's status. The article in fact covers a cheating story, yet the author uses alternative lexical items to name the process by referring to the situation as a (love) story, (second chance- repeated twice) and (feelings):

(25) "I want a second chance at love with somebody else"

(26) "I met somebody at a wedding a year ago and it stirred up feelings in me"

The above quotes and the lexical items constituting them show the naturalization process done in the article to make a "cheating" look like a normal love relationship. The contradiction rises specifically when the husband himself admits that the relation is behind his wife, the relation is established a long time ago, it was him who took the first step to start it, and she was the one who asked to reveal the relation:

(27) "I said I was 'an admirer' and she took the bait. We talked via Whatsapp every day for weeks."

(28) "I found out her name and messaged her in secret."

(29) "...too but she won't see me whilst I'm living with my wife"

Although the analysis proves that the relationship covered in the article is not only a second chance love but a cheating process, the article asserts that the husband is a victim and the wife is nothing more than a person to be blamed for all what happened and what happens. The author, using certain lexical items and transitivity structuring, manages to victimize the male character, the husband, in the following lines:

(30) "I'm a prisoner in my own home"

(31) "My wife treats me like dirt."

(32) "It stirred up feelings in me that I'd never felt before."

(33) "I don't love her. I want a second chance at love with somebody else"

(34) "You may be worried about her endangering herself if you leave, but she's endangering you if you stay"

In (30), the lexical item (prisoner) and the identificative process of transitivity assert the bad social position that the husband has in his home and the damaging relationship he and his wife has. In (31), another lexical item (dirt) is used to support the same idea in addition to the actional process of transitivity used to describe the wife's treatment to her husband.

In (32), (33) and (34), victimization of the husband is taken to a higher level by attributing positive feelings to him such as (stirred up feelings VS. never felt before), (don't love her VS. love her) and (endangering herself VS. endangering you – the husband).

Finally, to complete the image and put forward the one to be blamed, the wife, in absentia, is described using the following lexis and processes:

(35) "she gets mad"

(36) "she gets violent"

(37) "she's thrown things and hit me"

(38) "Nobody should be expected to tolerate violence in any relationship - even when mental health issues are involved"

(39) "...but she's endangering you if you stay"

All the material processes in the above quotes and the circumstances attached to them show a dangerous and a negative image on the wife yet, unbelievably, the husband has not thought about taking a serious step to leave her except when his girlfriend asked him to do so. Moreover, lexical items such as (mad), (mental health), (hit), (violent),

(violence) and (endangering) are all effective to shift the blame on the wife without any doubt.

It is worth mentioning that In 1998, Clark has conducted a critical discourse analysis study on the way women are represented on The Sun newspaper in articles discussing crimes of sexual violence. The study is entitled “The linguistics of blame: representations of women in The Sun’s reporting of crimes of sexual violence”. The study has been investigating articles published between the 10th November 1986 to the 3rd of January 1987. The analyst has utilized the same linguistic tools to establish the study as the ones used in this study, namely lexical items and transitivity. Specifically, Clark (1998) has tried to show the names attributed to each character (male VS female) to identify who is defined as a victim and who is the attacker. Transitivity, on the other hand, is used to highlight the processes and the circumstances attached to each character, i.e. the victim and the attacker. The study has concluded that there was an obvious tendency on The Sun newspaper to show women as the ones to be blamed.

Now, in this study, as articles from 2022 are analysed on the way women are held the responsibility in situations where they should be only identified as victims, it is found that the news agency of The Sun still adopts some of those ideologies to put the blame on women. However, the process of shifting is less obvious nowadays from then and more implicit. This itself proves that studies of critical discourse analysis, along with the activities of feminism, have given result but still need to be established more.

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UTOPIAN SOCIETY AND TOTALITARIAN IDEALS IN THE VISION OF THOMAS MORUS

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Abstract: *Utopian societies have always attracted unconventional minds. They have often been starting ideas for larger systems of thought, and past ideas of other thinkers have been modified or altered in favor of mundane things like political systems. This paper will focus on one of the first political thinkers to speak of utopia as a social and political system, Thomas Morus. We will see what principles guide the society Morus envisions, touching on key concepts such as private property and freedom.*

Keywords: *totalitarian society; utopian ideas; utopian society*

The concept of utopia is the creation of the author Thomas More, who in 1516 wrote his most famous book: *De optimo statu reipublicae deque nova Utopia* (On the Best State of a Republic and on the New Utopia), in which he describes, in great detail, an ideal society that highlights some of the main aspects later embraced by communism. More regulates private property, agriculture, governance, education, family relationships etc., and establishes rules for all of these, aimed at creating an ideal society where people can live happily.

Utopia, as we all know, is an unachievable future project. Utopias can exist on an individual level, but we will only refer to the social level, to how society relates to and *interacts* with utopia. A utopian society embodies a model of an ideal socio-political-religious order. It is, therefore, a society that is (almost) impossible to put into practice because it would require such great wisdom, both from the leaders and the citizens, that we can only imagine it; it remains fixed only in the realm of imagination, without the desire for wealth, without pride among people or rulers, without the desire to conquer territories, with freedom and religious tolerance. These are the characteristics of a utopian society, hence ideal.

The term “utopia” has its roots in the Greek language; it translates to *ou-topos* meaning “no place” “nowhere” and it is a creation of Thomas More. Furthermore, the author creates his own words and terms in his work, most of which are compound terms using different particles from Greek or Latin. The purpose of these inventions is to express his revolutionary ideas as clearly as possible. Moreover, More invents terms and writes this book in the form of a narrative, primarily to avoid falling further into the king’s disfavor.

More wrote the work *Utopia* in 1516, just before the outbreak of the Reformation, during a period when unrest and corruption, which led to the reform, were escalating towards conflict. *Utopia*, initially written in Latin and later translated into several languages, presents what its narrator, Raphael Hythloday, claimed to be an ideal human society, the island of Utopia.

The utopian society is a nation based on rational thinking, with common property, high productivity, not esteeming gold and not considering it vital for society’s development, without real class distinctions, poverty, crime, or immoral behavior, with religious tolerance and little inclination towards war. It is a society that Raphael Hythloday believes to be superior to any other in Europe.

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Hythloday, the storyteller, mentions that initially, Utopia was not an island but through an incredible feat of civic engineering, the island was separated from the continent by digging a wide canal of 15 miles. It is thus suggested that this island is a creation of artifice, not of nature, making it a product of human will and power.

Immediately upon entering this country, he ordered the cutting of the isthmus of fifteen thousand paces that connected the peninsula to the continent, thus allowing the sea to flow around the land. To ensure that the natives did not consider their work a disgrace imposed by the conqueror, Utopus also put all his soldiers to work on this enormous project. Initially, the neighbors, mocking this attempt as a mere eccentric plan, were astounded and frightened when they saw that the work, divided among the numerous workers, was completed with unbelievable speed. (Morus, 2009, 63).

In Utopia, people are taught various professions, not just one, and Hythloday tells us that not only men do this, but women as well. Here we see a resemblance to Marx's ideas, who also envisions an egalitarian society where women gain a greater social function. The result of everyone working is that all people have more time to dedicate to freedom and the cultivation of the mind, and this brings happiness to the Utopians.

One of the main characteristics of the island is the absence of private property, a feature that we will later find in communist societies as one of the defining elements of communist or Marxist-communist ideology. Hythloday argues that private property brings more harm to those already distressed and more benefit to those who are already wealthy. He even invokes the name of Plato, who in *The Republic* advocates for communal property as the foundation for the ideal city, stating that communal ownership is the solution for the masses to remain content.

So consider - I said - whether those who are to be good guardians should live and dwell in the following manner: first, none of them should possess any private property beyond the bare essentials. Then, no one should have a room or a storeroom where someone else cannot enter if they wish. From the rest of the citizens (after determining what is necessary), they should receive as wages for their guardianship what is sufficient for men practiced in warfare, temperate and brave, so that they neither have excess during the year nor suffer any want. They should eat at common tables, like those quartered together (Platon, II, 416 d)

Of course, after discussing this, many oppose the idea, including the character Morus, stating that a country with common properties will not prosper and that people will no longer be motivated to work, as they would benefit from the work of others. At the end of Book I, Morus even makes an apology for private property, stating that without it, political power cannot be maintained and, additionally, it aids in the development of industry. However, Hythloday has been to Utopia and witnessed a society based on common property in operation. He even describes the effort made by this country in healing social evils. He also describes their technical capabilities, explaining how a ship carrying Egyptian and Roman sailors wrecked on the island; from these people, the Utopians practically gathered all the technical skills of the two great empires.

Because common ownership is one of the central concepts of Utopia, and later of communism, it's not surprising that the dispute over common versus private ownership of a property should provide a continuous thread between the two books of Utopia.

Morus's negative response to Hythloday's proposal for common property, emphasizing the irreconcilability of human nature with such a social arrangement, is classic and Aristotelian. It's used even today to critique socialist and communist social models, and critics of Marxism often cite this text to highlight the harmfulness of common ownership.

We can't overlook, however, the fact that the reasons behind the concept of common ownership in Utopia compared to the situation in communism are radically different. In the former case, Hythloday advocates for common ownership based on religious principles, fundamentally different from the atheistic and economic beliefs of Marxist ideologies.

This doesn't mean that the two concepts of common ownership don't overlap in any way; both seek to eliminate exploitation, but their basis comes from extremely different sources. Maintaining communal ownership is the way of life that Jesus instructed the apostles to follow, and Hythloday sees, stemming from that command, a series of corresponding virtues, such as reducing pride, greed, poverty, irrationality, and the exploitation of the poor by the rich. The ways in which communal ownership manages to underpin such a social transformation are further elaborated on later in the book.

Common ownership extended to other aspects of life for the inhabitants of Utopia, including agriculture, which also operates at a communal level. At the historical moment when this idea emerged, it was considered revolutionary because, both in England and in Europe, agricultural work was reserved for the poor. In Utopia, the idea arises that there is no social class. Class distinctions are dismantled, working the land is an integral part of life, and the stigma associated with that work is eliminated. The statement that the Utopians believe the earth is something to be worked rather than owned is an evident reference to the historical period when the British transformed the wool market and agriculture into an oligopoly, simultaneously raising prices and depriving small landowners of their existence. Moreover, agriculture in Utopia doesn't operate within any market system. Instead of selling their surplus, a city provides it for free to those in need and, in turn, receives from others who have a surplus. As seen in their agricultural policy, the economic structures of markets and money simply do not exist in Utopia.

Such elements might seem, for individuals living in large urban societies, exceptional or even inconceivable. However, as Professor Gregory Claeys from the University of London mentioned in a lecture at St. Francis College¹, there are smaller societies, towns, or villages where people practice this type of social trust. For instance, they may not lock their house doors, or the police officers greet all passersby while on patrol.

Thus, we can conclude that Morus's Utopia presents many social concepts that were later embraced by Marxists. We could argue that Morus articulated and solidified the idea of an ideal, social, and egalitarian society, one that anticipates the communist society that emerged several hundred years later. This idea traces its roots back to antiquity when figures like Plato, Plutarch, or Al-Farabi also proposed utopian societies of their own.

Morus's city "is distinguished by the refusal of any private property - including for housing etc. - and by a generalized egalitarianism, including between sexes. Thus, right from the beginning, the prototype of Utopia is closely associated with the communist

¹ Gregory Claeys, *Dystopia: A Natural History. A Study of Modern Despotism, Its Antecedents, and Its Literary Diffractions*, Oxford University Press, London 2017. (vide și Marx and Marxism, PenguinBooks, London 2011) The mentioned lecture is found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iU1pz2CGJdM>. Accessed on the 07.01.2024.

idea of suppressing private property. [...] In the 19th century, opponents of Gracchus Babeuf saw in the Island of Utopia the prototype of the communist city, because here property and currency are eradicated, labor is transformed into a social duty, and everyone receives according to their needs.” (Curtois, 2008, 650-651).

So, we see how communism borrows elements from Morus’s Utopian City and starts to base its actions on writings that legitimize its deeds. In fact, communism fabricates this legitimacy through communist historians who reserve honorable places for great utopians such as Morus, Campanella, or Father Meslier¹. In other words, communist historians create, not to say invent, a series of architects of a fundamentally communist society.

The Utopia created by Morus contrasts with the monarchies that governed the main European powers at that time. In Utopia, political function is attained through elections rather than inherited by birth, thus its fundamental political unity is also its fundamental social unity - the household. Only the Governor, the primary figure in the state, is elected for life, but even he can be removed if suspected of tyranny.

Thomas Morus’s Utopia is one of the most democratic and unique political concepts ever conceived in Medieval and Renaissance Europe. The idea that individual households could be involved in decision-making affecting the entire state would have shocked any reader from the early 16th century and was considered another absurdity of Morus’s Utopia.

The exchange between Morus (the character in the book) and Hythloday can be seen as a conflict between two separate ways of thinking. Hythloday adheres to a belief in the purity of the philosophical ideal of truth, while Morus holds a more pragmatic conviction that such purity holds no value and must be tempered and made useful for the public good, even if it means compromising the initial ideal. This is a classic political and philosophical conflict, with roots that trace back at least to Plato’s ideal Republic and also to Aristotle’s response, suggesting that the Republic could never function as a state.

To find a place on the map for nowhere, to strive to program the impossible, to create a fable for what is ineffable. This is utopia. The expression of an ideal, a way of thinking about the possible. When Thomas More first coined the term „utopia” in 1516, this toponym not only designates an imaginary island; it legitimizes an aspiration toward *eutopia*, toward happiness as a concrete task that must be undertaken rather than ignored. Thomas More expresses with precision and rigor his vivid, concrete vision of an alternative society. It’s another way of life, a different organization, a different spirit. Morus highlights all these aspects meticulously. The multitude of details unveiled by More leaves no area untouched, starting from the foundation of Utopia, the names of the cities, the organization of the Island’s Council, the allocation of arable land, to the planning of the economy, the selection of public offices, the distribution of working hours, educational and healthcare institutions, sports, marriage regulations, justice, and even wars - all are thoroughly devised and all rules are adhered to. Absolutely nothing concerning the realm of daily life is left unaddressed or unregulated.

¹Jean Meslier was a French Catholic priest from the 17th century, and after his death, it was discovered that he had written an extensive philosophical essay promoting atheism and materialism. Known as his “Testament,” the text was found after his passing and came as a revelation to many, given his public life as a dedicated priest. In his essay, Meslier criticizes and denounces all religions, presenting arguments against faith and advocating for a materialistic worldview. This text had a significant impact in philosophical circles and contributed to the development of atheist thinking and arguments against religion.

The utopian city is truly a “civil community.” It doesn’t allow for individual claims to creep in. Nevertheless, the personalities of the Utopians are not denied. Thus, Morus identifies the dangers of individualism for city governance as early as the beginning of the 16th century. Life in the commonwealth of the Utopian Island is a declaration of war against the individualism that begins to emerge in modern politics. Certainly, Morus isn’t the first to grapple with individualization; Plato, in his Ideal City, insists that individualization is the greatest sin, one that could even lead to the destruction of the city.

The idea of creating Utopia stems from Morus’ discontent with the corruption and decadence in the society of his time. He seeks reform and begins to criticize and satirize the judicial practices prevalent in Europe at that moment. He targets, for instance, the mercenary soldiers who prioritized money over defending their own country, as well as the wealth of the monarchy and the policy of conquest that led to disaster and ruin. Consequently, Morus envisions the Island of Utopia, where the guiding principles stand in stark contrast to those of reality.

As the essential evil is seen as the ferment of individualism, where self-love degenerates into selfishness, Morus emphasizes solidarity and cohesion as the fundamental pillars of Utopian society. Moreover, the civil society is conceived as an extensive family that ensures mutual affection. Therefore, laws are envisioned as a bulwark against selfishness for everyone. In other words, the separation between ethics and politics is deemed impossible, and their intimate union holds something sacred as it corresponds to the fundamental nature of things: before being individuals, humans are brothers in a vast human community.

Compared to the corrupted and disordered royalties of the European continent, Utopia exemplifies order in every aspect. Everything is measured and reasonable. Its organization—magistrates, army etc.—contrasts with the negativity undermining the royalties of the time. Utopia embodies balance and control. Morus’ work is a prodigious essay aiming to restore man to his true nature: it reshapes people’s external lives and revitalizes their inner lives. Utopian politics stands against the misguided and erroneous man, aiming to bring him back to his true nature by restoring the truth that the Creator bestowed upon the world. In creating the ideal society, Morus identifies the primary faults of the system.

Morus deciphers the corpus of political passions: in princes, the love for war, conquest, and glory, greed and waste, ambition, selfishness, cunning. In ministers and courtiers, flattery, hypocrisy, lies, and cunning. In the people, fear and passivity, ignorance and cowardice, lack of thought and voluntary submission. All these accumulated passions are the triumph of evil. (Goyard-Fabre, 1987,52).

A. L. Morton, in his work “L’utopie anglaise,” said about Morus that he is “a milestone on the road of scientific socialism,” (Morton, 1964, 44) especially because Morus insists, within the society he creates, on two principles that became definitive for the communism of the 20th century: the idea of a classless society and the abolition of private property. Moreover, by opposing the real society and creating an ideal one, interpreters of communism can easily argue that he, too, attempted to create a new human adapted to the new society.

The social and economic conditions at the beginning of the 16th century (when Utopia was written) and the late 19th century are so vastly different that the construction

of Utopia couldn't have possibly anticipated the revolutionary doctrine of 20th-century communism. As for the creation of the new man, Morus only seeks the return to one's true nature, to order, and the elimination of corruption.

Certainly, there are aspects of Utopia that can be criticized. For instance, it can be viewed as a place of conformity, suppressed individuality, or extreme simplicity. Additionally, Utopia might be considered a place of disguised tyranny, especially by staunch advocates of liberalism or even libertarians. This perspective is also supported by the fact that at the end of the work, the character Thomas More objects that Utopia might not be magnificent because its main foundation, their communal life, operates without the exchange of money, which is his primary objection.

After Raphael had reached the end of his story, though many of their Utopian customs and institutions seemed entirely strange to me, such as their method of waging war, their worship and religion, as well as many other practices of theirs, and chiefly their leading principle of governing... without the use of money—a system which abolishes completely, according to my common opinion, all nobility, all pomp, all splendor, and greatness, things that, in my common view, constitute the true adornment and beauty of a state...(Morus, 152)

Concluding, we have before us a work that can be considered a starting point for what later will be encountered under the name of socialist societies. The quest for a recipe to create a perfect society has never led to the effective establishment of a good society. And this happens because in theory, a perfect society disadvantages some social categories more than others. Moreover, as can be reproached in Morus's Utopia, there are elements that can lead to totalitarianism, and this happens because the theoretical principles are inevitably put into practice by leaders who, regardless of how they were chosen or what prerogatives they have, will abuse power in one way or another. Additionally, the ideas in theory clash when attempting to put them into practice with reality, which is much more unpredictable than any theoretician might foresee in their writings, especially when it comes to issues applied to societies formed by people.

Nevertheless, we cannot fail to recognize that Morus's work brings a sense of courage and novelty, especially at the time of its writing. Furthermore, the success the work has, even hundreds of years after its writing, shows us how important Morus is for later political theories, especially for what happened in the 20th century, a century marked by totalitarianism and consequently by horrors and terror. The reinterpretation of the great thinkers was one of the talents of the leaders of totalitarian states, starting with Lenin, who departs from Marxist ideology, creating his own version, and continuing with all the leaders of the totalitarian states in Eastern Europe.

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CONSTRUCTION, RECONSTRUCTION AND DECONSTRUCTION OF THE TEXT IN “ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD”

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Abstract: Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* is a perfect example of intertextuality, being a purposeful attempt at creating a new text, while looking back at Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and giving a new life to some minor characters also hinting at Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. The framed story thus allows for more versions to develop, while embracing specific traits of the Theatre of the Absurd. The present paper focuses on exploring the elements which offer the popularity and literary value of the play while analysing the influences of other literary works and the way in which the playwright masterfully created such an incredibly well-received literary piece.

Keywords: intertextuality; Theatre of the Absurd; language; fate

Tom Stoppard's first major play, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, was received with praise managing to place its author on the list of the great writers of the 20th century making him the youngest playwright to have his work performed at the National Theatre. The public was, thus, offered a debut worthy of positive assessments and opinions that called attention to both the playwright's talent and his passion for language as shown in some of the time's reviews:

When *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* was first performed on the fringe of the Edinburgh Festival in August 1966, Ronald Bryden announced 'the most brilliant debut by a young playwright since John Arden'. The next April, when it was produced in London by the National Theatre, Harold Hobson called it 'the most important event in the British professional theatre of the last nine years.' Arden's social concern, John Osborne's anger, and even Harold Pinter's comedy of menace were beginning to seem moods of the past. For the moment, at least, the 'university wit' of this non-university journalist, who had rewritten *Hamlet* as if from a back-stage Beckett's-eye-view, was all the rage. And indeed, during the next several years Tom Stoppard managed to come up with one surprising whirlwind of verbal and theatrical levity after another. (Whitaker, 1983:1)

The popularity *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* enjoyed helped its transition to the film version (1990) directed by the author himself and starring the famous Tim Roth as Guildenstern and Gary Oldman as Rosencrantz who played in a very convincing manner helping the film become a favourite at the time of its release. The reviews offered an insight into how the casting and the acting helped bring to the audience a thought-provoking film where the wittiness and depth of some of the lines of the characters is mixed with the absurdity of several events maintain the entertaining intertwining of the modern language with the references to the Elizabethan *Hamlet* revealing a search for the truth.

Stoppard was not appreciated only for the more postmodern, quite absurd play that he offered to the public, but also for the language he used and its role in conveying a

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message that seemed so important to both the author and his audience in order to make sure that there were no misunderstandings as the play was actually full of questions about life, its meaning, fate and the way mankind has changed. “What Stoppard had stumbled on in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* was not a philosophy but a comic stratagem. What came through more strongly than in previous writing was the playwright’s gift for badinage, repartee, verbal byplay”. (Delaney, 2006:280)

As language appears to have been one of the elements that Stoppard focused on for a long time there were comparisons made between himself and other English writing authors trying to find common points with them, revealing as well the fact that

More than almost any living writer, Stoppard is obsessed with the many quirky irregularities of the English language. Numerous critics have observed that this interest in the curiosities of English is the result of Stoppard’s immigrant status, noting that his interest is similar to other immigrant writers like Joseph Conrad and Vladimir Nabokov. The problem with this biographical perspective is that Stoppard’s work is also reminiscent of many eminent native English speakers as well, notably Oscar Wilde and P. G. Wodehouse. Regardless of the reason, what is irrefutable is that Stoppard is intrigued by language, especially its simultaneous ability to illuminate and obfuscate. (Demastes, 2013: 27)

From the beginning of the play the intertextuality with Shakespeare’s work is extremely obvious as the title characters are already known as Hamlet’s old friends summoned by King Claudius to make sure that the prince does not have a plan against the newly crowned king while manifesting his “madness”. They are tools used by Claudius to accompany their friend to England having been given a letter where it is demanded for Hamlet to be killed when he arrives at their destination. Apparently the two friends do not know anything about the content of the letter they are carrying, so it is easy for Hamlet when he finds out the truth and manages to replace the initial piece of correspondence with a new letter which orders for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to be killed instead of him. This strategy helps the prince return home unharmed in Shakespeare’s play.

However, in Stoppard’s play one is not really sure where the characters really are and the audience is just vaguely presented with the events from the morning when someone asked Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to go somewhere as they do not know where they are or where they are heading. So, there is this obvious parallel made with Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* as one observes that Stoppard’s protagonists throughout the play seem to be unable to recall previous events revealing similarities with Vladimir and Estragon as the characters are somehow at the mercy of their situations and the tone used by both authors can be called similar as there is the passive attitude promoted in the plays.

There have also appeared critics willing to diminish the high quality of Stoppard’s play and they seem to challenge its originality as so many parallels had been drawn. There seemed to be some curiosity around what truly revealed the playwright’s talent and originality and this can be observed as “Stoppard’s “Shakespearean” characters are men whose curiosity, flaws, qualities of endearment, and even cowardice are Stoppard’s own inventions nowhere to be found in the original work. Stoppard starts with sources but ends with a work that is anything but derivative.” (Demastes, 2013: 49)

Stoppard’s approach seems to be constantly deconstructing and reconstructing the Shakespearean play and by doing so he offers new perspectives on both the original text and characters and his own. One of the first mentions would be the short version of

the names of the protagonists that are used instead of the long Elizabethan ones, namely Ros and Guil. The second one would be the explanation of the title itself meaning that

As the title of Stoppard's play says, though, Ros and Guil are now the main characters of a play with a similar story; however, the two "are" (and not "are going to" or "may be") dead, a piece of knowledge which is shocking and self-reflexive: the play "knows" it is a play, dramatizing the sad fortune of the two protagonists. These people are only given prominence to represent something more important than their personality and their choice. They are dead to show all is a play performed on stage for the audience who are already aware of everything. (Sharif, 2019: 86)

The famous scene from the beginning of the play when Ros and Guil are tossing coins and it is always heads as Rosencrantz is the one constantly winning leads to Guildenstern's analysis to why such a thing might happen ninety-two times in a row emptying his bag and therefore making Rosencrantz's bigger as he is the one winning. The way Stoppard uses language to show Guil's determination to find an answer to why Ros's luck seems to be without end and he is determined to explore some possible ideas and find out why has this event occurred so many times.

ROS: Heads... (*He puts it in his bag.*)

GUIL sits despondently. *He takes a coin, spins it, lets it fall between his feet. He looks at it, picks it up, throws it to ROS who puts it in his bag.*

GUIL takes another coin, spins it, catches it, turns it over to his other hand, looks at it, and throws it to **ROS**, who pun in his bag. **GUIL** takes a third coin, spins it, catches it in his right hat turns it over onto his left wrist, lobs it in the air, catches it with his left hand, raises his left leg, throws the coin? Up under it, catches it and turns it over on the top of his head, where it sits. **ROS** comes, looks at it, puts it in his bag.

ROS: I'm afraid

GUIL: So am I.

ROS: I'm afraid it isn't your day.

GUIL: I'm afraid it is.

Small pause.

ROS: Eighty-nine.

GUIL: it must be indicative of something, besides the redistribution of wealth. (*He muses.*) List of possible explanations. One: I'm willing it. Inside where nothing shows, I am the essence of a man spinning double-headed coins, and betting against himself in private atonement for an unremembered past. (*He spins a coin at ROS.*)

ROS: Heads.

GUIL: Two: time has stopped dead, and the single experience of one coin being spun once has been repeated ninety times... (*He flips a coin, looks at it, tosses it to ROS.*) On the whole, doubtful. Three: divine intervention, that is to say, a good turn from above concerning him, cf. children of Israel, or retribution from above concerning me, cf. Lot's wife. Four: a spectacular vindication of the principle that each individual coin spun individually (*he spins one*) is as likely to come down heads as tails and therefore should cause no surprise each individual time it does. (*It does. He tosses it to ROS.*)

ROS: I've never known anything like it! (Stoppard, 1967: 16)

What is also interesting to notice is that we do have a hint into Ros's character as we are announced that "However, he is nice enough to feel a little embarrassed at taking so much money off his friend. Let that be his character note" (Stoppard, 1967: 11). As we are not offered many details about the two protagonists – there being an attempt at making them average individuals – one clearly understands that Rosencrantz is the more

easy-going one, the one that does not worry all that much, even being accused by Guildenstern that he has nothing original to say. “In *Rosencrantz; and Guildenstern are Dead* Stoppard therefore presents his heroes as two likeable but utterly confused characters, engaged in a perpetual struggle to comprehend the complex manoeuvrings that are taking place around them as the plot of *Hamlet* unfolds”. (Brassell, 1985:38)

It is a play about four main themes. The first is a search for the nature of truth. Right at the end of the play Rosencrantz utters to Guildenstern, ‘To tell the truth’, which is what he and his companion have been trying to do throughout the play. The second is an exploration of the concept of illusion and reality through the practice of acting. Reflecting upon what they have, at Claudius’ request, gleaned from Hamlet about his state of mind, Rosencrantz admits one is talking about ‘some shadow-play’ which Stoppard uses to explore aspects of the nature of reality. Thirdly, the play makes considerable mention of death, regarding human mortality as a destination in itself. As the Player observes, the play he is in (reflecting also *Hamlet*) is ‘a slaughterhouse – eight corpses all told. It brings out the best in us’. But, the most significant theme of the whole play is that of the random versus the deterministic nature of destiny. (Purse, 2016: 53)

Another element that was taken from *Hamlet* and kept as a structure is the idea of a play-within-a-play as Ros and Guil meet a group of actors whose leader is the Player and who are headed to Elsinore to perform *The Murder of Gonzago*. The Player is the one that comments on the impact language has on our lives and the way he rebels against it. They start carrying on conversations that lead to questioning what make-belief is, what fate is and all this role-play that is exposed during the entire play, so the purpose of the actors seems to be more active and more relevant to Stoppard’s play than we have seen in Shakespeare’s approach.

Stoppard uses a multi-layered text releasing meaning in a stratified sequence to act as a foil to expose the meaninglessness and fluidity of the postmodern, post-Christian era. By using Shakespeare as a guide to find direction in the modern world, Stoppard’s new intertextual configuration underscores the central position still occupied by Shakespeare in our Western cultural heritage. (de Lange and Combrink, 1991: 83)

We see the protagonists simply move from room to room in the Elsinore Palace meeting all sorts of people who are not always taking their presence into account. There is also the confusion regarding their names as the king mistakes them and the queen tries to correct him and recognize their real names. At one point the comic element appears when there is this confusion among themselves in an attempt to have a conversation with Hamlet and try to foresee what might happen, losing for a short time the very idea of identity:

GUIL: You question, I’ll answer.
ROS: He’s not himself, you know.
GUIL: I’m him, you see.
Beat.
ROS: Who am I then?
GUIL: You’re yourself.
ROS: And he’s you?
GUIL: Not a bit of it.
ROS: Are you afflicted?

GUIL: That's the idea. Are you ready?
ROS: Let's go back a bit.
GUIL: I'm afflicted.
ROS: I see.
GUIL: Glean what afflicts me.
ROS: Right.
GUIL: Question and answer.
ROS: How should I begin?
GUIL: Address me.
ROS: My dear Guildenstern!
GUIL: (*quietly*): You've forgotten-haven't you?
ROS: My dear Rosencrantz!
GUIL: (*great control*): I don't think you quite understand. we are attempting is hypothesis in which I answer him, while you ask me questions. (Stoppard, 1967: 51)

As *Hamlet* is well-known to be about “words, words, words” Guil himself mentions that words are all they have to go on revealing a similarity between the two plays. However, this mentioning of the words and their importance helps Stoppard adapt the vehicle to the idea and so, there is a new text that provides a fresh perspective, creating a play that has separated itself from *Hamlet*, not from its influence, but it has been shown what a dedicated playwright can do with two minor characters in a Shakespearean play, revealing once again the greatness in Shakespeare's writing and the way new generations of playwrights can feel there is a stable point of inspiration for their work. Thus, Tom Stoppard's work *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1967) is becoming more and more known as a postmodern play which:

uses the sign system and codes that have intricate intertextual ties with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and with the conventions of contemporary literary and artistic forms, especially the theater of the absurd and postmodernist literature which all contribute to making up of what is known as theatricality. (Sharif, 2019: 83)

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CACOPHONY, SYMPHONY OR POLYPHONY: MÁIRTÍN Ó CADHAIN'S "GRAVEYARD CLAY"

Roxana Elena DONCU*

Abstract: *Graveyard Dust* (in Gaelic *Cré na Cille*) is Máirtín Ó Cadhain's first and most acclaimed novel. Consisting entirely of the dialogues among the dead people from a graveyard in rural Connemara and the monologues of the *Trumpet of the Graveyard*, this iconic work of Irish literature, inspired by the novels of Fyodor Dostoyevsky (which Ó Cadhain had read while in prison) takes Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of polyphony to a new level. With no indications as to who is speaking at what moment, the cacophony of dead voices only begins to make sense after the reader learns to identify the speakers by their quirks, phrases and obsessions. As one of the translators of the novel into English, Alan Titley, remarked, the novel consists mostly of talk. The dead do not speak about redemption, eternity or forgiveness of sins, but about their earthly lives, their former loves and addictions, football and booze, and have a hard time trying to organize elections among the inhabitants of the cemetery. They are all essentially Irish, and their harsh humour helps them bear with dignity the extreme poverty of their land. The polyphony of voices enacts a sense of democracy which Ó Cadhain, as a political and language activist, had felt as missing in the time of the Irish Free State.

Keywords: polyphony; Irish nationalism; irony

Graveyard Clay (alternative translation: *The Dirty Dust*) is Irish writer Máirtín Ó Cadhain's (1906-1970) most acclaimed work. Written in Gaelic (under the title of *Cré na Cille*), the novel had won the Oireachtas (Irish legislature) literary prize in 1947, yet it was denied publication by the state publishing house, as they thought it was too Joycean, a polite way of saying that it used foul language. *Cré na Cille* was eventually brought out two years later, by a small independent publishing house, Sairseal agus Dill. It immediately attracted attention from the readers¹ who disregarded what was thought by critics to be an experimental form, and enjoyed the earthy banter, often turning to bickering, of its dead and buried characters. For decades it remained an important part of Irish literature, though inaccessible to wider audiences. Both its translations, which appeared almost seven decades following its publication, were commissioned by UNESCO, which recommended the novel to be translated into other European languages.

The difficulty of translating such a work arose first and foremost from the language spoken by the characters². Ó Cadhain was born into a family of traditional Irish story-tellers, in the midst of a marginal Gaelic community, in south Connemara. His familiarity with the spoken language and the oral traditions of these poor communities

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¹ Ó Cadhain's first translator, John Trodden Keefe notes that "The well-known critic Breandan O hEithir, then a student at University College, Galway, tells of students rushing to buy the Irish Press hot off the Dublin train and eagerly reading the latest installment about Caitriona Paudeen and her neighbors. He also describes reading the book to illiterate native Irish speakers and their gleeful interest in it" (1985: 367).

² Keefe also quotes one of the first reviews of the novel, by the Irish linguist David Greene, as stating that "It is written by a man who handles his native Connemara Irish flexibly and confidently ... There are few pages without at least one word unfamiliar to me. There would be nothing derogatory about supplying a glossary. ... I say this because I feel it would be a pity if anybody were put off the dialogue by meeting too many unfamiliar words, for it is the triumph of the book" (1985: 367).

prompted him first to become a teacher for his native community, and later to work as a language activist, collecting folk tales and Irish songs, as well as gathering a wealth of linguistic material from the speech of his people. This activity led to his seminal contribution to the *English-Irish Dictionary* (Dublin, 1959) and to his drafting, while a lecturer at Trinity College, Dublin, a revolutionary textbook for students, *The Consonants of Irish* (*Ceiríníní na Gaeltacht*), published in 1961.

Not only the language proved prohibitive for prospective translators, the novel's experimental form and its unusual choice of topic may have been regarded as a challenge for readers outside the Gaeltacht communities. At first sight, the reader might have the impression that he/she is dealing with a play¹. The novel begins with what look like the indications for a play's setting, the time (Eternity) and place (The Graveyard). Instead of chapters, the novel is structured in 10 interludes: The Black Clay, the Spreading of the Clay, the Teasing of the Clay, the Crushing of the Clay, the Bone-Fertilising of the Clay, the Kneading of the Clay, the Moulding of the Clay, the Firing of the Clay, the Smoothing of the Clay, the White Clay. The term 'interlude' is interesting and suggestive in its own way: while in theater the interlude is a break between acts (*interludium* in Latin meaning 'between the plays') or a short play, in music it points to a passage or section which, though disruptive in itself, links together the various parts of the musical piece². The ten interludes of the novel, whose organizing feature is disruption (characters speak, are interrupted by other characters and fight back for their voice), on a larger scale represent a kind of metaphorical progression from 'the black clay' (chaos) to 'the white clay' (creation). The stages of creation are assimilated to the transformation of the clay from a black formless matter, through human intervention (teasing, crushing, bone-fertilising, kneading, moulding, firing and smoothing) into the final porcelain/ceramic form, which has been part of human culture for millennia. While human bodies break down and transform into clay, the clay itself is moulded to become a fit object for everyday human use; thus destruction and creation are understood as the two sides of the same archetypal reality, and, as Doncu wrote, "they allude to the making and un-making of tradition and community, the things which Ó Cadhain strove to preserve both through language and his political activism" (2023: 19).

The focus on the transformation of the clay from formless matter into a functional shape which defines human life shows that the author's choice of topic – dead people talking among themselves in a graveyard, with no regard whatsoever for religious ideas like eternal life – places him firmly into a secular tradition, out of the reach of Catholicism, yet profoundly anchored to a mythical reality.

The commitment to the preservation of community and language in the absence of any religious ideology is what makes Ó Cadhain stand out as a secular nationalist. Ó hÉigeartaigh claims that Ó Cadhain's politics were republican and socialist (2008: 28), while Ó Cathasaigh identifies Ó Cadhain's socialism as left radicalism (2008: 18). In 1932 the writer became a member of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), after working for some years as a volunteer for them. Arrested in 1939, Ó Cadhain was interned for almost five years, without trial, in Camp Curragh, a prison for political dissidents, where he taught

¹ As a matter of fact *Cré na Cille* was adapted and serialized as a radio play by the poet and writer Johnny Choil Mhaidhc O Coisdealbha in 1972.

² For Keefe as well, the ten interludes point to a traditional/mythical rather than a modern approach to reality: "Churchyard Clay is scored like a musical composition written for spoken voices. Each of the ten "interludes" with its variations is placed in a progression which in turn is named to indicate the cyclical nature of the evolution of the human body to clay" (1985: 369)

himself Russian and read Dostoyevsky. It may have been Dostoyevsky's use of polyphony (Bakhtin) which inspired him to use speech – the speech of the dead – as a means of commentary on the Irish politics of the day.

This choice of topic, unusual in itself, is still perfectly justified in the economy of the novel. Alan Titley, one of the translators of the novel, remarks in his introduction to the novel that talk is “the principal character in the novel” (2015: 8). This becomes obvious even from the very first page of the novel, where the reader is introduced to the characters and the dialogue conventions. The dialogue conventions are a system of dots and lines which guides the reader through the labyrinth of the conversations, marking the beginning, the middle and the interruption of speech. Though necessary, they are not sufficient for the identification of each speaker. For, in contrast to a play, where the names of the speakers are given right before their utterances, there are no such markings in *Graveyard Clay*¹. At first, the reader is puzzled, trying to make sense out of the jumble of words which keep pouring out of the noisy graves. The dead speak continuously. They do so because this is the only thing they can still do while dead. The first realization of being dead comes in the form of a speech, which is then echoed by the responses of the others. The newly-buried thus introduce themselves to the whole underground community. Since speaking is the only form of human interaction left to them, the dead raise it to a kind of art. Every action they perform can take place via speech. They can accuse each other, reveal harsh truths, tell stories, learn foreign languages and even hold elections, but ironically, these performative utterances have lost all efficiency. And this is because a performative has an effect as long as there are two (complementary) realities: the reality of language/speech and the reality of the world. In the absence of the latter, speech turns into the only reality – and thus the main character.

The unending flow of voices in the graveyard is only interrupted a few times, by the Trump (trumpet) of the Graveyard, a sort of disembodied Voice who fills the part of the extradiegetic narrator, meditating on the condition of being dead. Until the intervention of the Trump, in Interlude Three, The Teasing of the Clay, the reader is somehow at a loss regarding the manner in which the conversations should be interpreted. As the utterers of each line are quite difficult to identify (the easiest are Caitríona Phaidin and Nora Sheainin, the two sworn enemies), the impression is that one listens to a cacophony of voices coming from simultaneous radio broadcasts:

- ... The nettly groves of Donagh's Village, you said.
- Even nettles wouldn't grow on the hillocks of your village, there are so many fleas on them...
- ... I fell off a stack of oats...
- Faith then, as you say, the Menlo man and myself used to write to each other...
- ..."I wonder is this the War of the Two Foreigners?" says I to Paitseach Sheainin...
- Wake up, man! That war's over since 1918...
- It was still going on when I was dying... (Ó Cadhain 2016: 29)

This cacophony begins to make sense only after the first monologue of the Trump of the Graveyard:

¹ Keefe reads this lack of markings as a specific authorial strategy, designed to outline a particular storyworld and its epistemology: “The idiosyncratic lack of the usual signposting is not just a wayward contrariness. The intention of the author is to attempt to define each of his dramatis personae by means of highly individual discourse. Only by their speech patterns can we come to recognize the characters and try to piece together what is true or what is hearsay” (1985: 368).

I am the Trump of the Graveyard. Let my voice be heard! It must be heard...

For I am every voice that was, that is and that will be. I was the first voice in the formlessness of the universe. I am the last voice that will be heard in the dust of Armageddon. I was the muffled voice of the first embryo in the first womb. When the golden harvest is stacked in the haggard, I am the voice that will summon home the last gleaner from the Grain-field of Time. For I am the first-born son of Time and Life, and steward of their household. I am reaper, stack-builder and thresher of Time. I am storeman, cellarer and turnkey of Life. Let my voice be heard! It must be heard... (Ó Cadhain 2016: 65)

The distance between the Trump and the inhabitants of the graveyard is the distance between heaven and earth, idea and reality (manifestation). The Trump is the platonic Voice which gives voice to everyone, a mythological figure who can be linked to Hestia, the firstborn of Chronos, the goddess of hearth and fire. The progression of the interludes, an allegory of how clay is shaped, moulded and baked (fired) in order to produce pottery, is also mythologically linked to the sacredness of the hearth and home. Presiding over the whole graveyard, the voice of the Trump declares the non-reality of the underground:

There is neither time nor life in the Graveyard. There is neither brightness nor darkness. There is no sunset, springtide, changeability of wind or breaking of weather. Nor is there lengthening of the day, or manifestation of the Pleiads and the Plough; nor the growing creature attiring itself in the cloak of Joy and Festivity. The lively eyes of the child are not there. Nor the extravagant desire of the youth. Nor the rose-tinted cheeks of the maiden. Nor the gentle voice of the nurturing mother. Nor the serene smile of old age. (Ó Cadhain 2016: 65)

Apart from its function as mediator between the underground and the aboveground, The Trump of the Graveyard fulfills another, more practical role: it announces a newcomer into the graveyard world. From Interlude Three to Interlude Eight, six newly-buried corpses arrive and are welcomed by Caitríona Phaidin, who almost at once starts questioning them about her relatives and the state of affairs aboveground.

A terrible woman, both in her life and afterlife, Caitríona is a mix between a virago and a hag¹. The novel opens with her monologue, which traces the main developing lines of the novel: instead of wondering about the state of her soul and being concerned with salvation, Caitríona's interests are all about appearance and preserving status:

I wonder am I buried in the Pound Plot or the Fifteen-Shilling Plot? Or did the devil possess them to dump me in the Half-Guinea Plot, after all my warnings? The morning of the day I died I called Pádraig up from the kitchen: "I beseech you, Pádraig, my child," I said. "Bury me in the Pound Plot. In the Pound Plot. Some of us are buried in the Half-Guinea Plot, but even so..."

I told them to get the best coffin in Tadhg's. It's a good oak coffin anyway... I have the scapular mantle on. And the winding-sheet. I had them left ready myself ... There's a spot on this sheet. It's like a daub of soot. No it's not. A fingermark! My son's wife for certain. It's like her sloppiness. If Nell saw it! I suppose she was there. She wouldn't have been, by God, if I could have helped it...

¹ Keefe likens sharp-tongued Caitríona to the Hag of Beare (369), a mythical Irish character, also present in the folklore of Western Scotland, who, according to Eleanor Hull, is "connected with old age and winter" (1927: 254).

[...] The crucifix is on my breast, the one I bought at the mission... But where's the black crucifix Tomaisin's wife got blessed for me at Knock Shrine the last time Tomaisin had to be tied? I told them to put that one on me too. It's much better looking than this one. The Saviour on this one is crooked since Padraig's children dropped it. The Saviour on the black one is gorgeous. (Ó Cadhain 2016: 3-4)

As the reader finds his/her way into the interludes, just as the clay is gradually taking shape, the voices of the dead start acquiring personality and meaning. The characters become identifiable by their quirks, grudges, dissatisfactions and desires, their ways of addressing others and the way they tell stories, idiosyncratic expressions¹, swearwords, etc. The initial cacophony turns into what may be termed a symphony, a large-scale composition with numerous motifs that are developed.

The main motif is that of the relations between the inhabitants of the small Irish-speaking communities in whose midst Ó Cadhain was born and raised. As Titley remarks, in the Connemara of the thirties and forties, “the only culture was talk”, and talk was “the centerpiece of creativity” (2015: 8). This extremely creative and humorous way of talking is what made Ó Cadhain's novel so popular among the Gaelic-speaking communities. Talk, it must be mentioned, is almost always small talk, gossip and chatter, for “these dead voices in the unquiet grave are concerned only with the immediate quotidian—the stolen seaweed, who is marrying whom, a donkey's trespass, what somebody's will contains, how the publican robbed them” (Titley 2015: 9).

Other topics of conversation are politics, football² and booze. Two political activists, supporters of Arthur Griffith and Eamon de Valera, are constantly arguing, as the first had stabbed the other, an IRA member. Their lines mirror each other in a parody of autonomy and self-sufficiency. Their constant fights are an ironical comment on the state of Irish politics:

—Hold on now till I read you the Declaration issued by Eamon de Valera to the people of Ireland: “People of Ireland... “

—Hold on yourself till I read you the Declaration issued by Arthur Griffith to the people of Ireland: “People of Ireland... “ (Ó Cadhain 2016: 40)

But there is also some talk about culture and literature. The Master is trying to initiate Nora Sheainin (Filthy Feet) into the mysteries of literature and high culture. He starts reading to her, as he complains that “There's no peace or seclusion or opportunity for culture here . . . and as you say, Nora, paltry trivialities is all they ever talk about . . . cards, horses, drink, violence...” (Ó Cadhain 2016: 15). Nora, however, uses the notion of culture as a weapon against Caitríona³:

—*Honest*, Muraed, I have forgotten everything concerning Caitríona's affairs on the plain above us. Culture, Muraed. It elevates the mind to the lofty peaks and opens the fairy palaces in which is stored the protoplasm of colour and sound [...] One loses all

¹ For instance, Caitríona's speeches, which always focus on the wrongs various people have done to her, finish with “I'll explode! I'll explode!” (Ó Cadhain 2016: 52), a mark of her choleric, easily-angered personality.

² The matches they discuss were between Galway and Kerry, two football teams still existing today.

³ At one point, talking about another character, Nora Filthy Feet remarks that he “had enough culture not to marry Caitríona Phaidin” (Ó Cadhain 2016: 189).

interest in the paltry trivia of doleful life. A glorious disorder has filled my mind for some time now, brought on by an avalanche of culture (Ó Cadhain 2016: 23)

and also as a political weapon in the elections held underground:

—...The joint candidate that we—the Fifteen-Shilling Party— put forward in this election is a woman. Don't let that frighten any of you, friends.[...] Three years ago when she came into the graveyard clay she was as ill-informed as any of those windbags spouting nonsense down there in the Half-Guinea Plot. But in spite of what the Half-Guinea Party says, everybody in this graveyard has equal rights and equal opportunity (knocking of skulls). Our joint candidate is proof of that. She has culture and learning now. My Corpses, I wish to introduce to you our joint candidate...Nora Sheainin (Ó Cadhain 2016: 48)

In a parody of the three estates, the inhabitants of the graveyard are divided into the Pound, the Fifteen Shilling and the Half-Guinea Plots. When elections are held, each estate has its own party. The Pound Party are “the Party of the Gentry, the Party of Conservatism, the Party of Big Shots, the Party of Reactionaries, the Party of Restraint and Control”, the Fifteen Shilling are “the Party of Commerce and Trading, of the Poets and Artists, of the *Bourgeoisie* and the Middle Classes, of Property and Wealth”, while the Half Guinea Party is “the Party of the Labouring Class, of the Proletariat, the Rural Rent-Payers, the Party of the Unfree and the Bond Tenants and the Old Thatched Cabin, the Party of the Great Dispossessed”¹ (Ó Cadhain 2016: 48).

The ongoing culture war between Coili, the traditional story teller or bard, and the writer offers the reader a bird's eye view of the undercurrents in Irish culture. While Coili's simple, yet humorous verses documenting the foibles of his neighbours seem to please everyone, the writer's more elaborate work is equally rejected by the people and the state-sponsored publishing house. The cultural policy of the post-colonial and independent Irish state comes under critical scrutiny with the writer's observation that “If you intend to take up writing, Coili, remember that it is taboo for An Gum to publish anything that a daughter would hide from her father” (Ó Cadhain 2016: 19), relating to Ó Cadhain own experience of having his manuscript rejected on account of his controversial use of the popular dialect. Noting the duplicity of the cultural policies of the free state, Dhiarmada noted that

the State's neglect of the Gaeltacht regions which led to economic stagnation and a higher than average level of emigration made both Ó Cadhain and his contemporary, the Aran poet Mairtin Ó Direain, internal migrants in a country where State ideology paid lip service to the Irish language, idealised the Gaeltacht as a nostalgic Utopia - the true repository of national identity – while allowing the living Gaeltacht to be denuded of its youth and vitality through emigration (2008: 55).

Attempting to explain the poverty of the Gaeltacht regions, the writer and Coili have divergent opinions. While the writer traces it to a scientific theory of evolution (starting with the Ice Age), Coili resorts to myth and legend, in particular to the folklore related to Cromwell (the Curse of Cromwell) and the myth of the Devil falling down from the sky in Connemara, and fighting with Archangel Michael.

¹ The definitions of the parties are socialist and Marxist in character, with the Pound Party as the repressive state apparatus, the Fifteen Shilling the bourgeoisie and the ideological state apparatus, and the Half Guinea the (lumpen) proletariat.

All these different voices conversing, debating or fighting over politics, culture, football or simply booze, money and property make up what Mikhail Bakhtin defined as polyphony “a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses” (1984: 6). This polyphonic structure has its roots in Ó Cadhain’s experience as a native of Connemara, his political involvement with the IRA and the Irish Republicans, his anti-Catholicism and his interest in the value of spoken Gaelic¹. The polyphony of dead voices refers both to the democratic ideal and to its subversion (the many voices speak in vain, to no effect whatsoever), which is Ó Cadhain’s ironic authorial commentary on the state of Irish politics. His political stance was both aligned and divergent from the Irish nationalism of Éire na Gaeilge (the Ireland of the Irish language) movement, which attempted to resurrect traditional culture and on whose agenda de-anglicisation featured as a priority.

Though preservation of the culture and language of the Gaeltacht communities was Ó Cadhain’s main political and academic goal, his vision of the future was less idyllic than that of the Blasket Islands writers (Peig Sayers, Muiris Ó Suilleabhain and Tomas Ó Criomhthain). As Doncu notes, “The harsh humour of the dead’s chatter under the ground is meant as a resistance strategy to the traditional way Irishmen were depicted in English literature as well as a critical reflection on the model for an emergent Irish identity offered by the Blasket Island autobiographies” (2023: 19-20). The first wave of Irish nationalism offered an idealized picture of the Irish rural communities, depicting them as “morally superior to the debased values of modern popular culture emanating from urban industrial England” (De Paor 2008: 10). Dhiarmada links the utopian project of this first wave of nationalism to nostalgia, arguing that

In the late nineteenth century, the revival and restoration of the Irish language itself became an important part of the Utopian project of cultural nationalism and can be read as a form of nostalgia, “a desire to go home” to a remembered pre-colonial past where the deracinated colonial subjects could locate themselves again in their own home/language (2008: 54).

In contrast, Ó Cadhain’s revival of the native speech of his community is far from being idealized, revealing all the gaps at the roots of Irish politics: lack of education and self-reliance, leading to an uncritical acceptance and blind following of everything the leaders proposed. At the same time, Ó Cadhain is equally critical of religion, showing Catholicism to be more of a pretense than a real moral influence on the poor Irish communities. His commitment to language preservation, allied with a realistic portrayal of the petty interests and squabbles of a poor community represent an ironic double of the nostalgic take of the first Irish nationalists. From this point of view *Graveyard Clay* can be considered an early example of a postmodern work, in which the multiplicity of perspectives and voices, though referring nostalgically to an already irrecoverable past, is in fact used as ironic commentary on the current state of politics. Both nostalgia and irony, as Hutcheon notes, connect emotion with politics, affect with agency (2000: 22). The living speech of the dead may be, in this context, interpreted in two different ways:

¹ In a speech he delivered in front of an Irish cultural organisation, Ó Cadhain stated that “The most valuable literary instrument I got from my people was the spoken language, the natural earthy pungent speech, which sometimes starts dancing and sometimes weeping, in spite of me” (qtd. in Mac Com Iomaire vii).

as Ó Cadhain's subjective attachment to traditional values and as his objective criticism of the same communities whose language he strove to preserve.

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REIMAGINING TRADITION: INTERTEXTUAL STRATEGIES IN ALICE WALKER'S "THE COLOR PURPLE"

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***Abstract:** This paper delves into the intertextual strategies employed by Alice Walker in her seminal work, *The Color Purple*. Focusing on the concept of reimagining tradition through intertextuality, our analysis uncovers how Walker artfully reinterprets and reshapes literary, cultural, and historical references to convey the unique narratives of her characters. We explore the dialogism and polyphony within the novel, revealing a multiplicity of voices that illuminate the complex lives of African American women. It also illustrates how intertextual strategies contribute to the reimagining of literary and cultural traditions, underscoring their significance as tools of empowerment and cultural critique. This paper demonstrates the enduring power of reimagining tradition through intertextuality within the African American literary tradition.*

***Keywords:** African American fiction; Alice Walker; reimagining tradition*

1. Introduction

This paper embarks on a journey to unravel the layers of intertextual engagement in *The Color Purple*, illuminating how Alice Walker reimagines and reinterprets traditional narratives, both African American and Western, to craft a unique literary narrative.

The novel is celebrated for its groundbreaking exploration of African American women's experiences. It has inspired a generation of writers and scholars to delve into similar themes of identity, family, and empowerment. Its success and its adaptation into a critically acclaimed film have further solidified its place in the canon of African American literature.

In the context of the paper, the key concepts to be explored are intertextuality and reimagining tradition.

Intertextuality is a fundamental concept in literary studies that refers to the dynamic relationship between texts. It suggests that no text stands in isolation; instead, all texts are interconnected through a web of references, influences, and echoes of other texts. Here are some key aspects of intertextuality: reference and allusions, dialogues and responses, transformation and remixing, cultural and historical context. Intertextuality allows for the transformation and remixing of ideas and narratives. Authors can take existing stories and concepts and give them new life or a fresh perspective, contributing to the evolution of literary traditions. The concept is deeply influenced by the cultural and historical context in which a text is created. Authors draw upon the cultural and intellectual milieu of their time when engaging with other texts.

"Reimagining tradition" refers to the act of taking established literary, cultural, or historical traditions and reinterpreting them in new and innovative ways. In the context of literature, it involves challenging and reshaping traditional narratives, themes, and conventions. The key points related to reimagining tradition are: innovation and creativity, cultural and social critique, cultural continuity, and intersectionality. Reimagining tradition is driven by the author's creative impulse. It involves breaking away from conventional storytelling or thematic approaches and introducing novel elements or perspectives. Authors often use reimagining tradition as a means to critique

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or subvert existing cultural or social norms. By revisiting and reshaping traditional stories or concepts, they can highlight issues, inequalities, or alternative viewpoints.

Reimagining tradition maintains a connection to the past while embracing contemporary concerns. It acknowledges the significance of cultural continuity while allowing for adaptation to changing times.

2. Dialogism and Polyphony in *The Color Purple*

In *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker employs multiple voices and perspectives to create a rich and complex narrative that reflects the diverse experiences of its characters. These narrative techniques contribute to the novel's depth and its exploration of themes related to race, gender, identity, and empowerment. Here are some ways in which multiple voices and perspectives are utilized in the novel: first-person narration, shifts in point of view, multiple narrative threads, variety of voices, empowerment through narrative, community and solidarity, and intersectionality.

The novel is primarily written in the form of letters, with each letter serving as a first-person narrative from one of the characters. The use of letters allows readers to directly access the inner thoughts, feelings, and personal experiences of the characters. The primary narrators are Celie, Nettie, and later, Shug Avery, each offering their unique perspective on the events and their own growth and transformation.

The novel frequently shifts between different characters' points of view. This shift allows readers to see the same events or situations from multiple angles, providing a nuanced understanding of the characters' lives. For example, we see the same incident through Celie's eyes and then through Shug's or Nettie's perspective, which reveals different layers of meaning.

The novel features multiple narrative threads as it follows the lives of several characters, including Celie, Nettie, Sofia, and Shug Avery. These different narrative threads intersect and overlap, creating a tapestry of interconnected stories that highlight the diverse experiences of African American women in the early 20th century South.

Each character in the novel has a distinct voice and narrative style. Celie's early letters, for example, are marked by their uneducated, colloquial language, while Nettie's letters are more formal and educated. This distinction in voices emphasizes the characters' individuality and reflects their unique backgrounds and experiences.

As the novel progresses, readers witness the characters' growth and empowerment through their narratives. Celie, in particular, undergoes a profound transformation, finding her voice and agency through the act of writing letters. Her narrative evolves from one of despair and submission to one of self-discovery and empowerment.

The use of multiple voices and perspectives underscores the importance of community and solidarity among African American women. Through their narratives, the characters support and uplift each other, challenging the oppressive forces of racism and patriarchy.

The novel explores the intersectionality of race, gender, and class by presenting the experiences of characters who navigate multiple forms of oppression. These intersecting identities are reflected in the characters' narratives and contribute to a nuanced exploration of their struggles and triumphs.

Alice Walker skillfully employs these narrative techniques to create a narrative mosaic that amplifies the voices and perspectives of African American women. This approach allows readers to engage deeply with the characters' experiences, fostering empathy and understanding while highlighting the resilience and strength of these women in the face of adversity.

Evolving dynamics: Mr. and Celie

At the beginning of the novel, Celie's relationship with Mister is characterized by extreme subservience and submission. She refers to him as "Mr." and obeys his every command without question. Mister's treatment of Celie is marked by emotional and physical abuse. He is emotionally distant, disrespectful, and even cruel at times. This abusive dynamic is emblematic of the broader societal norms that devalue and oppress women in the novel. Celie's initial interactions with Mister highlight her lack of agency and voice. She is essentially voiceless in the relationship, unable to assert herself or express her feelings and desires. Mister's domination over Celie reflects the broader gender hierarchy in the society depicted in the novel, where women are marginalized and silenced. As the novel progresses, readers witness significant shifts in the power dynamics between Celie and Mister. These shifts are partly a result of Celie's personal growth and empowerment.

Shug Avery's arrival in their household introduces a new dynamic. Shug, who is initially Mister's lover, forms a close bond with Celie. Celie's connection with Shug begins to challenge Mister's control. Celie's evolving relationship with Shug is pivotal in her self-discovery and newfound sense of self-worth. Shug encourages Celie to question her subservient role and to explore her own desires and identity. Through her interactions with Shug, Celie gains confidence and begins to find her voice. She starts to express her thoughts and feelings more openly, both in her letters and in her direct conversations.

Mister undergoes his own transformation as the novel unfolds. While he initially represents the oppressive male figure, he is not portrayed as a one-dimensional villain. Over time, Mister begins to change, particularly through his interactions with Shug and Celie. He comes to recognize the cruelty of his past actions and attempts to make amends. This transformation reflects the potential for personal growth and redemption.

The evolving dynamic between Celie and Mister serves as a microcosm of the broader themes of the novel, including the empowerment of women, the impact of abusive relationships, and the potential for transformation and healing. Their relationship is emblematic of the larger struggle against systemic sexism and patriarchy in the novel's setting.

Evolving dynamics: Celie and Shug

In the world of *The Color Purple*, Celie and Shug Avery's relationship emerges as a radiant beacon of self-discovery, empowerment, and love amidst the darkness of oppression. At its core, their bond transcends the conventional boundaries of friendship or mentorship; it becomes a profound journey of liberation for both characters.

In the early stages of their relationship, Celie is drawn to Shug's luminous presence like a moth to a flame. Shug's charisma, independence, and audacity stand in stark contrast to Celie's existence of silence and servitude. Celie's fascination with Shug becomes a reflection of her own suppressed desires for a more liberated and fulfilling life.

But Shug Avery is not merely a symbol of unattainable glamour; she is the catalyst for Celie's metamorphosis. Through her encouragement and unwavering support, Shug invites Celie to question the submissive role society has thrust upon her. Shug's mantra, "You sure is ugly," uttered with affectionate tenderness, becomes a transformative refrain for Celie. It pushes her to reevaluate her self-worth and to embark on a courageous journey of self-discovery.

The emotional connection between Celie and Shug deepens as they share their most intimate thoughts and vulnerabilities. They become each other's refuge, a sanctuary of love and acceptance in a world that often rejects them. Shug's embrace of Celie is not limited to her physical beauty, but rather a celebration of her innate worth as a human

being. Through Shug's eyes, Celie begins to see herself as more than just a submissive wife or a victim of abuse.

Celie's empowerment is a testament to the profound impact Shug has on her life. With Shug's guidance, she learns to stand up to Mister and to find her voice, both literally and metaphorically. Her journey from silence to eloquence is nothing short of a triumph of the human spirit. Shug's teachings enable Celie to evolve from a cocoon of oppression into a butterfly of strength and self-assurance.

Yet, it is essential to recognize that Shug's transformation is equally significant. Her relationship with Celie is not a one-sided mentorship but a mutual exchange of wisdom and growth. Shug, the embodiment of liberation, learns from Celie's unwavering faith and resilience. Celie's capacity to love, forgive, and heal touches Shug profoundly, leading her on a parallel path of self-acceptance and authenticity.

Their relationship is a rebellion against traditional gender roles and societal expectations. Together, they challenge the oppressive norms that seek to limit women's freedom and self-expression. Celie and Shug's partnership is a testament to the idea that women can form profound, loving bonds outside the confines of male domination. They demonstrate that sisterhood and love can be powerful tools of resistance against the patriarchal forces that seek to divide and conquer.

Celie's letters to God

Within the pages of *The Color Purple*, Celie's letters to God emerge as a haunting, poignant, and profoundly personal narrative device. These letters, which begin as a desperate plea from a voice silenced by oppression, evolve into a testament to the indomitable human spirit and the transformative power of self-discovery.

Celie's initial letters to God are born from a sense of isolation and powerlessness. She writes as if speaking to a distant deity, a solitary confidant in a world that has denied her a voice. These early letters are marked by their raw, unfiltered honesty. They reveal the depths of Celie's despair, her sense of abandonment, and her belief that no one on Earth cares for her. In her letters, Celie uses a language that is unrefined and colloquial, mirroring her lack of formal education and societal marginalization. Through these letters, we bear witness to the harsh reality of her life, her traumatic experiences, and her profound sense of unworthiness.

However, as the novel unfolds, Celie's letters to God undergo a remarkable transformation that mirrors her own journey toward self-confidence and self-expression. Her evolution is intertwined with her growing connection to Shug Avery, who encourages her to address her letters not to God, but to herself. This subtle shift in addressing her letters is symbolic of Celie's changing perception of herself. It marks the beginning of her reclamation of her own voice and identity. Celie starts to see that she is worthy of love, understanding, and self-acceptance. Her letters are no longer desperate cries for help; they become a form of self-affirmation and self-empowerment.

As Celie gains confidence, her letters evolve into expressions of her desires, her dreams, and her growing self-awareness. She begins to assert herself through her writing, telling God that she's "here" and claiming her place in the world. Her language becomes more refined, reflecting not only her newfound sense of self but also her education, which she receives through Nettie's letters.

The culmination of this transformation is when Celie changes her salutation from "Dear God" to "Dear Nettie" when she believes her sister is lost. This act signifies a profound shift in Celie's sense of connection and her recognition of the importance of her relationships with other people.

Her letters to God are a narrative mirror, reflecting her journey from silence and isolation to empowerment and self-expression. They offer readers a window into her evolving sense of self-worth and her growing determination to claim her place in the world. Through these letters, Alice Walker shows us the power of language and self-affirmation in the face of oppression, inviting us to witness Celie's remarkable transformation and her emergence as a voice of resilience and strength.

Celie's and Nettie's letter exchange

In the novel, the narrative unfolds through the exchange of letters between sisters Celie and Nettie, providing a striking juxtaposition of voices that illuminates the stark differences in their life journeys. Celie's letters to God, as discussed earlier, are poignant expressions of her growth from silence to empowerment. Nettie's letters, on the other hand, serve as a counterpoint to Celie's narrative, offering readers a glimpse into her separate world and reflecting her distinct experiences.

Celie's letters are raw and authentic, mirroring her lack of formal education and the harshness of her life. Her writing style is unpolished, characterized by colloquial language, misspellings, and a profound emotional immediacy. Celie bares her soul in these letters, sharing her joys and sorrows, her trauma, and her evolving sense of self. Her letters are a testament to her authenticity and vulnerability.

In contrast, Nettie's letters are markedly more formal and educated. Having received a formal education and lived a life as a missionary in Africa, Nettie's writing reflects her intellectual prowess and her exposure to a wider world. Her letters are characterized by grammatical correctness, refined language, and a broader cultural awareness. The formality of her writing mirrors her different life circumstances and the contrast between her experiences in Africa and Celie's life in the rural South.

The differences in their writing styles are a reflection of the starkly contrasting worlds inhabited by the sisters. Celie's letters are imbued with the suffocating reality of rural Southern life, where she is subjected to abuse and oppression. Her language mirrors her isolation and powerlessness.

On the other hand, Nettie's letters transport readers to the exotic beauty and cultural richness of Africa. Her writing style captures the wonder and intellectual curiosity she experiences in a world far removed from Celie's. The formality of her writing underscores the intellectual and cultural disparities between the two sisters.

The differences in writing style between Celie and Nettie serve as a reflection of their individual journeys. Celie's letters are a chronicle of her transformation from silence to self-expression, from subservience to empowerment. Her language evolves as she gains confidence and self-assurance.

Nettie's letters, meanwhile, chronicle her journey from a sheltered missionary life to her exposure to the complexities of African culture and society. Her formal and educated writing style reflects her growth as an individual and her ability to navigate the challenges of her environment.

In conclusion, Celie's letters to God and Nettie's epistles provide a striking contrast in *The Color Purple*, highlighting the differences in their experiences and journeys. Celie's raw authenticity mirrors her personal growth and self-empowerment, while Nettie's formal style reflects her intellectual development and her exposure to a world beyond Celie's. Together, these divergent voices enrich the novel's narrative, offering readers a deeper understanding of the sisters' distinct paths and the broader themes of the story.

3. Intertextuality as a narrative tool

Intertextuality creates a dynamic dialogue between different texts and authors. It allows writers to engage in conversations with their predecessors and contemporaries, contributing to the ongoing development of literary traditions. It is a powerful tool that writers use to create depth, resonance, and complexity in their works. It invites readers to explore the intricate relationships between texts and to consider the broader cultural and intellectual context in which literature exists.

Biblical references

In Alice Walker's novel the narrative weaves a complex tapestry of biblical allusions and intertextuality that adds profound layers of meaning to the story. These references provide insight into the characters' journeys, the exploration of faith, and the defiance of traditional norms.

At the heart of this intertextuality lies the significance of names. Celie's transformation from the biblical echo of "Cain" to "Celie" mirrors her journey from victimhood to self-discovery. This transformation aligns with biblical themes of redemption and renewal, symbolizing her path to empowerment. Throughout the novel, biblical scriptures and stories are revisited and reinterpreted. Celie's initial Letters to God reflect her understanding of God as distant and judgmental. However, as she gains confidence and self-assurance, her concept of God evolves into a more personal and benevolent presence.

Shug Avery challenges conventional religious dogma, engaging in her own spiritual exploration. She expands the concept of divinity by asserting that God is neither he nor she but an all-encompassing "It". This perspective fosters a more inclusive and expansive spirituality.

The novel also explores the theme of "biblical womanhood" through Celie, Sofia, and Shug Avery. Celie's initial submissiveness mirrors the biblical ideal of a meek and obedient wife, while Sofia's resistance challenges these norms. Shug Avery, in contrast, defies traditional biblical roles for women. She embodies sensuality, independence, and freedom, breaking free from societal expectations. The overarching themes of redemption and forgiveness find resonance in biblical narratives. Celie's transformation and her forgiveness of her abusers echo the redemptive arcs of biblical figures like Mary Magdalene and the prodigal son. Her narrative invites readers to contemplate the possibilities of healing and redemption, even in the face of profound trauma and abuse.

In *The Color Purple*, biblical references and intertextuality enrich the narrative, inviting readers to question and reimagine traditional religious interpretations. Alice Walker's reinterpretation of biblical narratives serves as a catalyst for celebrating the resilience and strength of marginalized voices. Through this intertextual lens, the novel becomes a captivating exploration of faith, redemption, and the enduring power of the human spirit.

African cultural references

The intertextual references to African cultural elements, primarily through Nettie's letters from Africa, serve as a powerful thematic thread in *The Color Purple*. These references connect the characters to their African heritage and the broader African diaspora, highlighting the significance of cultural roots and the enduring impact of the African experience. Nettie's letters from Africa become a conduit for Celie and the readers to reconnect with their African roots, which had been severed during the transatlantic slave trade. Nettie's descriptions of African culture, customs, and traditions provide a glimpse into the rich heritage that Celie and other African Americans had been

disconnected from for generations. Through Nettie's narratives, characters like Celie and Shug Avery gain a deeper understanding of their ancestral homeland, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural identity that had been obscured by centuries of displacement.

African cultural elements, as depicted in Nettie's letters, serve as symbols of resilience and endurance. They signify the survival of African traditions and the persistence of cultural memory despite the brutality of slavery and the dislocation of the African diaspora. Nettie's accounts of African rituals, dances, and storytelling underscore the tenacity of cultural practices that have transcended time and distance. These elements affirm the enduring legacy of African heritage within the African American community. The letters not only connect Celie to her personal African roots but also highlight the broader African diaspora. Nettie's experiences in Africa represent a parallel journey to the one Celie undergoes in the rural South. Both sisters grapple with oppression and discrimination, albeit in different contexts.

By juxtaposing the African American experience with Nettie's experiences in Africa, the novel underscores the shared struggles and resilience of the African diaspora. It underscores the idea that, despite geographical separation, people of African descent share a common history and heritage. These letters also illustrate the power of cultural reclamation and identity. Her immersion in African culture empowers her to challenge the colonial norms and injustices she encounters. Similarly, Celie's exposure to Nettie's letters contributes to her own journey of empowerment and self-discovery.

The reclamation of African cultural elements becomes a source of strength and identity for the characters. It reinforces the idea that embracing one's cultural heritage can be a form of resistance against oppressive forces. Nettie's letters celebrate the diversity within the African diaspora, showcasing the multiplicity of cultures, languages, and traditions across the continent. This diversity challenges monolithic stereotypes and emphasizes the richness of African heritage. The novel subtly suggests that the African diaspora is not a monolithic entity but a tapestry of diverse cultures, reflecting the complexity and depth of African history and its influence on the global African diaspora.

4. Conclusions

Alice Walker reimagines and reshapes traditional texts and cultural references in *The Color Purple* to convey her unique narrative by infusing her work with a distinctive African American and feminist perspective. She reimagines the traditional epistolary novel format by having her characters write letters, primarily Celie's Letters to God and later, to Nettie. This allows the characters to express their innermost thoughts, fears, and desires, providing readers with intimate access to their experiences. The personal nature of these letters reshapes the traditional form, making it a powerful vehicle for conveying the characters' emotional journeys. Through Celie's Letters to God, Walker engages with religious imagery and traditions but subverts them. Celie's initial perception of God as a distant and judgmental figure evolves into a more personal and benevolent presence. This subversion challenges traditional religious norms and conveys the idea of spiritual growth and self-discovery outside established religious frameworks.

Walker reinterprets African American vernacular language and dialect to create authentic and richly textured dialogue. She captures the rhythms and cadences of Southern African American speech, infusing the novel with cultural authenticity while reshaping traditional literary language conventions. She reshapes the traditional portrayal of African American women in literature by empowering her female characters. Celie's transformation from a victim of abuse to a confident, self-assured woman challenges

traditional narratives of female submissiveness. Shug Avery's independence and sensuality further subvert conventional gender roles.

Walker's incorporation of African cultural elements, particularly through Nettie's letters from Africa, allows her to reclaim and celebrate African heritage. This reshaping of cultural references connects the characters to their roots and emphasizes the resilience of cultural memory despite the African diaspora. The novel addresses complex social issues such as racism, sexism, and homophobia within the African American community. By reshaping these issues into the narrative, she confronts them head-on and provides a platform for critical examination and discussion.

The novel reshapes traditional narratives by celebrating the strength of female bonds and sisterhood. The deep and supportive relationship between Celie and Nettie, as well as Celie's friendship with Shug Avery, elevates the importance of female relationships and challenges male-dominated narratives.

Overall, Alice Walker's reimagining and reshaping of traditional texts and cultural references in *The Color Purple* serve to convey a unique narrative that centers on the experiences, resilience, and empowerment of African American women. Through her innovative storytelling, Walker offers a fresh perspective on African American literature, spirituality, identity, and the enduring strength of marginalized voices.

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INTERTEXTUALITY IN GYLES BRANDRETH'S "OSCAR WILDE AND THE CANDLELIGHT MURDERS"

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Abstract: Starting from some ideas on postmodernism and intertextuality, the paper goes on to present Gyles Brandreth's Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders and the author's relationship with Oscar Wilde, Arthur Conan Doyle and Robert Sherard, the three literary figures that appear as characters in the novel. Then it focuses on discussing Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders in relation to some literary works considered its intertexts: Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray and A Woman of No Importance, Arthur Conan Doyle's The Sign of Four and A Study in Scarlet and Agatha Christie's The Mysterious Affair at Styles. We shall analyse intertextuality in what concerns the plot, the construction of the characters and their relationships, and the language.

Keywords: intertext; detective; character

Introduction. Postmodernism and intertextuality

Though not invented by and not restricted to postmodernism, intertextuality is a defining feature of postmodernist literary works, and many theorists of the second half of the 20th century asserted that texts were built on and relied on one another. William H. Gass, for instance, stated that "Traditionally, stories were stolen [...] or they were felt to be the common property of a culture or community" (1985: 147). Michel Foucault claimed that any book was a node within a network, being caught up in a system of references to other books, texts, sentences, while the reader's job was not just to recognize the intertexts, but also to realize what had been done to them. (cf. 1977) Julia Kristeva discussed the plurality of texts within and behind any given text, shifting the focus of critical activity from the notion of the author to the idea of textual productivity (cf. 1969), while Linda Hutcheon noted that "A literary work can actually no longer be considered original; if it were, it could have no meaning for its reader. It is only as part of prior discourses that any text derives meaning and significance" (2004: 126).

Postmodernism resumes and reinterprets the past, not innocently, but with irony, good temper and (self-)parodic nostalgia. (cf. Currie 1998) However, as Linda Hutcheon notices, while irony marks the difference from the past, "the intertextual echoing simultaneously works to affirm – textually and hermeneutically – the connection with the past" (*ibidem*: 125).

Gyles Brandreth and his Oscar Wilde Murder Mysteries. Brandreth and Oscar Wilde, Arthur Conan Doyle and Robert Sherard

One of the contemporary writers that resumed the past literary canon and reinterpreted it in his own way is Gyles Brandreth in his *Oscar Wilde Murder Mysteries*, a series of Victorian detective tales. Projected by its author to include nine novels, so far it includes seven:

1. *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders* (2007), published in the United States as *Oscar Wilde and a Death of No Importance*

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2. *Oscar Wilde and the Ring of Death* (2008), also known as *Oscar Wilde and a Game Called Murder*
3. *Oscar Wilde and the Dead Man's Smile* (2009)
4. *Oscar Wilde and the Nest of Vipers* (2010), also known as *Oscar Wilde and the Vampire Murders*
5. *Oscar Wilde and the Vatican Murders* (2011)
6. *Oscar Wilde and the Murders at Reading Gaol* (2012)
7. *Oscar Wilde and the Return of Jack the Ripper* (2019). (cf. *Oscar Wilde. A Series by Gyles Brandreth*)

While it is clear from the novels' titles that they are somehow connected to Oscar Wilde, they also feature other literary figures that are familiar to the reader, like Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, Robert Sherard, one of Wilde's closest friends, who was also his first and most loyal biographer, or Bram Stoker, the creator of Dracula. The novels revolve around various murders that Wilde and his friends are trying to solve. Reference is made in the novels to the creation of some of Wilde's masterpieces like *The Picture of Dorian Gray* or *Lady Windermere's Fan*, but also to events in his life like his lecture tour in America or his incarceration at Reading Gaol.

Brandreth's series of novels is part of a tendency obvious in the past years when several narratives attempted to provide "an idiosyncratic version of Oscar's comings and goings" (Joris, 2012: 83). Peter Ackroyd's *The Last Testament of Oscar Wilde* (1983), Robert Reilly's *The God of Mirrors* (1986), Russel A. Brown's *Sherlock Holmes and the Mysterious Friend of Oscar Wilde* (1988), Rohase Piercy's *The Coward Does It with a Kiss* (1990), Clare Elfman's *The Case of the Pederast's Wife* (2000) are just some of the titles mentioned by Kirby Joris (2012).

As far as Gyles Brandreth is concerned, he himself confessed a life-long acquaintance and fascination with Oscar Wilde's life and works. At the same time, he has been equally fascinated with the Sherlock Holmes stories and has things in common with the other literary figure present in his *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders*, Robert Sherard.

For the first ten years of his life, Brandreth lived near Tite Street, where Oscar Wilde's residence was situated. The first nonfiction book he ever read was the first full account of the trials of Oscar Wilde published in 1948 by H. Montgomery Hyde, one of his father's colleagues. (cf. *An Interview with Gyles Brandreth*) When he was 13, he was given *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, which he read from cover to cover, relishing the language and learning by heart Wilde's *Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young*. He considers it the book that changed his life's path, inspiring his love of language, of poetry and of theatre and the seven novels he wrote. (cf. *'I'd serve Oscar Wilde my fish finger sandwich': 21 Questions with Gyles Brandreth*)

Moreover, Brandreth went to the same school as Cyril, the older of Wilde's two sons. The founder of the school, John Badley, was still alive when Brandreth was a boy and, as he had been a friend of Wilde's, he told Gyles about the writer.

When Brandreth was 10, his family moved to Baker Street, the London home of Sherlock Holmes.

Though the writer considers William Shakespeare his favourite author, he also stated that his favourite book when he was a teenager was Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. (cf. *'I'd serve Oscar Wilde my fish finger sandwich': 21 Questions with Gyles Brandreth*) As a boy, he read the Sherlock Holmes stories over and over again, and consequently, when he was 13, he wrote a play called *A Study in Sherlock*.

From an autobiography of Arthur Conan Doyle, *Memories and Adventures* (1924), read in the late 1990s, Brandreth found that he and Wilde had been friends. They met in 1889 at the Langham Hotel in Portland Place in London's West End, being brought together by J.M. Stoddart, an American publisher who was then in England commissioning material for *Lippincott's Magazine*. At that time Wilde was 35 and Conan Doyle 30. "The upshot of the evening was that Mr. Stoddart got to publish both Arthur Conan Doyle's second Sherlock Holmes story, *The Sign of Four*, and Oscar Wilde's novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and I was inspired to write the first of the Oscar Wilde Murder Mysteries.", confesses Brandreth. (*An Interview with Gyles Brandreth*)

As far as Sherard is concerned, Brandreth and Sherard went to the same Oxford College. In addition to that, "As young men we both went out of our way to 'collect' some of the great figures of the day." (*ibidem*) They are both Francophile, and Brandreth admits having been a reporter and a writer in Sherard's tradition.

He identifies *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *The Sign of Four* as the books that should be read by those who will wish to explore the writings of Oscar Wilde and Arthur Conan Doyle after reading his novel. He motivates his choice by the fact that these were the books they were writing in the period when the action of *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders* is set. (*cf. An Interview with Gyles Brandreth*) They are the main intertexts for his novel. To them, one can add Wilde's play *A Woman of No Importance*, Conan Doyle's novel *A Study in Scarlet*, and Agatha Christie's novels.

Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders and A Woman of No Importance

The title of Wilde's play *A Woman of No Importance* is brought to mind by the American title of Brandreth's novel, *A Death of No Importance*, and the observation that should be made here is that neither the death nor the woman mentioned in the titles are really unimportant. On the contrary. Even though both Billy Wood, the character who dies in Gyles Brandreth's novel, and Mrs. Arbuthnot, the woman denoted by the title of Wilde's play, are marginal figures in Victorian society, they become significant for other characters in the respective literary works, for the authors and for the readers.

Victorian society rejected both homosexuality and loose morals. The literature of the period entertained the idea that "transgressive sexuality nurtured criminality" (Ward, 2014: 4). The Victorians were obsessed with "fallen" women, who fell either while they were married or outside of marriage. While the crime of a fallen married woman was less violent, perhaps bigamy, the fallen unmarried woman tended to commit more dramatic crimes. Such women faced a life of prostitution leading frequently to violent death or the appearance of an unwanted child, which led to the temptation to commit child-murder. Another crime associated with transgressive sexuality was homosexuality. "Even the suspicion of homosexuality was enough to condemn a man not only in the public eye but also to his closest male friends", highlights Thais E. Morgan (1996: 153).

In spite of these features of Victorian society, both Brandreth and Wilde used as characters in their works Billy, a 16-year-old male prostitute, and, respectively, Mrs. Arbuthnot, an unmarried mother, accepted in society on account of the fact that she pretended to be a widow. Both of them assert their importance as individuals and as characters. Billy is loved dearly not only by his mother, but also by Aidan Fraser, his lover who embalms his body and continues to sleep near him even after his death, by Aston Uptorpe, the older man who is in love with him and who offers Oscar key evidence that helps him catch the murderer and by Oscar Wilde himself, who is fascinated with the boy's acting talent and who does his best to find out who murdered him.

In her turn, Mrs. Arbuthnot is also greatly loved by her son Gerald, admired by Lady Hunstanton who considers it an honour that the former woman has agreed to visit her, and by Hester Worlsey, a rich young American Puritan. The latter's admiration and support are quite paradoxical if we consider the opinion she voices in the second act of the play, that all women who have sinned should be punished. However, the two women are united by their feminist views. In the same conversation, Hester asserts that the men along whom the respective women have sinned should be punished too, and that English society is unjust to the fair sex. In her turn, the feminist Mrs. Arbuthnot definitely refuses to marry her son's father, in spite of Gerald's insistence. In this respect she finds herself supported by Miss Worlsey, who argues: "That would be real dishonour, the first you have ever known. That would be real disgrace: the first to touch you." (Fourth Act) The young lady offers to take Mrs. Arbuthnot away with her and when the latter refuses, she readily agrees to marry Gerald, in spite of the difference in their wealth and status.

In both literary works, the apparently unimportant individuals become important characters: Billy as the person whose death is at the core of the novel, fostering Oscar's investigating powers, and Rachel Arbuthnot as a role model, a strong woman, resourceful enough to find a way not just to survive in the hypocritical double standard society, but to be accepted and admired by the worthier of its members.

Oscar Wilde as a Sherlock Holmesian detective. Other detectives in *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders*: Aidan Fraser and Arthur Conan Doyle

As a detective investigating Billy's death, Oscar follows the lead of Arthur Conan Doyle's character Sherlock Holmes. As a matter of fact, he is not a stranger to Conan Doyle or to his literary creation. Also as a matter of fact, he is not the only character in the novel qualified to function as a detective. Besides Conan Doyle, whom one should expect to be familiar with the deduction method of his hero, there is Aidan Fraser, a Scotland Yard detective, who, together with Dr. Bell, Doyle's mentor and former professor at Edinburgh, served as a model for Sherlock. But as it also happens in the Sherlock Holmes works, it is not the professional detective that manages to solve the murder. And Doyle, though good at it and taking the lead from time to time, is not the actual investigator in Brandreth's work.

It is to Arthur Conan Doyle that Oscar talks about the discovery of Billy's dead body, and it is Arthur that asks him the first questions about the identity of the boy and his relationship to him, as well as about other elements relevant to the investigation, questions that Oscar, in fact, fails to answer satisfactorily. It is Conan Doyle that puts him on the murderer's track after he pretends to have seen some drops of blood on the wall of the room where Billy's body was allegedly found. It is also he that takes charge when Constance Wilde, Oscar's wife, gets Billy's embalmed head as a birthday present during her birthday party. He is very calm and organizes everything and everybody very efficiently. But in spite of his obvious qualities and of his obvious knowledge of crime and investigation techniques, as we have already pointed out, he is not Brandreth's Sherlock Holmes.

Aidan Fraser of Scotland Yard seems more qualified to assume this position. Not only that he is a professional detective and a very promising one, "the youngest of the twenty-two inspectors in 'the Met'" (i.e. the Metropolitan Police) (Brandreth, 2008: 47), but he is also acknowledged by Conan Doyle as one of his models for Sherlock. Moreover, Robert Sherard, the narrator of Brandreth's novel, considers Fraser similar in appearance to his notion of Sherlock. Let us see how he describes "Fraser-of-the Yard":

On the day that Oscar and I first met him, 1 September 1889, Fraser had just turned thirty-two. Despite his hooded, sunken eyes, he looked much younger than his years. He was clean-shaven, with clear-cut features, all proportionate, a complexion as white as chalk and a high forehead as smooth as alabaster. He wore his dark, near-black hair swept back, without a parting, and a touch longer than was the fashion. He was, by any account, extraordinarily striking: tall, slim, athletic, angular. (Brandreth, 2008: 46)

And this is how Doyle's narrator, Dr. Watson, sees Sherlock in the first novel featuring him, *A Study in Scarlet*:

His very person and appearance were such as to strike the attention of the most casual observer. In height he was rather over six feet, and so excessively lean that he seemed to be considerably taller. His eyes were sharp and piercing, save during those intervals of torpor to which I have alluded; and his thin, hawk-like nose gave his whole expression an air of alertness and decision. His chin, too, had the prominence and squareness which mark the man of determination. His hands were invariably blotted with ink and stained with chemicals, yet he was possessed of extraordinary delicacy of touch, as I frequently had occasion to observe when I watched him manipulating his fragile philosophical instruments. (Doyle, 2004: 10-11)

What the two have in common is the fact that they strike the attention of those noticing them. (Incidentally, so does Oscar.) And in spite of the different features noticed by the different narrators, they have certain common attributes: they are both tall, thin and angular, which gives them a similar general aspect.

Doyle sends Oscar to Fraser because they were best friends while they were both students at the University of Edinburgh, but Fraser fails to be the detective that Oscar needs. He refuses to take the writer seriously because the body disappeared soon after it was found and he considers that without a body there is no murder. Moreover, there is no trace of anything having actually happened at the address in Cowley Street where Billy was found, and none of his friends and nobody from his family reported him missing. With the police facing also the murders attributed to the person known as Jack the Ripper, Fraser claims he cannot do very much. He promises, however, to send somebody to examine the crime scene. He does not. Neither does he take Billy's mother to the morgue to identify her son's body, when it is finally found, claiming that in acting as he did, he took into consideration Oscar and Conan Doyle's opinion that the shock could kill her.

Besides, Fraser makes use of various strategies in order to divert Oscar's attention from the investigation of Billy's murder. First, he tells him of another ongoing investigation of the police involving a group of homosexuals and a male brothel. Fraser's mention of this affair is meant as a warning for the writer, since Billy was himself a male prostitute and the search for his body and his murderer might lead to unpleasant revelations and consequences. The group includes some acquaintances of Oscar's, but he claims he has nothing to do with it and has nothing to hide. Secondly, Fraser invites Oscar and Robert to come to Paris with him and his fiancée, to celebrate her birthday, in fact to offer him an alibi.

The Scotland Yard inspector decides to start investigating only after the appearance of Billy's head, but then he is so eager to do it that he gets mocked at by Oscar. The writer cannot avoid noticing the irony of the fact that the inspector wants to go immediately to the Albemarle club from which the box containing the head was sent, saying there is no time to lose, even though he did nothing in the four months that have passed since Oscar reported the murder. Besides, he no longer allows the writer to continue investigating, claiming that now it is police business. He pretty quickly arrests Edward O'Donnell, Billy's uncle and stepfather, for his murder, even if O'Donnell's wife,

who is far from loving him, offers him an alibi. Rather atypically for a clever and perceptive professional investigator, and one who is quite appreciated by his colleagues and superiors, he discards all pieces of evidence in favour of O'Donnell's innocence. He claims that Bellotti, Billy's pimp, said and accepted to testify that Billy's uncle was one of his clients and the person Billy was in love with. When Bellotti dies run over by the subway, he totally rejects the idea that he was killed.

Actually, not only that Fraser of Scotland Yard is not Gyles Brandreth's Sherlock Holmes, but he also proves to be one of the murderers in *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders*. He kills both Bellotti and O'Donnell, claiming an accident, respectively a suicide, thus preventing Oscar from talking to them and finding everything. The other killer in the novel, Billy's murderer, is Veronica, Fraser's fiancée. Jealous on Fraser's relationship with the young boy and on their love, Veronica kills Billy, then is helped by her fiancé to clean the crime scene. While Veronica is arrested, Fraser, at her suggestion, commits suicide.

That leaves us with the least likely option for the detective: Oscar Wilde himself. Though apparently the least qualified, as an imaginative writer, to play this role, it is he who becomes Brandreth's Sherlock Holmes. His imagination makes him unbelievable as the person who discovered the dead body – Conan Doyle thinks he imagined it. In spite of this, he makes a credible detective.

He knows both Arthur Conan Doyle, whom he met at Langham Hotel, where they had dinner with their publisher Mr. Stoddart, and who rapidly became Oscar's friend, and his creation, having read both *Micah Clarke* and *A Study in Scarlet* and being one of the first to read Doyle's latest work, *The Sign of Four*. He is quite familiar with Holmes's method of investigating, and, much like his model, he applies his method of deduction not only to the case, but also to his friends. This is, for instance, what he tells Robert about Conan Doyle:

'Arthur wants to get away at once. His train departs within the hour. He has his ticket and scant means to buy another. He is strapped for cash, Robert. Like you, money is a perpetual worry to him. Unlike you, he pays his bills on time. Besides, it is his wife's birthday and he is eager to hasten back to her, bearing gifts.' (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 13)

A little later, he explains to the admiring Doyle:

'Well, Arthur, I surmised that you might be short of funds last night because of the alacrity with which you accepted Stoddart's invitation to write for him and then enquired how soon you might be able to expect payment. This morning, when I arrived at the hotel, it was not yet eight o'clock and yet you were already at the desk, settling your account. I saw your check book. It was brand-new, but the cheque you were using was the last one in the book. As yesterday was the last day of the month, I thought to myself, The good doctor is a man who likes to pay his bills on time.' [...]

'But how did you know that today is my wife's birthday?'

'Your luggage includes a bouquet of fresh flowers with card attached, and a lady's hatbox. I do not yet know you well, Arthur, but I know you well enough to be certain these are not gifts intended for some passing fancy [...]

'And how do you know I have already purchased my railway ticket?' he asked.

'Because I see it sticking out of your left breast pocket!' Oscar replied." (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 14 - 15)

While here we have what Sherlock tells Dr. Watson:

'For example, observation shows me that you have been to the Wigmore Street Post-Office this morning, but deduction lets me know that when there you dispatched a telegram.'

'Right!' said I. [...]

‘Observation tells me that you have a little reddish mould adhering to your instep. Just opposite the Seymour Street Office they have taken up the pavement and thrown up some earth which lies in such a way that it is difficult to avoid treading in it in entering. The earth is of this peculiar reddish tint which is found, as far as I know, nowhere else in the neighbourhood. So much is observation. The rest is deduction. [...] I knew that you had not written a letter, since I sat opposite to you all morning. I see also in your open desk there that you have a sheet of stamps and a thick bundle of postcards. What could you go into the post-office for, then, but to send a wire?’ (Doyle, 2004: 112-113)

Similarities between *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders* and Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Sign of Four*: the detective’s friend as partner in the investigation and as (un)reliable narrator of the events, the detective’s relationship to the police, the detective’s “spies”. Agatha Christie’s *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* as an intertext for *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders*

Besides this, there are several other elements that Brandreth’s novel has in common with Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Sign of Four*. Firstly, in both novels the body is discovered by the detective, in a room, a discovery followed by the examination of the room by the detective. Secondly, in both novels, the detective is accompanied in his investigation by a friend, who then writes about the case. Thirdly, in both novels, this friend and partner falls in love with a woman. Fourthly, in both novels the detectives wish to solve the case independently of the police, who prevent rather than help them do it, though the end finds them “enjoying” the victory together. Fifthly, both detectives need the help of their “spies”.

Speaking of the friend and partner who joins the detective in the investigation, in *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders* this is Robert Sherard, while in *The Sign of Four* it is Dr. Watson. Oscar himself identifies Robert with Watson several times. When he decides to investigate the murder that is going to be ignored by the police, he tells his wife that he will involve Robert in an adventure in which he himself will be Sherlock Holmes, while Robert will be Dr. Watson. When he decides to take a break from it and go to Oxford to start working on *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, he lets Robert know he is his Dr. Watson. At a certain point he even calls his friend Watson. Sherard is definitely similar to Conan Doyle’s character in that he is several steps behind his partner and in constant need of being explained everything. They also have in common the role of recording the adventures and putting them together in a coherent form, that is the novels that we are reading. As narrators, however, they both have some issues. Brandreth’s book opens with a fragment *From the previously unpublished memoirs of Robert Sherard*, written in France, in 1939. Sherard tells about where and when he met and became friends with Wilde (Paris, 1883) and how, after Oscar’s death, he “determined to say all the things that I knew of him, to tell people what he really was, so that my story might help a little to a better understanding of a man of rare heart and rarer genius” (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 1-2). He writes this part of the memoir on August 31, 1939, when the world is on the verge of war. However, all he cares about is finishing his story before dying, although he knows there are blanks in his memory.

There is much that I have forgotten, much that I have tried to forget, but what you will read in the pages that follow I know to be true. In the years of our friendship, I kept a journal of our times together. I promised Oscar that for fifty years I would keep his secret. I have kept my word. And now the time has come when I can break my silence. At last, I can reveal all that I know of Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders. I must do it, for I have the record. I was there. I am the witness. (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 2)

Thus, we are given the image of a narrator that is both reliable and unreliable at the same time. On the one hand, he has the journal where he recorded all the events in the past. On the other hand, he admits his memory of them is not intact. Moreover, the fact that this fragment is indicated by the author to belong to Sherard's previously unpublished memoirs points to its being forged. Dr. Watson is a similar kind of narrator. He also has been taking notes of Holmes's activity and tells his friend he used them to come up with "a small brochure with the somewhat fantastic title of 'A Study in Scarlet'" (Doyle, *op. cit.*: 110), a brochure Sherlock "glanced over" and found not entirely satisfactory, as he considers:

Detection is, or ought to be, an exact science, and should be treated in the same cold and unemotional manner. You have attempted to tinge it with romanticism, which produces much the same effect as if you worked a love-story or an elopement into the fifth proposition of Euclid. (Doyle *op. cit.*: 110)

So the facts are there, but somewhat altered, we do not know how or how much.

On the other hand, there is one respect in which Robert is different from Watson and that concerns his love life. While Robert is a womanizer, married, but on the point of getting divorced, and always in love with one lady or another, Watson is single. Both fall in love during the investigation, Watson with the client, Mary Morstan, who in the end accepts him as "a husband in prospective" (Doyle, *op. cit.*: 204), Sherard with the culprit, the auburn-haired Veronica Sutherland, who actually uses his feelings for her to find what he and Oscar have discovered about the case. As a not so constant person, always falling in love and quickly forgetting his previous attachments, Robert Sherard is more similar with Hercule Poirot's partner, Captain Hastings, from Agatha Christie's novels. In *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, for instance, Hastings also falls in love with one of the suspects, a married woman, Mary Cavendish, but also with the auburn-haired Cynthia Murdoch, to whom he proposes. While neither of them is the murderer, Hastings's feelings for them, engendering the assumption that they are innocent and thus good confidants, are likely to endanger the result of Poirot's investigation.

In *The Sign of Four* the Scotland Yard detective that will take credit for solving the murder, though his only merits are that he allows Sherlock to take control and that he contributes a fast police-boat capable of catching the culprits' launch is inspector Athelney Jones. In *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders* it is Archy Gilmore, who only assists to the disclosure of the culprits and arrests Veronica. Though from different reasons, Jones is as keen as Fraser to arrest the wrong person and ignore the evidence that does not support his initial idea, but he comes to realise and to admit, probably much like Gilmore, that he has to give in to the superior deductive powers of the unofficial consulting detective. Gilmore, on the other hand, is offered a bargain by Oscar: the latter promises to prove Fraser and Veronica guilty if the latter hands his enemy Bertrand Ramier over to the French police.

As for the "spies" that help the two unofficial detectives, they are street children. In *The Sign of Four*, they are referred to by Sherlock as "the unofficial force, - the Baker Street irregulars". (Doyle, *op. cit.*: 161) In this particular case they are led by Wiggins, Holmes's "dirty little lieutenant" (*ibidem*: 159), who does not shy away when it comes to asking for what is due to him and his gang for their services. Holmes employs them on various errands and pays them. Now they are supposed to locate the steam launch called the Aurora, in which the suspects ran away, and Holmes is very confident that they will fulfil their mission. "If the launch is above water they will find her [...]. They can go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone. I expect to hear before evening that they

have spotted her.” (Doyle, *op. cit.*: 162) Even though the boys do not manage on this occasion, since the boat was modified a little and they cannot recognize it, they will be more successfully employed on other cases.

Oscar’s spies are referred to by him as his travelling eyes and ears, absolutely necessary to a man who professes that he does not like physical exercise. He also considers them among his most sincere friends. One of the best of these spies is, in our novel, Jimmy, a 12-13-year-old kid with a friendly face. Together with his friends, he is supposed to keep an eye on the main suspects – Edward O’Donnell and Gerard Bellotti – while Oscar himself is at Oxford. They do so, noticing that the two men mind their business as usual, thus enabling Oscar to make what he terms negative progress. He gives the kids money regularly and keeps them away from troubles. In exchange, they pay him various services: take messages, take flowers, find cabs. They are 20-30 children at most, in all London, and are deemed reliable because, though dirty, shabby, and leading a messy, insecure life, they are good, hard-working and honest.

Holmes’s unemotional attitude vs. Oscar’s warmth

Oscar knows that Arthur Conan Doyle put at Holmes’s disposal a group of such supporters, but he claims he was the first to have the idea of using the street children as his aides, and he counts on Robert to do him justice and make his precedence in this respect known to the world. What is different in the two men’s approaches to these children is that while Holmes has a professional relationship with them, not appreciating very much when they all show up in his house and preferring to deal only with Wiggins directly, Wilde treats them with more affection and views them as his friends.

As a matter of fact, this is the main difference between the two detectives. Holmes is cold and unemotional, rejecting feelings entirely, while Oscar is warm and sentimental. This is also obvious from the way in which they treat their friends. At the end of *The Sign of Four*, when Dr. Watson announces Holmes that he will marry Miss Morstan, his friend, though admitting that the future bride has incontestable qualities, cannot congratulate him on account of the fact that “love is an emotional thing, and whatever is emotional is opposed to that true cold reason which I place above all things” (*ibidem*: 204). Oscar, on the other hand, repeatedly tells Robert that “a man should always be in love” (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 324 – 325, 333) since “life without love is like a sunless garden when the flowers are dead. The consciousness of loving and being loved brings a warmth and richness to life that nothing else can bring” (*ibidem*: 324).

Brandreth’s “borrowings” from Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Several of Wilde’s witticisms appear in the novel, many of them being taken from his writings. However, Brandreth also admits some are lines of his own devising, at the same time expressing his wish that his readers would not be able to tell the difference. (*cf. An Interview with Gyles Brandreth*) We shall refer only to three quotations from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* that can also be found in *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders*. All three belong to Lord Henry Wotton in Wilde’s novel and appear in conversations between him, Dorian and Basil Hallward. The first quotation is:

“Every impulse that we strive to strangle broods in the mind, and poisons us. The body sins once, and has done with its sin, for action is a mode of purification. Nothing remains then but the recollection of a pleasure, or the luxury of a regret. The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. Resist it, and your soul grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself, with desire for what its monstrous laws have made monstrous and unlawful. It has been said that the great events of the world take place in the

brain. It is in the brain, and the brain only, that the great sins of the world take place also.' (Wilde, 1994: 25-26)

With Brandreth, it becomes:

'Is not the true and certain way to get rid of a temptation to yield to it? Resist it and your soul grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself. Every instinct that we strive to strangle broods on the mind and poisons us. The body sins once and has done with its sin, for action is a mode of purification...' (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 295)

The words are addressed by Oscar to Robert, when he tries to explain the intimate scene between John Gray and Aidan Fraser that they caught a glimpse of. Brandreth preserved two sentences from Wilde ("The body sins once, and has done with its sin, for action is a mode of purification." and "Resist it, and your soul grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself") and rephrased the others.

The second quotation is: " 'What a fuss people make about fidelity!' exclaimed Lord Henry. 'Why, even in love it is purely a question for physiology. It has nothing to do with our own will. Young men want to be faithful, and are not; old men want to be faithless, and cannot: that is all one can say.' " (Wilde, *op. cit.*: 38)

Here is what Brandreth makes of it: "What a ridiculous fuss is made of fidelity! Young men want to be faithful, and are not; old men want to be faithless, and cannot. That's all there is to it." (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 132) Again the words are addressed to Robert, who is advised to court Veronica, though he is in love with someone else, and to enjoy his youth while he still can. The contemporary author preserves the beginning and the end of Lord Henry's line, passivizing the first sentence, but keeping the last one unchanged.

Finally, we have some words addressed to Basil directly: "Basil, I can't allow you to smoke cigars. You must have a cigarette. A cigarette is the perfect type of a perfect pleasure. It is exquisite, and it leaves one unsatisfied. What more can one want?" (Wilde, *op. cit.*: 93-94) This time, in Brandreth's book, Oscar speaks to Robert and to his own wife Constance, about his own smoking habit, in the conversation in which he also communicates to the former that he wants to investigate Billy's death with his help: "A cigarette is the perfect type of perfect pleasure, is it not? It is exquisite and leaves one unsatisfied" (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 60) The words are almost unchanged.

In spite of the fact that Oscar's words addressed to Robert echo the words addressed by Lord Henry Wotton to Dorian Gray or to Basil Hallward in Dorian's presence, Oscar's relationship to Robert does not parallel any relationship in Wilde's novel. However, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* does serve as an intertext for Brandreth's novel in what concerns the characters as well. John Gray, Oscar's goddaughter and Billy himself are inspired from the Victorian novel.

John Gray shares with Dorian not only his surname, but also his physical appearance.

Dorian is seen by Basil as having "a simple and a beautiful nature" (Wilde, *op. cit.*: 21), while his physical description is offered to us not directly by Wilde, but through Lord Henry, who studies him with interest, since he fascinates Basil so much:

Yes, he was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his finely curved scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair. There was something in his face that made one trust him at once. All the candour of youth was there, as well as all youth's passionate purity. One felt that he had kept himself unspotted from the world. (Wilde, *op. cit.*: 23)

More or less the same features can be seen on John's face, as it is noticed by Robert, when the former brings a beaten Oscar to the latter's door: "His hair was blond and longer than it should have been. His eyes were blue and watchful. His skin was golden, his lips were pale, his high cheek-bones were dusted with freckles the colour of sand", in short "a young Adonis in a sailor-suit" (Brandreth, *op. cit.*: 139). Both are blond-haired and blue-eyed, the purity suggested by this being enhanced by the fact that Dorian is perceived by Henry as pure and candid, while John is described by Robert as being 23, but looking 15 at most, the younger age also likely to suggest purity and candour.

John's relationship with Oscar is reminiscent of Basil's relationship with Dorian, but also of Dorian's with Henry. He tells Oscar he is obsessed with the latter, and writes to him about the profound influence exerted on him by the writer, about how the latter dominates him, about how he is happy only when he is around Oscar and how he is jealous on anybody who talks to his idol. In the same way, Dorian dominates and inspires Basil, and Lord Henry influences and dominates Dorian. Robert is suspicious of John Gray because the latter appears in all key moments of the drama they live: he is among Oscar's guests when they receive Billy's embalmed head, he is in the right place at the right time when Oscar is beaten, he is on the train taking them to see Mrs Woods for the second time. But the writer rejects the idea of the young man's involvement, especially since he knows that John follows him out of admiration and even wants to solve the murder himself in order to prove his devotion. Brandreth's Gray may be homosexual, and thus deviant from the accepted morality of his epoch, but his homosexuality serves the society and Oscar, since, at his request, John tempts Fraser, who succumbs to the trap and is thus caught. Even though neither Dorian nor John is as pure and candid as he seems to be, the latter does not even come close to the darkness of the former. Neither is the influence exerted by Oscar on his younger friend so destructive as that exerted by Dorian on Basil (who ends up being killed by his muse) or as that exerted by Lord Henry on Dorian (who, under his "friend" 's spell, becomes more of a demon than of a human being).

Oscar's goddaughter, Odile, and Billy seem inspired from Wilde's character Sibyl Vane, the talented young actress Dorian falls in love with and then abandons because after she discovers life, she can no longer feign it on stage. Both Odile and Billy are gifted actors, and are tutored by Oscar, who teaches them all he can in order for them to succeed in life as artists. He seems to consider them and to love them as if they had been his younger siblings, the girl even getting his deceased sister's name as an artist name.

Conclusion

The analysis made on Gyles Brandreth's novel and on its intertexts has revealed both similarities and differences in what concerns the plot, the construction of the characters and their relationships, and the language. While the similarities are expected in such cases and connect *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders* with other detective stories (especially, but not only Conan Doyle's) and with Oscar Wilde's works, equally expected are the differences, which identify the novel under discussion as a literary work in its own right, worthy of its intertexts.

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THE NARRATIVE OF OTHERNESS: THE PLURALITY OF VOICES AS A MEANS OF DE/RECONSTRUCTING VIOLENCE IN IAN McEWAN'S "SATURDAY"

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***Abstract:** The primary intention of this paper is to dwell on the plurality of voices that populate the novel *Saturday*, published by Ian McEwan in 2005 as a means of deciphering the functional mechanisms of terrorist violence, a type of violence that has been present in the public consciousness and influenced it ever since the beginning of the 21st century. The article seeks to discover the way in which a British novelist understands and fictionalises violence perpetrated in the capital city of the country, London, and the effects it has on multiple types of characters.*

***Keywords:** Other(ness); violence; terror*

Introduction

In his famous and influential study, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, the cultural theorist Jean-François Lyotard stated that the postmodern work struggles continuously to identify a way to present the unrepresentable. There are some situations, Lyotard argued, that, by their very nature, cannot be conceived or articulated within the normal boundaries of reason and can hardly be assimilated within a culture (cf. Lyotard, 1995). History is punctuated with some events - he employs the Auschwitz situation to illustrate his point - whose nature refuses to be reduced to conventional understanding or conventional plots, that is to anything other than what they are: displays of unimaginable difficulty.

The task of presenting the unrepresentable is central to the works of literature designed to fictionalise a traumatic event as a way of annihilating the shocking potential comprised within such an event by endlessly replaying the trauma back and making sure that it belongs to the past. The main direction of research is represented here by Ian McEwan's novel *Saturday*, published in 2005, which is punctuated with references to the threatening and traumatising potentiality of terrorist violence and was created out of the need to respond to the uneasiness that characterizes the consciousness of twenty-first century citizens who were the witnesses of terrorist events that simply defied representation and understanding within the Western cultural imagination (the 9/11 attacks against America).

***Saturday* and Its Multiple Focus on Violence**

McEwan's *Saturday* does not contain direct representations of the violent acts proper. In fact, as compared to other novels belonging to the same genre (such as DeLillo's *Falling Man*), the intrusion of terrorist violence and terrorist identity is less poignant in *Saturday*, which revolves around a very small group of individuals living in post 9/11 Britain. The novelist's purpose was to follow closely a detailed day in the life of one distinct character, the distinguished London neurosurgeon Henry Perowne, but it should be noted that the meaning is much larger than the immediate one. The novel is punctuated with symbolic references that are essential when searching for the connections between this particular novel and the phenomenon of terrorist violence. Such a reference

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is introduced in the title of the novel and punctuated through meaningful reoccurrences throughout the text. To be more specific, the action of the novel is set on one single day (as in *Ulysses* or *Mrs. Dalloway*) which is the first weekend day (which means the first day away from work). However, the Saturday in question is not typical or everyday, but rather “heavy with significance in the capital [London], the centre of the political protest” (Guignery, 53); it is 15 February, 2003, the day on which hundreds of thousands would march in the capital of the United Kingdom in protest against the British authorities’ decision to support the USA in the ‘war on terror’. It is the anti-war demonstration that provides a constant political backdrop to the story (although it is always kept at some distance, whether on television or on the streets). If *Falling Man* contains interchapters which basically describe the unfolding of the terrorist attacks against America, in Saturday the plane crashes are not directly depicted and terrorism has somehow been substituted by the phenomenon of urban violence. However, Saturday faithfully reproduces an atmosphere of psychological distress and trauma, accompanied by the constant fear of experiencing the same kind of shocking experience.

True to form, McEwan makes ample use of metaphor and symbolism, reducing enormous global fluxes of events to the immediate level of personal experience. He represents the phenomenon of terrorism in its global dimension by projecting it against a personal reaction and interpretation of events and constructs his novel around what happens to Henry Perowne on that Saturday, but the true meaning of this novel should not be restricted to that. Saturday places the reader in the middle of one man’s life, in the middle of his family and professional life, and, what is very important to this endeavour, in the middle of the most significant period of our time (that interval between the 9/11 attacks of September 11, 2001, and the advent of the anti Iraq war); it is because of these aspects that this novel somehow manages to be about everything.

McEwan offers an interesting character study: a respectable man who leads a decent and respectable life. Henry Perowne is a good professional - “he’s renowned for his speed, his success rate and his list – he takes over three hundred cases a year” – Saturday, 2005: 24 -, he is happily married to Rosalind, a corporate lawyer for a newspaper constantly trying “to steer her newspaper away from the courts” and the daughter of John Grammaticus, a famous poet; not in the least, he is a proud father – he remarks with satisfaction that “someone has written somewhere that Theo Perowne plays like an angel” (Saturday, 2005: 26). On a personal level, Perowne’s Saturday is close to banality; from the remaining memories of the soon-to-be-closed workweek (it lingers into the weekend) to the usual Saturday routine activities (a squash game, a visit to his mother (who has almost entirely lost her mind)) as well as the errands of this particular day (shopping, cooking, going to hear Theo’s band rehearse), McEwan slowly and carefully describes what Perowne does and thinks, and what happens to and around him. His daughter, Daisy, is about to have her first book of poetry published, and is coming home for the first time in six months - the longest she has ever been away. His son, Theo, who abandoned school and has found fulfilment as a blues musician, still lives at home; just like Daisy, he gets along very well with his father. The final guest expected for dinner from France is Rosalind’s father, John Grammaticus - the one possibly disruptive presence, a strong personality who put his mark on the personalities of both grandchildren but who has not quite mended a rift with Daisy.

Perowne is not much of a reader, but his daughter has been constantly trying to educate him, making up reading lists for him. He still does not quite get it, but for the most part he is willing to try. But some of the books she suggests are too much for him to take: “the actual, not the magical should be the challenge. This reading list persuaded

Perowne that the supernatural was the recourse of an insufficient imagination, a dereliction of duty, a childish evasion of the difficulties and wonders of the real, of the demanding re-enactment of the plausible” (Saturday, 2005: 67).

The actual plot of the novel is launched by an accident; Perowne’s world is not disturbed by the peace demonstration, but by a particular incident on his way to his weekly squash game with his anaesthetist. Henry is held up at a street junction closed in preparation for the passage of the Anti Iraq War demonstration later that same day. Soon after passing through the junction, his car collides with another, a red BMW, (“a vehicle he associates for no very good reason with criminality, drug dealing”- Saturday, 2005: 83), causing less damage to his silver S500 Mercedes, but more damage to the red BMW. The two parties involved in the minor crash (Perowne on the one hand, Baxter and two other associates who look and behave like thugs, on the other) have different opinions on how they should settle the incident, and the scene escalates into one of inescapable violence. Aware of his inability to stand a chance if things really turned to physical violence, Perowne uses his expertise to present Baxter with information on his genetic, incurable disease. The man has Huntington’s Disease, a cruel, debilitating ailment; Baxter knows that (and knows what awaits him), and when he realises Perowne also knows, he backs off (and has his mates back off too). It is enough for the power balance to incline in Perowne’s favour and allow Perowne to escape - though the memory of what happened, and how he acted, haunts him for most of the rest of the day.

The rest of the day is devoted to familial obligations: a visit to his mother (in a suburban nursing home), attendance at Theo’s rehearsal at a blues club, and finally preparations for the dinner in honour of Daisy, who is coming home from Paris. Once all family is reunited, the celebrations are violently interrupted by Baxter and one of his friends. It seems that Perowne anticipated this new encounter throughout the day, when, at various moments, he thought he saw that same car following him around to his house. And now Baxter was in his house, probably trying to make Perowne pay with a knife at his wife’s neck for the humiliation he had provoked to him earlier. The final confrontation between the two men occurs inside the operating theatre, where Perowne is called in to operate on the young man. Having performed the surgery, Perowne comes home and ends his Saturday meditating on the events set in motion by the car crash earlier that day. He decides to drop the charges against Baxter and even make sure that he receives the proper treatment at the hospital, in spite of his wife’s declared hate for the aggressor.

There is a hint as to the substance of the novel from the very epigraph, which Ian McEwan extracts from Saul Bellow’s *Herzog*: “For instance? Well, for instance, what it means to be a man. In a city. In a century. In transition. In a mass. Transformed by science. Under organised power. Subject to tremendous controls. In a condition caused by mechanization. After the late failure of radical hopes. In a society that was no community and devalued the person. (...) You – you yourself are a child of this mass and a brother to all the rest. Or else an ingratiate, dilettante, idiot. There, Herzog, thought Herzog, since you ask for the instance, is the way it runs” (Saul Bellow, *Herzog*, 1964). The list describes the conditions (transition, mechanization, lack of values, organized power etc.) surrounding the idea of “what it means to be a man” in Herzog’s America, that is several decades earlier. It seems that these conditions still apply in the lives of McEwan’s characters, who inhabit a world whose paradigm has been fundamentally changed by more or less unexpected orders of things. The final statement of the fragment is meant to remind the readers that they are themselves products of these conditions: “you yourself are a child of this mass and a brother to all the rest”.

Saturday conveys the same message of continuity and recovering from the spiral of both political and personal violence. Two years after the event, Henry Perowne continues to feel at ease in the operating room and rather comforted by the “repetition” (Saturday, 2005: 40) of domestic rituals, which he performs in a patient and efficient manner. Personally, the main character refuses to consider that the world has fundamentally changed: “How foolishly apocalyptic those apprehensions seem by daylight, when the self-evident fact of the streets and the people on them are their own justification, their own insurance. The world has not fundamentally changed. Talk of a hundred-year crisis is indulgence. There are always crises, and Islamic terrorism will settle into place, alongside recent wars, climate change, the politics of international trade, land and fresh water shortages, hunger, poverty and the rest” (Saturday, 2005: 76-77). And the city, “grand achievement of the living and all the dead who’ve ever lived here (...) won’t easily allow itself to be destroyed” (Saturday, 2005: 77). Perowne sees terrorism as part of the picture, and people will have to adapt to its particulars in order to keep on performing their routine activities. Terrorism is not the sole problem of mankind; this conclusion is obvious from a short presentation of Perowne’s son reaction to the events. Even if Theo (a 16-year-old blues musician at the time of the attacks) was violently torn apart from this artistic world by the violence of the terrorist attacks (“the September attacks were Theo’s induction into international affairs, the moment he accepted that events beyond friends, home and the music scene had bearing on his existence” (Saturday, 2005: 31), 18 months after their occurrence he has the capacity to transform what seemed to be an impending catastrophe into a matter of a rather personal nature: when seeing the fire in the sky, the first idea that comes to his mind is a fellow band member who was supposed to travel by plane that night

The ‘Others’ in Ian McEwan’s *Saturday*

Ian McEwan’s *Saturday* populates both the pages of the novel and Henry Perowne’s life with several categories of ‘others’. The main point of reference, or the identity that serves as reference to all others, is Henry Perowne, a British citizen living in London and longing for a revival of the old values. The ‘other’ may be taken to be Rodney Browne, who comes from Guyana and is one of Henry’s registrars. The relationship between Henry and his registrar is strictly professional, therefore he seems to be only an extra in the story. Then, there is Andrea Chapman, a black character of Nigerian origin, who is one of Perowne’s patients, a teenager with a brain tumour. These are the racial others in *Saturday*, but their presence in the novel is somehow intended to describe some features of Perowne as a neurosurgeon, thus on a professional level rather than serving as ‘outsiders’ in Britain.

Baxter also fulfils the “role of an ‘other’ to which Perowne and England have to adapt” (Eckstein, 2008: 106). Baxter represents the ease with which the threatening other can “infiltrate the privileged world of the predominantly white middle class” (Tew, Mengham, 2006: 126); the true danger that is associated with Baxter comes from the domestic presence of people that come from different backgrounds. The relation between Perowne and Baxter serves as a means of underlining Perowne’s attitude towards people who are different: since Baxter and his friends come from a background that is different from his, Perowne does not manage “*to take the trio seriously*” (Saturday, 2005: 90), and humiliates Baxter by talking about his disease in front of other people. More than that, the neurosurgeon perceives Baxter through animalistic terms: “*He’s a fidgety, small-faced young man with thick eyebrows and dark brown hair razored close to the skull. The mouth is set bulbously, with the smoothly shaved shadow of a strong beard adding to the*

effect of a muzzle. The general simian air is compounded by sloping shoulders" (Saturday, 2005: 87-88). At the end of the novel, however, Perowne feels guilty that "he has done nothing, given nothing to Baxter who has so little that is not wrecked by his defective genes" (Saturday, 2005:236) and decides to give up the charges against him. Perowne takes up the road from small-mindedness to open-mindedness and his final attitude "advocates tolerance to the 'others' populating Britain" (Eckstein, 2008: 105).

There is another character that is actually a 'cultural other' and whose presence is extremely important to Perowne: Jay Strauss, Perowne's colleague and friend, who is an American. Perowne thinks in positive terms about Jay: "An American with the warmth and directness that no one else in this English hospital could muster" (Saturday, 2005: 9). Perowne is aware of the multicultural nature of British society, just as he is aware of the cosmopolitan character of the metropolis: "Now it has Greek, Turkish and Italian restaurants – the local sort that never get mentioned in the guides – with terraces where people eat in the summer" (Saturday, 2005: 76). "This is the fair embodiment of an inner city byway – diverse, self-confident, obscure" (Saturday, 2005:76). However diverse it may be, the city corresponds to Henry's expectations and the neurosurgeon is convinced that it has the capacity to protect itself against "the new enemy – well-organised, tentacular, full of hatred and focused zeal" (Saturday, 2005: 76). "The street is fine, and the city, grand achievement of the living and all the dead who've ever lived here is fine, too, and robust. It won't easily allow itself to be destroyed" (Saturday, 2005: 77).

In Saturday, the Self / Other interaction is activated and given further significances by the anti-war demonstration that serves as a background for the story. In concrete and historical terms, the day in question witnessed a coordinated flow of protests in 800 cities around the world against the imminent American invasion of Iraq. London sheltered the biggest demonstration in the city's history, with approximately 750,000 protesters according to police statistics. The novel follows this demonstration and includes some real-life details, even though its presence is somehow reduced to television reports or fugitive glimpses to those parts of the street. The first contact that takes place between Perowne and the protest march is (im)mediated by television coverage: "the news comes on as he's grinding the beans. (...) Then a reporter down among an early gathering of demonstrators by the Embankment. All this happiness on display is suspect. Everyone is thrilled to be together out on the streets – people are hugging themselves, it seems, as well as each other. If they think – and they could be right – that continued torture and summary executions, ethnic cleansing and occasional genocide are preferable to an invasion, they should be sombre in their view" (Saturday, 2004: 69-70). Later that day, everywhere he turns, the mass of marchers is also a presence - peaceful, yet their enormous size and potential threatening. The plane and the marchers - like the danger in Iraq, both Saddam Hussein's criminal rule and the violent solution that is being considered - are all kept at a distance: the world is close, but does not really intrude: "There, behind him on Gower Street, the march proper has begun. Thousands packed in a single dense column are making for Piccadilly, their banners angled forward heroically, as in a revolutionary poster. From their faces, hands and clothes they emanate the rich colour, almost like warmth, peculiar to compacted humanity. For dramatic effect, they're walking in silence to the funereal beat of the marching drums" (Saturday, 2005: 84).

The protest favours the demarcation of two types of discourses on the event that was taking place that precise Saturday, February 15th, 2003. Daisy and Henry Perowne have opposing points of view as far as the demonstration and the war on terror itself are concerned. Daisy summarises the political status of the problem by reference to the American presidency's decision to deal with the matter: "You know very well these

extremists, the Neo-cons, have taken over America. Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz. Iraq was always their pet project. Nine eleven was their big chance to talk Bush round” (Saturday, 2005: 190). Daisy’s attitude is fuelled by the conviction that, once caught in the spiral of violence, there is little chance to find one’s way back; violence generates even more violence, and this is the conclusion she transmits to her father: “And doesn’t it ever occur to you that in attacking Iraq we’re doing the very thing the New York bombers wanted us to do – lash out, make more enemies in Arab countries and radicalise Islam” (Saturday, 2005:191).

Henry does not share his daughter’s beliefs and he initially states his opinion that the military intervention in Iraq is a method of defending the contemporary technocratic society: “The genocide and torture, the mass graves, the security apparatus, the criminal totalitarian state – the iPod generation doesn’t want to know. Let nothing come between them and their ecstasy clubbing and cheap flights and reality TV. But it will, if we do nothing” (Saturday, 2005: 191). Radical Islam, Perowne states, hates the Westerners’ “freedom” (Saturday, 2005: 191) and democracy. But things are not as clear-cut as he claims in the fragment above. The truth is that Henry Perowne oscillates between the two conflicting positions activated by the anti-war demonstration. The reason for which he does not join the peace march is not necessarily connected to his supporting the war, but rather with the awareness of the fact that participating in the demonstration would express a more uncomplicated view of events than he actually holds. He looks, with hindsight, at the ideologies of the previous century: “Now we think we do see, how do things stand? After the ruinous experiments of the lately deceased century, after so much vile behaviour, so many deaths, a queasy agnosticism has settled around these matters of justice and redistributed wealth. No more big ideas. The world must improve, if at all, by tiny steps. People mostly take an existential view - having to sweep the streets for a living looks like simple bad luck. It’s not a visionary age. The streets need to be clean. Let the unlucky enlist” (Saturday, 2005: 74).

Things are as clear as crystal for an American in the novel, Jay Strauss, who openly welcomes the US initiative to engage in an anti Iraq war: “Iraq is a rotten state, a natural ally of terrorists, bound to cause mischief at some point and maw as well be taken out now while the US military is feeling perky after Afghanistan. And by taken out, he insists he means liberated and democratised” (Saturday, 2005: 100). The war is also supported by an Iraqi intellectual, who provides the reader with an insider’s knowledge of the matter. Miri Taleb had been subjected to a painful process of ‘raping’ (cf. Surdulescu 2006) his physical and moral integrity by the Iraqi regime for no known reason, other than his refusal to get involved in the political scene of the day and join the Ba’ath Party. Having survived the trauma and returned to the United Kingdom, Taleb relates what had happened to him in Iraq: “the torture was routine (...) Beatings, electrocution, anal rape, near-drowning, thrashing the soles of the feet. Everyone, from top officials to street sweepers, lived in a state of anxiety, constant fear” (Saturday, 2005: 64). Violence was nation-wide: “they were mostly very ordinary people, held for not showing a car licence plate, or because they got into an argument with a man who turned out to be a Party official, or because their children were coaxed at school into reporting their parents’ unappreciative remarks at the dinner table about Saddam. Or because they refused to join the Party during one of the many recruitment drives. Another common crime was to have a family member accused of deserting from the army” (Saturday, 2005: 63-64). The remembering of the physical violence he and many others had been subjected to makes him identify the mechanism that held Saddam in power with terror: “You see, it’s only terror that holds the nation together, the whole system runs on fear and no one

knows how to stop it” (Saturday, 2005: 64). The coming invasion may have positive consequences from the point of view of an Iraqi living in Britain: “Now the Americans are coming, perhaps for bad reasons. But Saddam and the Ba’athists will go. And then, my doctor friend, I will buy you a meal in a good Iraqi restaurant in London” (Saturday, 2005: 64).

As a consequence of being caught somewhere in the middle, Perowne is unable to form his own, decisive attitude toward the issue. McEwan tells us that the neurosurgeon “has had ambivalent or confused and shifting ideas about this coming invasion” (Saturday, 2005: 62), oscillating between moral condemnation of the Iraqis and peaceful resolution of the problem. It is this ambivalent attitude that spiritually paralysed so many individuals in the aftermath of violent actions perpetrated against humanity.

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NARRATIVE INTERTEXTUALITY IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S "FREE FALL"

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Abstract: *Free Fall* is a complex and metafictional novel that presents Samuel Mountjoy's life and evolution. William Golding's book also draws attention to the nature of fiction which offers the reader the possibility to analyse it as a postmodern novel, too, thus reminding us of some other literary creations.

Keywords: *recollection; existence; free will; myth; mystical*

William Golding's fourth novel, *Free Fall*, represents an interesting moral analysis upon the nature of human beings. In point of themes, use of symbols and forms of the fantastic, all of William Golding's novels seem to derive from one another.

"In his major novels, Golding deploys the various symbols, themes, and forms of the fantastic and carnivalesque in five main ways. These deployments move beyond a general or universal satirical function to undermine all human endeavours or actions. [...] Finally, they intensify a questioning of «truth-telling» in fiction that is so much part of the self-conscious and metafictional aspects of many of Golding's novels" (Crawford, 2002: 7).

Starting from R. Barthes' ideas that every text is an *intertext*, there can be identified the intertextual elements of William Golding's *Free Fall*. Most of the time, intertextuality includes character names, allusions to titles, imitation or reproduction of plots that are interspersed in the narrative and contribute to the construction of the novel.

In point of the title, *Free Fall* might give the impression that it re-enacts the mythical motif of the fall. In fact, it is a rather complex novel that deals with the concepts of freedom, choice, fall and the main character's quest for self-knowledge.

In Golding's novel, the mythical motif of the fall can be related to the transition that Samuel experiences when passing from childhood to adolescence and youth, an experience which is similar to the case of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, who passed from the state of innocent obedience to God to a state of guilty disobedience, Sammy's childhood representing the period of innocence, while his adolescence and youth the period of his loss of freedom. The hero is obsessed with the problem of losing his free will which makes the novel a reflection on the condition of human being since "Free will cannot be debated but only experienced, like a colour or the taste of potatoes" (Golding, 1988: 5).

Besides the general idea of the myth of fall, the hero's mystical experience in *Free Fall* resembles in certain ways the one described in *Pincher Martin*, but, although both of them feel enclosed within a guilty self, Samuel can ask for help. Young Mountjoy's struggle consists in his search for the mistakes that separated his body and soul, mistakes that might offer him the possibility to find the solution for a further happy existence by unifying the two worlds in which he lives, the moral world and the rational one.

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Free Fall interrelates with *Pincher Martin* in the sense that both of them use a similar narrative technique since the story, which is rather subjectively than chronologically ordered, is largely built out of the characters' recollections. However, the story presented in *Free Fall* is written in the form of a first-person narrative, not using the technical omniscient point of view.

"We are immediately aware of both similarities and differences. We recognize familiar portraits: Mary has become Beatrice; Sammy is a subtilized Pincher; the love-affair that was only one set of stills among many is now the central tragedy which challenges the understanding. The flashback world has, as it were, increased in scope and complexity so as to become the main picture" (Weekes, Gregor, 1968: 165).

Free Fall is the story of Samuel Mountjoy, an artist who lives in London and finds awareness in the symbolism that touches the real world, but especially the spiritual one.

"I have walked by stalls in the market-place where books, dog-eared and faded from their purple, have burst with a white hosanna. I have seen people crowned with a double crown, holding in either hand the crook and flail, the power and the glory. I have understood how the scar becomes a star, I have felt the flake of fire fall, miraculous and Pentecostal. My yesterdays walk with me. They keep step, they are grey faces that peer over my shoulder. I live on Paradise Hill, ten minutes from the station, thirty seconds from the shops and the local. Yet I am a burning amateur, torn by the irrational and incoherent, violently searching and self-condemned" (Golding, 1988: 1).

The first section of the story presents Samuel's childhood in the slum called Rotten Row, where he lived with his mother. The world of his childhood is filled with romance and beauty, but also with mystery and drama. After his mother's death, young Mountjoy is adopted by a neurotic person, Father Watts- Watt, and sent to the local grammar school where he meets his science teacher, Nick Shales, and Miss Pringle whom he is attracted to due to his artistic inclination. The boy's innocent world changes now. He can see its darker side marked by violence and tragedy.

The second section skips over his adolescent years to detail his romantic story, as a young art student, with Beatrice Ifor, a religious passive woman whom he desires so passionately, but whom he forsakes when he falls in love with Taffy whom he also marries. Samuel and his wife are members of the Communist Party.

The third section presents Sammy as a man, a prisoner in a German concentration camp, who is interrogated by doctor Halde, a Nazi doctor of psychology. The fourth section shifts back in time to Sammy as a schoolboy, describing the two teachers, Nick Shales and Miss Pringle, who played an important role in the development of his rational way of thinking. This part also presents his first meeting with Beatrice.

The final section returns to Sammy's post-war present, showing his visit to Beatrice and his last fruitless efforts to communicate with the two teachers, his "spiritual parents". The closing page of the novel shifts back in time to the moment when Samuel was still in the prison camp.

On the other hand, *Pincher Martin* is the story of a man who tries to avoid understanding something that has already happened. At first sight, the novel presents Pincher Martin, a naval officer, who struggles to survive on a rock in the North Atlantic, after the warship which he served on was destroyed. He is supposedly kept alive by his recollections. In fact, at the end of the novel, the reader finds out that the character has actually been dead since almost the start of the story which deals only with the few seconds prior to Martin's death.

The structure of the two novels is based on the series of flashbacks that the two characters experience. “*Free Fall* is just as static as *Pincher Martin*. On its last page we shall simply return to the first page with fuller comprehension; the pattern will have been fulfilled, not changed” (Weekes, Gregor, 1968:168).

For example, the fragment that describes the moment when Martin is about to drown can be compared to the one when Samuel is closed in a dark closet while he was imprisoned.

“When the air had gone with the shriek, water came in to fill its place, burning water, hard in the throat and mouth as stones that hurt. He hunched his body towards the place where air had been but now it was gone and there was nothing but black, chocking welter. His body let loose its panic and his mouth strained open till the hinges of his jaw hurt. Water thrust in, down, without mercy. Air came with it for a moment so that he fought in what might have been the right direction” (Golding, 1984:7).

“But I was walking, propelled not ungently from behind. Another was opened, for I heard the handle scrape. Hands pushed me and pressed down. I fell on my knees, head down, hands out protectively. I was kneeling on cold concrete and a door was shut roughly behind me. The key turned and feet went away.

How did I come to be so frightened of the dark?” (Golding, 1988: 117).

Sammy’s quest for the sense of existence reminds of Pincher Martin’s struggle for life. Both of them experience the timeless void: Pincher Martin on his rock, Samuel Mountjoy when, as a prisoner of war, is shut up in a small cell. While fighting to defeat the darkness of the closet in which young Mountjoy was imprisoned, his imagination goes beyond reality and he thinks that the ceiling of that torture space can descend and crush him at any moment. He also imagines that he might be attacked by a dead man, a monster or a snake. During this experience, Samuel Mountjoy gives up being rational, Golding presenting the intensity of man’s suffering and pain.

“Now more than the generalized dark, the centre of the cell boiled with shapes of conjecture. A well. Do you not feel that the floor of the cell slopes downward? You will begin to roll inward if you move, down to the well and the ant-lion at the bottom. If you are worn out with the fears of conjecture you will fall asleep and roll – We want information, not corpses.

[...] Will you, under the erected hair in the blindness, deduce without more effort the rigor, the body curled there like a frozen foetus? How long will you wait? Or will you stretch out your fingers and find our surprise curled there not eighteen inches from your own? It has a moustache of white swan’s feathers. You never touched his sharp nose then. Touch his nose now. All those dark roads of grue were unnecessary. The test is here” (Golding, 1988: 133).

The scene of Sammy’s imprisonment in the small cell is also similar to the one that George Orwell presents in his novel, *Ninety Eighty Four*, when Winston is captive in the Ministry of Love and taken to Room 101 where he has to face the worst thing in the world.

“The cage was nearer; it was closing in. Winston heard a succession of shrill cries which appeared to be occurring in the air above his head. But he fought furiously against his panic. To think, to think, even with a split second left—to think was the only hope. Suddenly the foul musty odour of the brutes struck his nostrils. There was a violent convulsion of nausea inside him, and he almost lost consciousness. Everything had gone black. For an instant he was insane, a screaming animal” (Orwell, 1992: 361). However, the difference between Winston and Samuel is the fact that Orwell’s character experiences real facts, while Golding’s hero only imagines.

There is another similarity in point of the characters' evolution. Both of them interact with a sort of torturer, in *Ninety Eighty Four*, Winston meets O'Brien, while in *Free Fall* Sammy discusses with Dr. Halde. After the physical and mental torture, both of them are set free, but also deeply changed.

"Therefore, when the commandant let me out of the darkness he came late and as a second string, giving me the liberty of the camp when perhaps I no longer needed it. I walked between huts, a man resurrected but not by him. I saw the huts as one who had little to do with them, was indifferent to them and the temporal succession of days that they implied. So, they shone with the innocent light of their own created nature. (...) Huge tears were dropping from my face into dust; and this dust was a universe of brilliant and fantastic crystals, that miracles instantly supported in their being. I looked up beyond the huts and the wire, I raised my dead eyes, desiring nothing, accepting all things and giving all created things away" (Golding, 1988: 141).

"The tears welled up in his eyes. A passing waiter noticed that his glass was empty and came back with the gin bottle. He took up his glass and sniffed at it. The stuff grew not less but more horrible with every mouthful he drank. But it had become the element he swam in. It was his life, his death, and his resurrection. It was gin that sank him into stupor every night, and gin that revived him every morning" (Orwell, 1992: 371).

The subject of *Free Fall* consists in the multiple interpretations that the word *existence* has in Samuel Mountjoy's self-discovery of the past and of his transcendence. "The most crucial fact about existence is that it emerges, that is, it is always developing in time, and is never to be defined at static points" (May, 1958: 66).

Sammy Mountjoy is the hero of his own existence that is also related to the nature of his love for Beatrice Ifor and his childhood memories in Rotten Row. Golding admitted that in *Free Fall* he wanted to show "the pattern lessness of life before we impose one on it" (Hodson, 1966: 72).

Therefore, the hero's goal is to find the perfect pattern for his existence: "How did I lose my freedom? I must go back and tell the story over. It is a curious story, not so much in the external events which are common enough, but in the way it presents itself to me, the only teller. [...] I have hung all the systems on the wall like a row of useless hats. They do not fit. They come in from the outside, they are suggested patterns, some dull and some of great beauty. But I have lived enough of my life to require a pattern that fits over everything I know; and where shall I find that?" (Golding, 1988: 5-6)

The pattern that Golding follows in *Free Fall* is the one of recurring events. Through the novel Sammy keeps questioning himself: *Is it here?*

"Is this the point I am looking for?

No.

Not here." (Golding, 1988: 41)

This pattern of interrogation gives structure to the narrative as the novel presents the hero's interview with Dr. Halde, his discussion with Father Watt- Watts after having spitted on the altar, Miss Pringle's interrogation related to his interpretation of the Bible, Dr. Enticott's questions at the asylum about Beatrice's breakdown.

The same technique that involves the use of questions is to be seen in Sammy's relationship with Beatrice, too, since he permanently asks her about everything so that he can dominate the girl. The surprising question *What is it like to be you?* that Mountjoy addresses to Beatrice is also the key to his personal inquiry. Beatrice's repeated answer, *maybe*, is quite provocative for Samuel and his quest for innocence and freedom.

"I'm trying to find out about you. After all, if we're going to spend our lives together- where are you? What are you? What is it like to be you?"

Her arms would shake- those arms that bent in at the elbows, were so delicate they seemed for receiving only- her breasts and her face would push against me, be hidden.

Impatient and angry. Continue the catechism.

Aren't you human, then? Aren't you a person at all?

And with shudders of her wrists and shaking of the long, fair hair she would whisper against me:

Maybe." (Golding, 1988: 93).

Samuel's search for his mistakes mostly refers to the relationship that he had with Beatrice, the girl whom he considered a thing to be possessed and abandoned. Young Mountjoy follows the general pattern of Golding's characters and can neither be good nor bad.

However, William Golding's novels do not only intertwined with each other in point of structure, characters, themes, symbols, but they are also interrelated to some other literary creations.

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PLURALITÉ DES VOIX DANS LES ROMANS POUR LA JEUNESSE « L'ŒIL DU LOUP » DE DANIEL PENNAC

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Abstract: A very talented author, enthusiastic defender of the pleasure of reading, Daniel Pennac has enjoyed success since the 1980s with the saga of the Malaussène family, the last volume of which has just been published. In June 2023, the French Academy awarded him its Grand Prix for Literature for all of his work. He is also known for his novels for young people, his autobiographical novels, comics, children's albums and plays. His favorite themes are childhood, social non-conformity, reflection and self-knowledge, education and inequalities. The passionate reader is fully satisfied with the situational comedy, the stylistic discoveries, the play on words and the colloquial, often slang language of its atypical and very endearing characters. In this article, we analyze the plurality of voices in the youth novel *The Eye of the Wolf* which, together, create a unique and unrepeatably work.

Keywords: Daniel Pennac; young adult novels; plurality of voices

Introduction

Daniel Pennac est l'un des écrivains français contemporains les plus appréciés qui s'est essayé à tous les domaines : essais, livres pour enfants, polars, romans, théâtre, scénario de film et, dans tous, remportant de nombreux prix et un grand succès au public. Né en 1944 à Casablanca au Maroc, dans une famille d'origine corse et provençale, le futur écrivain accompagne son père, ancien polytechnique devenu militaire de carrière et sa famille à travers différentes garnisons, de l'Afrique à l'Indochine, découvrant avec fascination des espaces complètement différents de la France dont on lui parlait souvent, sans le savoir. Dans une large mesure, cette influence d'un autre continent et d'autres cultures et civilisations joue plus tard un rôle décisif dans le choix des thèmes et du discours de ses livres. Il commence à lire sous l'influence de son père, qui, malgré son parcours scolaire difficile le soutient et le motive. Ainsi, le petit Daniel passe de la poésie à la prose et à l'écriture d'essais : « A l'époque, lire n'était pas l'absurde prouesse d'aujourd'hui. Considérée comme une perte de temps, réputée nuisible au travail scolaire, la lecture des romans nous était interdite pendant les heures d'étude. D'où ma vocation de lecteur clandestin (...). En lisant, je me suis physiquement installé dans un bonheur qui dure toujours ». (Pennac, 2007 : 33)

Comme le métier le plus naturel et le plus facile lui paraît être celui de professeur de langue française, Pennac fait ses études universitaires à Nice et commence à enseigner depuis la fin des années 60. En parallèle, il commence à écrire, d'abord pour lui-même, puis de plus en plus tenté par l'idée d'éditer, il débute en 1973 avec un pamphlet intitulé *A qui sert l'armée ?*, adoptant le pseudonyme de Pennac, sous lequel il devient un des auteurs les plus vendus, populaires et traduits du français contemporain.

Ainsi, en 1985, Gallimard publie un roman surprenant, *Au bonheur des ogres*, qui inaugure la saga consacrée au clan Malaussène et qui lui apporte une véritable consécration par la combinaison inspirée de l'humour et de la chronique familiale, souvent teintée d'éléments burlesques et comiques. Il enchaîne les années suivantes avec d'autres romans comme *La fée carabine* (1987), *La petite vendeuse de prose* (1989),

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Messieurs les enfants (1997), *Aux fruits de la passion* (1999) ou *Le dictateur et le hamac* (2003), succès critiques et surtout publics, traduits dans plusieurs langues.

En 2023, la tribu Malaussène fait une dernière apparition avec *Le Cas Malaussène 2 : terminus Malaussène*. Ce roman fait preuve de l'impact significatif que cette série de livres a eu dans les bibliothèques de France, comme en témoigne l'enthousiasme durable qu'elle continue à susciter. Une telle ferveur souligne le talent indéniable de Daniel Pennac, qui tisse des thèmes contemporains dans ses intrigues complexes : la violence, la tromperie, la justice, et l'inégalité, renforçant l'idée que le clan Malaussène peut transcender les simples produits de son imaginaire.

Écrivain pour la jeunesse

Daniel Pennac marque le paysage littéraire de plusieurs générations. Il écrit des romans, des nouvelles, des essais et des livres pour enfants qui connaissent tous un grand succès. Sa plume est à la fois poétique et réaliste, il sait créer des histoires captivantes qui parlent de la vie de tous les jours tout en explorant des thèmes universels. Les personnages de ses romans sont des gens ordinaires qui se battent pour leur bonheur, leur dignité et leur liberté.

L'écrivain est notamment connu pour ses romans pour adolescents, salués par la critique pour leur style narratif original et leur profondeur thématique. Il aborde des sujets tels que l'éducation, l'identité, la responsabilité et la tolérance dans ses histoires, et il le fait d'une manière qui est à la fois accessible et profonde.

En 1982, il se dédie à des ouvrages jeunesse avec *Cabot-Caboche* en 1982 et *L'œil du loup* en 1984 et *Le grand Rex* en 1986, tout en poursuivant son métier de professeur. Confirmé dans l'écriture de livres pour enfants, l'auteur poursuit sa lancée de livres à succès avec la série de romans de fiction réaliste pour enfants *Les aventures de Kamo*, parue en 1993 chez Gallimard-Jeunesse, mettant en scène des héros proches de l'univers enfantin, préoccupés par l'école et l'amitié : *Kamo, l'agence Babel, Kamo et moi, L'évasion de Kamo et Kamo, l'idée du siècle*. Le romancier, lui-même illustrateur, n'hésite même pas à faire appel à d'autres illustrateurs pour ses projets comme Jean-Philippe Chabot pour la série *Kamo* ou Tardi pour son conte de Noël *Le sens de la huppelande*. « Kamo, avoue-t-il, c'est l'école métamorphosée en rêve d'école, ou en école de rêve, au choix. »

En 2012, l'auteur publie *Le roman d'Ernest et Célestine*, l'histoire d'un ours et d'une souris, unis par leurs aspirations communes de devenir des artistes. Lors de leur rencontre fortuite, ils forment un lien non conventionnel, leur amitié s'épanouissant au milieu du scepticisme et de la désapprobation de leur entourage.

À la fois hommage et véritable désacralisation de la lecture, *Comme un roman* paraît en 1992. L'auteur y liste les droits imprescriptibles du lecteur, tels que le droit de sauter des pages, de ne pas finir le livre ou encore de lire n'importe où. Dans son essai, Pennac offre un hymne à la lecture tout en la désacralisant. Dans ce véritable essai de pédagogie active, il énonce « Les droits imprescriptibles du lecteur », comme une invitation à revoir les exigences et recommandations de l'institution éducative. Dans ce manifeste, l'auteur se fait le chantre de la lecture à voix-haute. Ses écrits pleins d'imagination sans retenue, privilégient l'humour et présagent sur l'enfance et l'éducation.

Véritable anticonformiste, Daniel Pennac mêle sans peur son parcours d'élève médiocre à son parcours professionnel, rappelant à la société que la lecture, comme l'amour, a le pouvoir de prolonger la vie. En 2007, *Chagrin d'école*, roman autobiographique captivant, reçoit le prestigieux prix Renaudot. L'écriture de Pennac est

remarquable, mêlant humour et émotion alors qu'il dépeint avec habileté les émotions et les contemplations qui ont façonné son remarquable voyage. Le roman rend compte avec authenticité des difficultés auxquelles sont confrontés les enfants en difficulté, tout en proposant des solutions pratiques pour les aider à surmonter les obstacles. Ce livre constitue une réflexion stimulante pour les professeurs, les parents et les élèves. Il met l'accent sur l'impact profond que l'attitude et les paroles d'un adulte peuvent avoir sur la réussite d'un enfant, favorisant la conviction que même dans les moments les plus sombres, l'espoir est toujours présent. C'est un puissant témoignage de persévérance, d'optimisme et de détermination.

L'œil du loup

Publié en 1984 aux éditions Nathan, *L'œil du loup* est un roman pour la jeunesse, de la veine fantastique, un conte philosophique à la manière du Petit Prince et de son Renard apprivoisé, un don d'amitié, d'empathie et d'acceptation de l'autre, qui se concentre sur le partage d'expériences et de vécus riches en leçons de vie. Pennac manipule habilement les distances géographiques, les climats extrêmes et les paysages à couper le souffle pour tisser les récits de ses deux protagonistes, Loup Bleu, qui a « la sagesse, comme un vieux loup plein de cicatrices » (Pennac, 1994 : 15) et Afrique N'Bia, un jeune garçon qui « sait bien qu'un nom ne vaut rien dire sans son histoire (...) comme un loup dans une zoo : rien qu'une bête parmi les autres si on ne connaît pas l'histoire de sa vie ». (Pennac, 1994 : 34)

Dans l'enceinte d'un zoo, l'histoire commence par le partage d'un regard profond. Le loup, qui arpente sans cesse les limites de sa cage, se retrouve perturbé par la présence inébranlable d'un enfant africain de l'autre côté de la clôture. Que pouvait bien lui demander cet enfant ? Contrairement aux autres enfants de son âge, les yeux de l'enfant suivent méticuleusement chaque mouvement du loup. Le loup, hanté par la perte de son compagnon et n'ayant qu'un seul œil, ne peut qu'apercevoir le garçon alors qu'il traverse son enclos. Lorsqu'il se tourne dans la direction opposée, l'enfant n'est plus dans son champ de vision. Le loup se convainc que le jeune garçon va bientôt se fatiguer et partir, mais à sa grande surprise, il reste immobile sous son regard inébranlable. Le loup, qui avait juré de ne pas prêter attention à la présence des humains, se retrouve cette fois incapable de résister. Jour après jour, l'enfant revient et la bête se laisse. Finalement, le loup s'approche de la clôture et s'assoit en face du garçon. Ils croisent leurs yeux et cette connexion, née de leur regard commun, leur permet de communiquer en silence, d'échanger leurs histoires, deux vies pleines d'épreuves, dans des lieux si lointains du monde, d'Alaska et d'Afrique, convergeant dans les jardins botaniques de Paris.

L'histoire témoigne de leur rencontre et de l'entrelacement de leurs histoires de vie, aboutissant à un roman poignant. À la base, le récit explore avec tendresse l'union de deux âmes isolées, alors que leur amitié s'épanouit des cendres de la méfiance et des dissemblances, vers une compréhension, une confiance et un bonheur ultimes partagés. Leurs expériences distinctes convergent, unies par un chemin commun marqué par la violence qui a brisé leurs vies et leurs familles. Pourtant, alors qu'ils parcourent le chemin ardu de la fuite et de l'exil forcé, une lueur d'espoir pour un nouveau départ émerge à l'horizon. À travers le regard perçant du Loup Bleu, les lecteurs sont transportés dans les paysages majestueux de l'Alaska, où abondent les panoramas enneigés et la faune sauvage. Au sein de sa meute, il prospère, jusqu'au jour fatidique où les humains envahissent son monde.

À l'inverse, l'enfant, Afrique, révèle sa propre histoire à travers ses yeux, souffrant à cause de la guerre et de la beauté austère des dunes du désert et des plaines de

la savane. Privé de sa famille, il se lance dans un voyage nomade à travers « l’Afrique jaune », « l’Afrique grise » et « l’Afrique verte » et découvre sa propre manière de résister : « raconter des histoires : les histoires qui font rêver » (Pennac, 1994 : 36). Dans ses histoires, on entend la voix de tout un continent, accablé par la pauvreté, la guerre, la souffrance ou l’injustice mais, en même temps, berceau de l’humanité, de la diversité, et de la tradition, « l’Afrique Jaune, le Sahara, l’Afrique du sable, du soleil, de la solitude, des scorpions et du silence » (Pennac, 1994 : 40). Les lecteurs sont transportés dans des pays lointains, où le pouvoir de l’amitié et la résilience de l’esprit humain prennent vie dans les moindres détails.

Avec un soin méticuleux, Pennac tisse un lien attachant entre ses personnages. Sans prononcer un seul mot, leur connexion silencieuse dévoile peu à peu la profondeur de leurs souvenirs. Dans cette œuvre intemporelle, les échos de la guerre et la menace que l’humanité fait peser sur la nature sont explorées d’une manière qui résonne profondément avec notre réalité actuelle. L’arrivée des réfugiés, souvent considérée comme une entité abstraite et intimidante, prend un visage et un récit humain dans ce roman, modifiant finalement notre perspective sur leurs expériences. Le talent de Pennac en tant que conteur et poète transparait dans son écriture, imprégnée d’espoir, d’humanité et d’un sentiment dominant de gaieté qui triomphe de tout élément dramatique. À travers le protagoniste, un enfant qui puise dans sa vie tumultueuse pour développer un talent de narrateur remarquable, l’auteur transmet la signification profonde de ces récits, qui nous transportent dans un monde onirique où les histoires comblent le fossé entre les individus et les espèces, combattant le vide de leur solitude. Alors que l’aube se lève et que les personnages se séparent, c’est comme s’ils étaient connectés spirituellement, unis à jamais par le pouvoir de la narration.

Du point de vue de la technique narrative, un narrateur omniscient non identifié assume le témoignage des événements qui se déroulent entre le loup et l’enfant. Le narrateur s’engage activement en proposant de nombreux jugements et, dans le premier chapitre, plonge dans les pensées du loup et nous fait connaître sa personnalité : « Celui-là n’est pas d’un naturel bavard. Plutôt sérieux. Vaguement triste, même. Ses frères le trouvent ennuyeux. Pourtant, quand il parle – c’est rare – tout le monde l’écoute. » (Pennac, 1994 : 15). Des narrateurs secondaires, incarnés par le loup et le jeune garçon, interviennent régulièrement, leur voix amplifiée par le narrateur principal. Ces narrateurs variés offrent des perspectives divergentes, servant de narrateurs internes, imprégnant ainsi l’expérience de lecture de complexité et d’enrichissement.

Les dialogues jouent un rôle crucial dans les œuvres de Pennac : ses personnages expliquent leurs choix ou leurs attitudes, discutent, échangent des informations car, ainsi, ils font avancer l’action ou introduire de nouvelles scènes. Le dialogue devient une autre façon pour le narrateur de continuer son histoire. Grâce à l’utilisation de la ponctuation, le lecteur peut expérimenter une certaine spontanéité qui vise à compenser l’absence d’intonation. De plus, les dialogues visent à transmettre les émotions des personnages. D’une part, il est important de reconnaître que ce qui est dit dans le texte est fictif, l’auteur s’efforce de créer un effet authentique. Dans les conversations réelles, ce ne sont pas seulement les mots qui comptent; la manière dont ils sont prononcés, y compris l’intonation et les gestes, jouent également un rôle important. Malheureusement, ces éléments non verbaux ne peuvent être entièrement reproduits par écrit. Cependant, Daniel Pennac reconnaît ces limites mais refuse de se laisser vaincre : « M’agace, celui-là... (...) Qu’est-ce qu’il me veut ? (...) N’a jamais vu de loup, ou quoi ? Travaille pas ? Pas d’école ? Pas d’amis ? Pas de parents ? Ou quoi ? (...) Incroyable ! (...) D’accord. D’accord ! Tu l’auras voulu ! » (Pennac, 1994 : 10)

Conclusions

A l'ère moderne, les histoires pour enfants transcendent les limites de la page imprimée et étendent leur influence aux domaines du cinéma, de la télévision et même des jeux interactifs. Essentiellement, ce qui n'était autrefois qu'une simple source de divertissement devient un vaste univers, très recherché. En 2023, *L'œil du loup* reconferme sa valeur universelle étant adapté en BD par Mathieu Sapin aux Editions Nathan. Le roman connaît aussi des adaptations télévisées, théâtrales et musicales.

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TECHNIQUES DE RÉÉCRITURE DE LA FABLE DANS LES MAGAZINES JEUNESSE

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Abstract: *This paper aims to analyse the parallels between the famous fable *The Cricket and the Ant* written by Jean de La Fontaine in 1668 and a prose rewrite by writer Pascal Brissy for a 2008 issue of *Histoires pour les petits*. After a brief presentation of the concept of rewriting and its specific procedures, we will identify the common elements and differences between the two texts at several levels of analysis (literary form, characters, enunciative system, thematic, ethical message, figures of speech, spatial and temporal references).*

Keywords: *rewriting; fable; children's magazines*

Préambule

« Tout texte porte la marque d'un héritage culturel. »
(Dauvin, 2013 : 264)

Notre propos consiste à examiner l'héritage de Jean de La Fontaine dans la presse magazine de nos jours et, plus concrètement, à relever les indices intertextuels d'un récit – Dame Cigale et les fourmis – qui revisite la célèbre fable La Cigale et la Fourmi et que Pascal Brissy a fait paraître en 2008 dans la revue *Histoires pour les petits*.

Nous allons retracer tout d'abord les aspects théoriques du concept de « réécriture » (définition, formes et procédés), pour étudier, par la suite, les différents rapports de coprésence ou de dérivation qui s'établissent entre les deux textes soumis à l'analyse. Cette illustration pratique nous permettra de dégager les points communs et, en égale mesure, de préciser les points originaux qui distinguent la variation (le texte réécrit) de son modèle de départ.

1. Enjeux socio-culturels de la réécriture dans la littérature de jeunesse

Les réécritures littéraires procèdent toujours d'un texte référentiel, pris comme modèle, et sont définies comme « un phénomène de déclinaison né de l'adaptation de ces architectures premières à un contexte énonciatif modifié par le changement de période historique » (*Séquence 8 : 5*). Par les phénomènes scripturaux mis en œuvre, la pratique de la réécriture assure la variété des textes littéraires et permet à tout auteur de transformer la tradition dans un champ immense d'expérience et d'innovation. Le renvoi à un texte de second degré, que le lecteur doit déchiffrer pour en sentir la saveur, se réalise le plus souvent par des jeux avec tout un arsenal d'outils littéraires, dont les plus importants portent sur les formes littéraires, les thèmes, les lexiques et les registres linguistiques.

Les critiques littéraires considèrent la réécriture comme une version du texte source (qu'ils nomment « hypotexte ») vue à la fois comme « reprise et variation de ce texte » (*ibidem* : 56) et qui prend des formes diverses, dont les plus importantes sont :

le travail de réécriture de l'écrivain sur ses propres textes (corrections, variantes...), l'insertion de texte (citations, plagiat, allusions), l'imitation (pastiche, imitations d'écrivains, d'époques ou de mouvements littéraires, de discours), la transformation de textes par transposition (changement de genre, de registre, ou de point de vue) ou par la parodie. (*ibidem*)

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À partir du lien qui s'établit entre l'œuvre source et le texte qui en dérive, les critiques littéraires font la distinction entre les notions d'« intertextualité » et d'« hypertextualité ». Ils considèrent que l'intertextualité consiste dans l'inclusion du texte modèle dans sa réécriture, tandis que l'hypertextualité repose sur un rapport de dérivation entre les deux créations. En outre, ils distinguent une intertextualité « explicite et directe » – représentée par la citation, la traduction, la référence et l'interprétation – et une intertextualité « implicite et indirecte », constituée par l'allusion et le plagiat (Darbeau, Bernard, 2013 : 197). En ce qui concerne l'hypertextualité, les critiques parlent de « l'absence du texte source dans la réécriture », ayant comme résultat un objet plus ou moins indépendant, qui s'éloigne de son modèle soit par amplification / expansion, soit, au contraire, par réduction / élimination (*ibidem* : 198). L'auteur de l'hypertexte peut développer un épisode du texte pris comme référence pour lui donner une importance qu'il n'avait pas dans le texte de départ, tout comme il peut décider d'éliminer du texte source quelques épisodes qu'il considère sans intérêt ou sans valeur. De même, il peut transformer un genre littéraire dans un autre par le procédé de l'adaptation ou de la transposition ou il peut réécrire le texte source en mimant son style, par le procédé de l'imitation, de la parodie ou du pastiche.

C'est dans les histoires destinées aux enfants et aux adolescents que ces techniques littéraires sont de plus en plus valorisées. Les écrits de la littérature pour la jeunesse transgressent ainsi les limites du champ paralittéraire dans lesquels ils sont habituellement intégrés et, aux dires de Lucie Choquette, ils sont désormais « légitimés non seulement par les acteurs de leur propre sphère mais aussi par ceux de la sphère lettrée » (Lucie Choquette, *apud* Pouliot, 2007 :72). À son tour, Suzanne Pouliot reprend l'idée de « l'ancrage de ces œuvres dans le corpus universel » et dresse la liste des indices les plus couramment exploités dans la réécriture d'une œuvre littéraire, à savoir :

la présence d'un texte autre par des codes typographiques (caractères italiques ou guillemets, lorsqu'il s'agit de citations), par des traits sémantiques (titre ou nom de l'auteur), par la mise en évidence d'un texte en retrait (lorsqu'un poème est cité), en faisant intervenir dans le texte une agrammaticalité, un sentiment de discontinuité ou un emprunt qui se manifeste en un terme souvent connu. (*ibidem* :73)

Quelles que soient les marques de filiation entre le texte source et sa réécriture, la culture classique réussit à se perpétuer de siècle en siècle grâce à ce riche ensemble de représentations culturelles réunies dans les magazines jeunesse. Les auteurs réussissent à adapter les hypotextes à des niveaux accessibles aux jeunes enfants ; ils simplifient le langage et agrémentent leur récit de références discrètes à des contenus communs, sans doute dans une visée moralisatrice. Leurs réécritures ont le rôle de bâtir tout un ensemble de valeurs et de suggérer aux lecteurs une série de comportements à réaliser.

Dans ce qui suit, nous allons centrer notre analyse sur un récit composé par Pascal Brissy pour le magazine *Histoires pour les petits* de Milan Presse. L'auteur replace dans un contexte actuel une fable référentielle de La Fontaine, *La Cigale et la Fourmi*, et fait valoir les constantes de celle-ci – la valeur permanente de la nature humaine qui y est décrite et la virtuosité de l'écriture classique – pour préserver la pérennité de ce texte célèbre. Son choix n'est pas sans fondement, car « les références aux Fables pullulent dans l'univers médiatique qui est le nôtre, et La Fontaine apparaît un peu comme un « must » culturel, comme un réservoir d'allégories, comme l'auteur qu'il est le plus permis de citer, de parodier ou de transposer. » (Collès, 2005 : 3) La lecture des fables et

de leurs réécritures sert de clé de compréhension des comportements humains et des diverses perspectives sur le monde et sur la vie.

Dès la première lecture, le texte de Pascal Brissy apparaît comme une imitation de la fable lafontainienne. Nous verrons dans ce qui suit que l’auteur propose le même point de départ du récit, mais il le fait évoluer différemment ; il garde la dimension allégorique des personnages, tout en modifiant leur rôle et leur statut. Ainsi, dans la réécriture qu’il propose à la célèbre fable *La Cigale et la Fourmi* de La Fontaine, Pascal Brissy crée-t-il « une forgerie », « une réécriture hypertextuelle sérieuse » (Darbeau, Bernard, *op. cit.* :199), un texte qui respecte l’autorité de son modèle et qui reprend l’histoire au point où elle s’est achevée dans le texte source.

La situation initiale de la narration proposée dans le magazine *Histoires pour les petits* porte un regard attentif sur le comportement de « dame » Cigale. Pour bien se préparer à l’hiver, elle garde dans un arbre creux d’importantes réserves de nourriture, qu’elle considère comme un trésor inestimable. Tout le monde sait qu’elle est très économe et avare, mais Dorémi, une petite fourmi qui a « le ventre en appétit », a le courage de frapper à sa porte pour lui demander à manger. À côté de ses amies Fasila, Dolasol et Mifasi, Dorémi fait partie d’un quatuor qui organise de grandes tournées à travers les prés. Elles sont toujours ovationnées et admirées pour leur musique, mais elles ont faim et échangeraient volontiers les applaudissements contre de la nourriture. Lors d’un concert organisé au milieu de la nature, les spectateurs se déchaînent et provoquent un tremblement de terre qui fend en deux le tronc de l’arbre où dame Cigale conserve ses provisions. Complètement dépourvue des ressources économiques qu’elle avait si attentivement épargnées durant l’été, elle ne plonge pas dans l’affolement et commence à chanter et à danser. Cette fête représente pour Dame Cigale et Dorémi le début d’une intense amitié et de toute une série de tournées rentables qu’elles organisent ensemble dans la forêt.

2. Hypotexte vs. réécriture : ressemblances, différences, visées

Après l’actualisation des aspects théoriques liés au concept de réécriture et un court résumé du récit *Dame Cigale et les fourmis* que Pascal Brissy propose dans le magazine *Histoire pour les petits*, nous allons essayer de déterminer les liens que cette histoire entretient avec son texte source (*La Cigale et la Fourmi* de Jean de La Fontaine). D’une part, nous allons identifier les points communs et les différences établis au niveau de la forme et du contenu des textes analysés ; d’autre part, nous allons dégager leur structure stylistique pour pouvoir repérer et regrouper en faisceaux les éléments définitoires de leur littéralité.

Nous allons tout d’abord classer sous forme de tableau les marques de la filiation retrouvable entre l’hypotexte et sa réécriture :

• hypotexte / hypertexte	Jean de La Fontaine, <i>La Cigale et la Fourmi</i> (1668)	Pascal Brissy, <i>Dame Cigale et les fourmis</i> (2008)
• auteur	- écrivain du XVII ^e siècle (1621-1695) - membre de l’Académie française à partir de 1684	- auteur pour la jeunesse, scénariste (né en 1969) - membre de la Charte des auteurs et Illustrateurs jeunesse
• titre	- deux noms d’insectes, [+Féminin], [+Singulier], à l’initiale majuscule, reliés par la conjonction de coordination « et »	- deux noms d’insectes [+Féminin], reliés par la conjonction de coordination « et » ; le premier, [+Singulier], à l’initiale majuscule, est associé au terme « dame »

		[+Noblesse]; le deuxième nom, [+Pluriel], prend une minuscule
• genre / forme littéraire	- fable : court discours argumentatif en vers, à visée didactique et divertissante, qui met en scène des animaux symboliques et qui part d'un cas particulier pour aboutir à une réflexion générale - poème en heptasyllabes et trisyllabes, à rimes suivies et embrassées	- conte animalier : texte en prose, à forte visée moralisatrice, qui humanise des animaux pour faire la satire de la société - œuvre de fiction en prose
• registre littéraire niveau linguistique	- pathétique (« famine »), ironique (« dansez maintenant »), merveilleux (animaux personnifiés) - niveau de langue soutenu, mais accessible (« la fourmi n'est pas prêteuse », « dit-elle à cette emprunteuse », « ne vous déplaie ! »)	- comique / satirique (répétitions, accumulations), pathétique (« famine »), ironique (« dansez maintenant »), merveilleux (animaux personnifiés) - niveau de langue familier (« la fourmi a toujours l'estomac dans les talons » = avoir une faim extrême)
• schéma narratif	- trois étapes : récit, dialogue (demande de la cigale, refus de la fourmi), morale	- quatre étapes : récit, dialogue (demande de la fourmi, refus de la cigale), récit (concert + chute de l'arbre et perte des provisions), morale
• personnages /comportements humains	- une cigale qui a chanté tout l'été et qui n'a pas de provisions pour passer l'hiver / une fourmi travailleuse, qui a fait des réserves. - la cigale incarne l'insouciance, l'oisiveté, mais aussi la politesse et l'altruisme / la fourmi incarne l'égoïsme, la prévoyance, l'inflexibilité méprisante	- « dame » Cigale qui a fait des réserves dans un arbre creux - la fourmi Dorémi, qui a une faim extrême, et ses trois amies, les fourmis Fasila, Dolasol et Mifasi - leurs « voisins » - hannetons, grillons et papillons – qui forment le public
• champs lexi cau x	- de la pauvreté et de la privation (« pas un seul petit morceau », « prêter », « fort dépourvue », « subsister ») - du cadre naturel (« fourmi », « cigale », « mouche », « vermisseau », « été », « grain », « bise », « saison ») - de l'univers artistique (chanter, danser)	- de la faim (« le ventre en appétit », « son ventre continue à gargouiller », « J'ai un trou dans l'estomac ») - du cadre naturel (« pré », « arbre », « hannetons, grillons et papillons », « pucerons », « papillons », « graines de potiron », « nectar ») - de l'économie et de l'abondance (« compte et recompte ses réserves », « elle ne peut pas s'empêcher de veiller sur son trésor », « il y a assez à manger pour cent familles de papillons, mille pucerons et toute une colonie de fourmis ») - du domaine musical (« une chansonnette », « nous sommes musiciennes », « le quatuor », « spectacle », « la danse du moustique », « applaudit à tout rompre »)

		- de la catastrophe (« l'arbre (...) se fendille en deux », « un drôle de tremblement : craaac ! »)
• modes et temps verbaux ; voix verbales	- le passé simple (« elle alla crier famine », « dit-elle à cette emprunteuse ») - le gérondif passé (« ayant chanté tout l'été ») - le gérondif présent (« la priant de lui prêter ») - le présent (« la fourmi n'est pas prêteuse », « j'en suis fort aise ») - l'imparfait (« que faisiez-vous au temps chaud ? ») - l'impératif (« eh bien, dansez maintenant ») - le subjonctif présent (« ne vous déplaie ») - le passé antérieur (« la bise fut venue ») - le futur (« je paierai ») - voix active (« elle alla crier famine »)	- le présent de narration (« elle va frapper chez dame Cigale ») - le gérondif présent (« en se posant », « en claquant la porte ») - le futur (« dame Cigale finira bien par leur offrir... », « est-ce que j'en aurai assez... ? ») - l'impératif (« eh bien, dansez maintenant ») - le passé antérieur (« quand la bise fut venue ») - l'impératif (« voyons, voyons ») - le passé récent (« qui vient d'arriver dans la région ») - le passé composé (« J'ai oublié de faire mes provisions », « peut-être avez-vous déjà entendu nos chansons ») - voix active (« nous rentrons d'une grande tournée »), passive (« elle a si peur d'être prise au dépourvu »), factitive (« vous ferez peut-être pleuvoir des potirons »)
• indices spatiaux et temporels	- espace non spécifié - « quand la bise fut venue » - « jour et nuit, à tout venant » - « tout l'été » - « au temps chaud »	- « de la forêt au fond du pré », « dans la cachette de sa maison, au creux d'un arbre » - « chaque jour », « au bout d'un moment », « au retour du printemps et des hirondelles »
• morale	- implicite, ambiguë : o il faut éviter de trop vivre au jour le jour, car l'imprévoyance peut être la cause du malheur o le travail est une valeur fondamentale	- explicite : o il faut être bienveillant et généreux avec ses semblables o il faut garder un équilibre entre la préparation pour l'avenir et les valeurs de partage et de générosité
• figures de style	- paraphrase péjorative (« cette emprunteuse ») - allitération (« ayant chanté tout l'été ») - allégorie (la fourmi = la prévoyance, mais aussi l'égoïsme, l'univers matérialiste, la cigale = l'insouciance, l'imprudance, l'oisiveté, mais aussi l'altruisme : « Nuit et jour, à tout venant, je chantais », l'univers artistique) - question rhétorique (« Vous chantiez ? »)	- énumération (« hannetons, grillons et papillons ») - hyperbole (« cent familles de papillons, mille pucerons et toute une colonie de fourmis », « applaudit à tout rompre ») - paraphrase (« la mauvaise saison » = l'hiver) - allégorie (la fourmi = l'importance du partage avec les autres et de l'appartenance à une communauté, la cigale = l'avarice, l'excès de prévoyance) - question rhétorique (« Vous chantiez au lieu de faire des provisions ? »)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - omnisciente : « La fourmi n'est pas prêteuse, c'est là son moindre défaut » 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - omnisciente : « De la forêt au fond du pré, tout le monde connaît les habitudes de la cigale. » - interne : « Elle a si peur d'être prise au dépourvu » / « Dorémi est un peu étonnée »
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • énonciation / marques de l'oralité 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discours direct : « - Que faisiez-vous au temps chaud ? dit-elle à cette emprunteuse / - Je chantais, ne vous déplaît » - discours indirect : « la priant de lui prêter » 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monologue : « en se posant toujours la même question : Voyons, voyons, est-ce que j'en aurai assez ? » - discours indirect libre : « Dorémi en est certaine : en échange de leur musique, dame Cigale finira bien par leur offrir un déjeuner ! » - discours direct : « - Mes graines de potiron ! Mon nectar ! crie la cigale affolée »

L'hypotexte et l'hypertexte que nous venons d'analyser proposent des titres apparentés – « La Cigale » / « Dame Cigale » et « la Fourmi » / « les fourmis » – qui anticipent une action centrée sur deux catégories de personnages. Malgré la conjonction de coordination « et » marquant l'union, les personnages mentionnés dans le titre apparaissent comme antithétiques. Chez La Fontaine, l'initiale majuscule est chargée de sens ; elle confère à ces deux noms le statut de nom propre, d'une grande valeur symbolique. En revanche, dans le titre proposé par Pascal Brissy, la majuscule de signification appliquée au terme « fourmi » n'existe plus ; ainsi ce mot se trouve-t-il dans une opposition sémantique avec « dame Cigale » et perd-il le statut d'entité individuelle, unique et honorée, qu'il avait acquis dans le texte source.

Dans le poème lafontainien, tout comme dans sa réécriture, la cigale et la fourmi sont des instances allégoriques qui renvoient à des comportements typiques de l'être humain, avec des qualités et des défauts tels que partage *vs.* égoïsme, épargne *vs.* dépense, économie *vs.* intérêt pour le domaine artistique. L'antagonisme entre les deux insectes est en effet une opposition entre deux façons différentes de concevoir l'existence humaine ; il sous-tend donc le renvoi à un univers référentiel d'une autre nature et cache un enseignement moral et civique.

Même si, dans les deux textes analysés, les héroïnes du récit (la cigale et la fourmi) et l'élément déclencheur de la narration (le retour de l'hiver) restent les mêmes, Pascal Brissy renverse le rôle des protagonistes : c'est la fourmi qui prend la place de la cigale insouciant créée par La Fontaine et vice-versa. L'auteur va encore plus loin : la fourmi qu'il imagine chante à travers les prés, forme un quatuor avec ses trois amies Fasila, Dolasol et Mifasi et, prise au dépourvu, ne se soucie guère de sa situation économique.

Le vocabulaire courant et familier, le registre comique, les personnages aux fonctionnements allégoriques différents, le message moral complétement détourné – tout cela transforme *Dame Cigale et les fourmis* dans une réécriture littéraire extrêmement originale. Le niveau de langue familier et les marques de l'oralité assurent l'aspect libre et authentique du discours. Le texte de Pascal Brissy regorge d'onomatopées (« dzzz bzzz », « craaac », « clap clap clap ») et d'interjections (« Sapristi ! », « Hum ! », « Oh là là ! ») qui marquent l'impatience, l'étonnement, voire l'exaspération.

Le récit *Dame Cigale et les fourmis* reprend intégralement du texte source des formules comme « quand la bise fut venue », « n'est pas prêteuse », « Eh bien, dansez maintenant » et/ou donne lieu à des allusions à la fable lafontainienne. Par exemple, la

structure « C'est là son moindre défaut » est modifiée sous la forme « C'est sans doute son plus gros défaut » ; de même, « Que faisiez-vous au temps chaud ? », apparaît sous la forme « Que faisiez-vous au retour du printemps et des hirondelles ? ». En outre, nous pouvons observer que, dans les deux textes, les indices spatiaux et temporels sont vagues, l'endroit /l'époque n'étant pas clairement défini(e).

Tous ces indices nous aident à admettre que la réécriture de Pascal Brissy reprend les traits essentiels de son hypotexte, à savoir : la concision, l'aspect anecdotique, le déroulement chronologique de l'action, le raisonnement par induction (d'un cas particulier à une morale à prétention universelle) et la double injonction « instruire et plaire ». Ce qui change par rapport au texte source, ce sont le processus d'individualisation des personnages, les voix narratives variables et le détournement complet de la moralité proposée par la fable. La réécriture laisse de côté la nécessité de corriger les défauts humains et annule la réprobation manifestée envers la cigale. Elle métaphorise les difficultés économiques auxquelles l'artiste est confronté dans l'espace public contemporain et propose aux enfants *une leçon sur l'importance de la solidarité*.

Conclusions

Cette réflexion sur les enjeux du récit Dame Cigale et les fourmis nous a permis d'évaluer l'originalité de l'auteur Pascal Brissy par rapport au modèle qu'il a choisi de réécrire. Nous avons constaté que, par rapport à la fable La Cigale et la Fourmi de Jean de La Fontaine, cette réécriture hypertextuelle suppose à la fois une transposition (qui change profondément de genre, de style, de registre) et une forgerie, une transformation « sérieuse », qui donne une suite au texte source. C'est un texte écrit en prose, qui dispense une moralité plus nuancée que la fable de La Fontaine et qui propose de nombreuses variations de l'hypotexte qu'il remploie (il transforme personnages, registres et niveaux de langue). Le titre choisi par Pascal Brissy présente dès le début la cigale comme un être supérieur, qui détient le « beau » rôle et qui symbolise un univers réaliste et austère, nettement opposé au monde insouciant des fourmis. Ce nouveau statut qu'elle acquiert dans la réécriture se réalise à contre-emploi, sans correspondance avec le profil proposé dans le texte source.

Par tous les mécanismes qu'il met en œuvre, Pascal Brissy propose aux enfants un texte plus explicite et plus amusant que le texte pris comme modèle. Tout en gardant la dimension allégorique et symbolique de la fable lafontainienne, il joue avec ce texte célèbre et, pour attirer davantage son public, s'amuse à parsemer son récit de mots appartenant au registre familier de la langue, d'interjections et d'onomatopées. C'est ainsi que le récit Dame Cigale et les fourmis prend en compte la spécificité et les besoins propres au public enfantin ; c'est ainsi également qu'il réussit à proposer une vision optimiste sur les rapports humains à une époque qui s'avère extrêmement complexe sur le plan moral, spirituel et social.

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PAUL MORAND - NEW YORK THROUGH A FRENCHMAN'S EYES

Corina Amelia GEORGESCU*

***Abstract:** After visiting America more times, Morand decides to write about it and he chooses the form which suits best to his intentions: travel writing. He focuses on a space that he sees as unique through the apparently unreconcilable contrasts that it brings together, that is New York. In order to render it as adequately as possible, the writer divides his book according to the parts of the city in four out of which the last one is dedicated to a kind of summary of the most striking aspects which he identifies all along his journey. Our paper aims at presenting the first and the last chapters of Morand's book, emphasizing certain aspects related to the diversity of spaces and cultures which make the New York City a city of contrasts.*

***Keywords:** America; Americans; culture; travel writing*

1. Paul Morand – life, work, cultural influences

Born in 1888 in Russia to French parents, Paul Morand spent his childhood and youth in an elevated artistic environment with his father being a playwright and painter and his grandfather being a curator at the Louvre and a manager at the École des Arts Décoratifs. Consequently, the family home is a place which welcomes the best-known people of the time in the field of literature and arts; one can mention such names as Jules Massenet, Auguste Rodin, Oscar Wilde, Jean Giraudoux. Morand studied Sciences Politiques in Paris in order to get prepared for a political career and later on attended Oxford University. In 1913, he became cultural attaché to the French Embassy in London. Between 1914 and 1918, he lived in England, Rome, Madrid and Paris.

Paul Morand met the Princess Hélène Soutzo, the daughter of a prominent Greek merchant banker, who, at the time, was married to an aristocrat of Greek-Romanian origin, Prince Dimitri Soutzo. As a consequence of their romantic affair, she divorced her husband in 1924 and married Morand in 1927.

Between 1925 and 1929, Morand made four trips to New York City where he had the opportunity to know famous American cultural personalities of the time such as Carl Van Vechten, F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife Zelda, Louise Bryant and her future husband, diplomat William Bullitt. Later on, in 1926, he was sent to the French Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand, thus having the opportunity to travel extensively.

Thirteen years later, he was assigned a post at the French embassy in London which gave him the opportunity to support Charles de Gaulle and the Free French Forces outside the country, but he refused and went to Vichy where he willingly offered his support to the Vichy government as their ideology suited his long-lasting convictions. Consequently, he was appointed ambassador to Romania where he did nothing to distinguish himself but to work for his own benefits; in 1944, he had to leave Bucharest in order to find refuge in Switzerland where he remained until the end of the war. Because of his collaboration with the Nazis, he was sentenced and had his government pension revoked. This did not prevent him and his wife from leading a comfortable life and from travelling between France, Switzerland and Morocco.

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Paul Morand's career and private life allowed him to be a part of the cultural environment of the time; thus, he had the opportunity to know Mallarmé ever since he was a young man and Jean Giraudoux became his tutor and friend. He was familiar with the Dada movement and with Jean Cocteau whom he had met at the premiere of Cocteau's ballet "Parade". His relationship with Cocteau brought him to the jazz milieu of the fashionable Parisian cabarets of the time. Proust was among the writers whom Morand met and who, as a piece of proof of appreciation agreed to write the preface for *Tendres Stocks* under the name *For a friend: remarks on style*, in which he did not only praise, but also criticized Morand's way of writing: "Amid the flowery compliments, Proust criticized the budding author's imagery which (as he told a correspondent) he found over-elaborate and artificial." [Winegarten:2024] The translation of the volume was done by Ezra Pound.

Paul Morand's other famous acquaintance was Coco Chanel whose friend and confidant he became to such an extent that in 1945, he travelled to St. Moritz, Switzerland, at her request to write her memoirs published as *The Allure of Chanel*, a short volume issued as a result of every evening conversations between the author and his subject and published in French in 1976 and in English in 2008.

Ideologically, Morand was tributary to Nietzsche, Spengler and Gobineau which mainly explains his way of thinking and acting regarding racism and anti-semitism. His political views prevented him from being elected as a member of the Académie française four times, in 1939, in 1941 and in 1958 when Charles de Gaulle was overtly against. However, he was accepted in 1968 but President de Gaulle refused to receive him at the Elysée Palace as required by the tradition.

Beginning his literary career with a volume of short stories called *Tendre Stocks*, translated into English by Ezra Pound and prefaced by Marcel Proust, Morand quickly gains notoriety; Pound translates *Ouvert la nuit* (1922), another collection of short stories; Morand also writes poetry, publishing *Lampes à arc* and *Feuilles de température*. After his trips to New York City, he will write *New York* (1930). Morand publishes more pieces of travel writing among which one may mention *Bucarest* (1935), *Venise* (1971), *Londres* (1933), but also some novels among which one is worth mentioning: *Lewis et Irène* (1924). The short genre seems to be Morand's favourite as well as the one which made him famous: « Morand's glancing, aphoristic prose – praised by Jean Cocteau and the surrealist André Breton – is often striking. » [Thompson, 2012]. Most of the time, he is seen as the painter of an epoch and of a society which he knew very well and in the middle of which he lived:

« Peintre circonstancié d'une époque, voyageur aux impressions précises et originales (*Venise*, 1971), Morand a beaucoup produit dans un genre voisin à la fois de la chronique et de la nouvelle, et son style fait de lui un maître du rythme narratif, le porte-parole des étourdissements des « années folles » de la première après-guerre. » [Lemaître, 1994 : 596]

Nevertheless, the history of literature remembers him as a "maître incontestable du voyage" [Tadié *et alii*, 2007, 649] for the pieces of travel writing that he published and where he proves to be a careful observer, a master of details and a commenter with a keen sense of recording anything culturally remarkable. These qualities enable him to provide the XXIst century reader with an interesting picture of the city of New York as it used to be almost one hundred years ago in the volume with the same title i.e. *New York* published in 1930.

2. Morand's *New York*

The XXth century brought along a new destination for artists in general and for writers in particular. The United States represents the new world, the mirage from a social point of view as well as from an economic and artistic point of view. Moreover, it is a world that facilitates the meeting of cultures, as it is a country originally built from a cultural mix.

« Le voyage aux Etats-Unis est devenu le parcours obligé de l'écrivain moderne – comme le voyage en Orient s'imposait aux romantiques. Georges Duhamel en ramène un témoignage critique (*Scènes du monde futur*, 1930), Paul Morand un de ses « portraits de villes » (*New York*, 1930), Simone de Beauvoir (*L'Amérique au jour le jour*, 1948) et Sartre (articles repris dans *Situations III*, 1949) des images contrastées, entre sympathie culturelle et condamnation politique. » [Labouret, 2018 :159]

Paul Morand is among all these writers seduced by this country of contrasts which is America and deciding to surprise New York as the city which perhaps represents the American spirit best, both at the spatial level and at the level of culture and mentalities.

“La France est liée à l'Amérique par ses dettes de guerre, mais surtout, le centre de gravité de l'Occident paraît s'être déplacé outre-Atlantique. Alors que l'Europe est plongée dans le marasme de l'après-guerre, les États-Unis entrent de manière pétaradante dans les roaring twenties. Tout est contraste entre la France de la « crise de l'esprit » et l'Amérique de la prospérité. L'Amérique est alors au cœur du monde. Toutes les conditions sont réunies pour que s'amorce une révolution du regard, de l'Américain à l'Amérique, du type, en tant qu'il symbolise tout un peuple et l'âme prétendue d'un pays, au pays lui-même, dans sa plus grande complexité.” [Buffet, 2021 :15]

Among the numerous travels that Morand did along his life, visiting the United States of America left powerful traces upon him and created a certain need of returning to this space, but also to refer to it under different forms. *Rien que la terre* (1926) is only the first step to know the United States and it will be followed by *New York* (1929) written after a second trip to America. It goes without saying that Morand, being fluent in English (after his studies at Oxford University) was able not only to understand the everyday realities that he could notice, but also to know them by means of the people he met among which Carl Van Vechten (supporter of the Harlem Renaissance movement), the writer F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife Zelda, Louise Bryant (journalist, supporter for the women's rights) and her future husband, diplomat William Bullitt. This double perspective of places and people enabled Morand to create *New York*, a piece of writing much appraised by Sollers who wrote a preface for its 1988 edition [Morand, 1987:5] underlining the vivacity of its style: “La vivacité de Morand est de nouveau parmi nous, on ne s'en plaindra pas.”

3. Travel Writing

People have always been curious to find out new things and especially new things about territories which situated outside their common environment. This desire has led them to discover new lands, to reveal hidden truths or even to contradict opinions transmitted from a generation to another previously thought of as general truths or even to understand their own culture better. The result of what they used to write down during

these expeditions is generally known by nowadays readers as *travel writing*. And while for ordinary people the concept involves no misunderstanding, critics have long been arguing over its definition as well as over its general features.

Travel writing is a term belonging to two different fields of human activities: travelling and writing and this is the reason why it is usually placed in the middle of **cross-disciplinary research**, almost creating what Nicholas Thomas [Thomas : 1993, 19] considered “a postdisciplinary humanities field, in which histories, cultural studies, cultural politics, narratives and ethnographies all intersect and are all open to being challenged”. Summarizing, travel writing should be seen on a more general level as a **cultural activity** establishing a relationship between the traveller-writer’s own culture and the “Other” ‘s culture, that is of the visited place and, on a more particular level, as a **literary activity**, if it is seen by means of the final product, that is the book. As far as our article’s needs, both of these aspects are suitable to be approached. Most of the critics’ opinions emphasize the idea that *travel writing* is related to “transition” and “change” [Hooper *et al.* :2004, 2] or to “déplacement” [Bloju, 2011: 9]¹, but Hooper *et al.* [Hooper *et al.* :2004, 2] are right when asserting that “travel writing remains a loosely defined body of literature.” This assumption is supported by the fact that some critics consider travel writing as:

“a subspecies of memoir in which autobiographical narrative arises from the speaker’s encounter with distant or unfamiliar data, freer than the reader, and thus every such book, even when it depicts its speaker trapped in Boa Vista, is an implicit celebration of freedom”. [Fussel : 1980, 203]

The direct consequence of including it in the category of the *memoirs* is the use of the **first-person singular** arising from the visitor’s encounter with the unknown and from the way he perceives / feels this reality rather from the way it really is. On the other hand, this encounter brings along facts belonging to a period of his/her life, becoming thus a reason for its being considered as an “autobiographical narrative”. It is exactly within the frame of this narrative that its author may include what Hooper calls “historical and geographical digression”: “Some writers employ memoir and historical and geographical digression within the narrative structure of a walk through the countryside”. [Hooper: 2004, 2]

By means of the **digression**, the narrator provides the reader with information on the historical background of the visited places to make him better understand the “Other” or presents geographical elements which might help the reader imagine the place which is being described, even though it remains inaccessible to him/her at the time of the narration.

Contrasting the writer’s cultural identity with the Other’s cultural identity in the process of travel writing creates the background for asserting different ideas and opinions about foreign cultures which transforms the narrative into an essay. Thus, the text turns into a “useful medium for the interrogation of ethnocentrism and for the displacement or estrangement of received ideas about ‘other’ cultures” [Hooper: 2004, 10], acquiring the dimension of an **essay**. Seen from this light, travel writing becomes not only a way of discovering a different country, but also one of better understanding one’s own as

¹ « Tout voyage, quelle que soit son but – voyage de plaisir, voyage de recherche, voyage administratif ou politique, voyage de libération ou voyage tout simplement, sans un but précis – suppose un déplacement dans l’espace. »

“Identity is largely constituted through the process of othering.” [Trinh T. Minh-ha: 1994, 15]

Exploring unknown territories as well as meeting people belonging to different cultures will give the traveller the opportunity of stepping aside for a moment and allowing himself / herself what one may call a **self-analysis** which inevitably enables the narrator to “construct” himself:

“this process of Othering is seen as an almost necessary component of many early modern travel accounts, as the subject constructs himself – frequently as an English, Protestant, Colonizing Male – in contrast to the natives of Eastern Europe, Persia, North America, and the East Indies.” [Hooper: 2004, 5]

or to “re-invent” himself (“Facing the “exotic” then, became a test for these early modern writers, but also a wonderful opportunity for self- (and national) (re)invention, a way of encountering, and then countering, difference” [Hooper: 2004, 5]) in the context of a new culture which urges him/her to reassess the realities that he/she is familiar with when discovering new ones.

A characteristic openly appearing when analysing the content of travel writing is **its versatility** as it gives the reader the opportunity to discover a mixture of literary genres, a multitude of historical and geographical backgrounds as well as different fields and perspectives; thus, this type of text may be characterized [Hooper: 2004, 10; Youngs:1994, 3] through its “absorption of different narrative styles and genres, the manner in which it effortlessly shape-shifts and blends any number of imaginative encounters, and its potential for interaction with a broad range of historical periods, disciplines and perspectives. [...] travel writing [can] be regarded as a relatively open-ended and versatile form.”

The common characteristic of all the texts belonging to travel writing, despite their heterogeneity, is their **main theme which is always related to travel**. When analysing these texts as well as their characteristics, some critics claim, given the texts’ diversity in point of form and content, that “the travel writing genre seems refractory to any definition that does not also take into account the medium which conveys the text”. [Calzati, 2015:153-168].

4. New York – the city of contrasts

Morand is a traveller; he visited a lot of countries on almost all the continents; it is therefore difficult for him to be amazed. The fact itself that he chooses some destinations in order to consecrate them a part of his writings shows that the impressions that those places left upon him were strong and undeletable: London, Bucharest, New York. If for London and Bucharest, there may be some explanation related to his being a student in the United Kingdom or to the fact that his wife has Romanian origins as well, which is the possible reason for which Morand chooses to write about New York? The only logical explanation might be that the city is a world in itself and its discovery operates for Morand as if he were an archaeologist seeking for a lost world that finally reveals itself to his hungry eyes. New York needs to be seen, heard, felt, walked along and the writer decides to know it with patience and method: this decision reflects in the way the book is organized, that is in four parts significantly called *La ville basse*, *La ville moyenne*, *La ville haute*, *Panorama de New York*. As far as we are concerned, this paper deals only with the first and the last parts of the book. The motivation that he has for writing about

New York, as well as the confession that he makes is that he discovers new faces of this city during each journey out of the four that he has to New York:

“New York, organisme vivant, se transforme: quelques mois d’absence suffisent pour en modifier les mœurs, le langage et certains aspects extérieurs ; aussi ai-je écrit ce livre après quatre séjours que j’y fis entre 1925 et 1929, dont le plus long fut de deux mois. A chacune de ces incursions, des vérités nouvelles me sautaient au visage, qui, autrement que par contraste, eussent été perdues.” [Morand, 1988:196-197].

The beginning of the first part is amazing starting by the word “silence”. It seems to echo the beginning of the world genesis in the Bible as the silence is a form of background for the only sound that one can hear, that is the cry of a sea-gull; an impersonal narrator, God-like, builds the scenery for what will be and for what will happen; the visual images designed by contrast between the dark (“la nuit”) and the light (“un soleil”) appear to order the space, seemingly following the look going from the right to the left. The reader finds in the texts the “germs” of an isotopy of the beginning of the world: “immobiles”, “germe”, “silence”, “commencement du monde”, “vide”, “naître”. He is invited to imaginarily attend the creation of a “New World” which has a name, that is, America. This lack of sound is paralleled to the lack of movement of a picture in which the natural elements quickly find their places, one by one: the sun, the ground and the water. The ground is defined through the size which seems to be, from the very beginning, huge, “d’une immensité sidérale”. The appearance of this territory called New York is foreseen by means of a future tense and, on a narrative level, by means of a flashforward, emphasized by an interesting syntagma “attendant de naître” meant to suggest the near future. Amazingly, this piece of land does not attract the foreigners to the north or to the south; the choice of naming the future communities by the name of the country (“Amérique française ou anglaise”, “Amérique suédoise ou espagnole”), but also by adjectives suggesting their origins represents a way of showing the mixture of cultures which will form what we call today the United States of America. Thus, the narrator conveys two main features of this country as Morand the traveller might have noticed: **the immensity of the spaces and the cultural diversity.**

”Silence.

[...] À droite, la nuit commence à cacher les collines. À gauche, descend un soleil jaune soufre.

L’Amérique est grande, déjà. D’une immensité sidérale. Immobiles, repliés sur eux-mêmes comme un germe, ces lieux qui seront New York attendent de naître. [...]

Silence du commencement du monde. Mer vide, sans une voile. Les voiles s’en vont plus au nord, vers l’Amérique française ou anglaise, plus au sud, vers l’Amérique suédoise ou espagnole. Jamais elles ne s’abaissent ici.” [Morand, 1988 : 25]

Morand starts by offering the reader some facts about the history of the places which begins in 1542 when Verrazzano describes them in a letter sent to Frances I without stopping there; the one who will stop will be Hudson, an Englishman and the captain of a Dutch ship, who will land on an isle called Manhatte or Manhattan. Block continues what Hudson had begun and the Dutch government will set a colony where French and English will come too. From its very beginnings, New York is seen as a city of trade and of

foreigners: “New York s’affirme ce qu’il ne cessera d’être; une place de commerce et une ville d’étrangers.” [Morand, 1988: 30] The name of the city comes from the duke of York who was the one to instigate an expedition during which the English conquered the territories which had belonged to the Dutch. New York witnesses a lot of events following the 1776 Declaration of Independence turning into what Morand might have seen at the beginning of the XXth century.

In order to describe what he sees, he adopts the hypostasis of a lonely tourist who carefully admires the landscape while being on a ship, which allows him a more personal 1st singular point of view. In a parallel movement by which the looker-on and the city seem to separate, getting farther and farther from each other, he has the chance to see some of the most important places of New York: Hudson, Brooklyn and the sky-scrapers:

”Je m’éloignai du rivage [...] New York s’éloignait. À ma gauche s’ouvrait Hudson [...], sans ponts ; à ma droite, la rivière de l’Est enjambée par l’arche métallique de Brooklyn [...] ; devant moi, les gratte-ciel s’étageaient, montaient, à mesure que je prenais du champ.” [Morand, 1988 : 39-40]

Being on a ship, Morand seems to have the time and the mood to carefully look around. The description that appears gives the reader the impression of a painting exhibited in front of him; the colours masterfully mix, the painter combining green, white, black and red as if they are part of an impressionist painting. Moreover, it provides a two-plan perspective: the image near-by and the one which can be seen far, in the distance; the former is delicate, fine as if the brush had been thin while the latter is stronger, ready to animate the whole picture.

”Flots verts, ponctués des blancs délicats d’une aile de mouette, d’une fumée, d’une voile, relevés de la touche d’une crête d’écume, tandis que, plus loin, les docks noirs apparaissent, soulignés lourdement, et que le rouge violent de la cheminée d’un paquebot vient redonner soudain du ton à ce paysage décoloré.” [Morand, 1988 : 40]

The natural scenery combines with the anthropological one and the **sky-scrapers** are a kind of leit-motif which the narration reiterates as it is a feature of the American space. They are seen as a “symbole de l’Amérique” [Morand, 1988 : 46] and Morand perceives them as human beings, men and women or even as symbolic temples dedicated to the most relevant stars of the universe, the sun and the moon. This mythological incursion to ancient cultures is meant to emphasize the size, but also the hidden meaning of such buildings; they suggest the majesty, the power and seem to anticipate the future world, by their vertical well-calculated dimension. They are no longer the power of the present, but of a future dominated by exact calculations suggested by the terms belonging to mathematics such as “nombres”, “zéros”, “multipliant”. These are hints aiming at two fields to which these sky-scrapers are related: mysticism and economics [Morand, 1988:49]:

”Les gratte-ciel ! Il y en a qui sont des femmes et d’autres des hommes ; les uns semblent des temples au Soleil, les autres rappellent la pyramide aztèque de la Lune. [...] Ces in-folios donnent à New York sa grandeur, sa force, son aspect de demain [...] Ils s’affirment verticalement, comme des nombres, et leurs fenêtres les suivent horizontalement comme des zéros carrés, et les multiplient.” [Morand, 1988 : 46]

Another architectural element is represented by the **bridges**; the one that is chosen by Morand is the Brooklyn Bridge that is said to have a “beauté intérieure” [Morand, 1988:66] coming from a mixture of force and elegance which makes the viewer compare it to a lyra. The moment when he discovers the bridge is the evening which brings more charm to it. It amazes through its dimensions (with four roads separated by a double railway for trains and trams), but also through its design, seeming an iron net or an arch which leaves an instant impression upon the one that views it, as compared to other places such as Paris or London.

One of the most representative aspects in New York is represented by the financial empire built here through the **banks**. Money is one of the forces driving people in this city. Morand chooses to mention more places related to the idea of fortune: the Subtreasury, Wall Street, the Morgan Bank, the New York Stock Exchange; the money religiously compared to some “hosties” [Morand, 1988:61] appeals to everyone and stock exchange becomes very popular for ordinary people such as typists or policemen.

Except for the financial side, one can also remark some other institutions considered important for the American everyday life, **the police and the prison**, on which the narrator will focus later on in the book.

The best-known places in New York are the ones that Morand visits and notices; one of them is Broadway situated at the very heart of Manhattan, in the middle of New York. It is not only the architecture, but also the everyday life in all its aspects that is described; for a Frenchman, lunch is almost a ritual. That is why, the way American have **lunch** is worth being mentioned. First of all, people do not have lunch at home and what may be unconceivable for a Frenchman, they are eating while they are working. Moreover, there is a wide range of places where one may have lunch (*grills, chop-houses, exchange-buffets*); restaurants are also mentioned by the text, but all of them seem to belong to a French cuisine tradition according to their names and to their way of serving food (*Savarin, Taupier, France’s Tavern*). The details reveal eating in a hurry, in a popular manner, ironically similar to that of animals gathered in a cowshed. Morand cannot help comparing if not the places, at least the prices to the ones he is used to in France. If he is happy with the taste of food, the atmosphere is unusual as all these places seem to be dominated by the lack of time, by a kind of automatization with all the devices where one can pay the food, people’s standing in a line and pushing.

”Il est temps de déjeuner. Les rues se remplissent à nouveau. À New York, personne ne rentre chez soi au milieu de la journée : on mange sur place, soit dans les bureaux, tout en travaillant, soit dans les clubs, soit dans les *cafeterias*. [...] Dans les bouillons populaires, des milliers d’êtres alignés dévorent, chapeau sur la tête, sur un seul rang, comme à l’étable, des nourritures d’ailleurs fraîches et appétissantes, pour des prix inférieurs aux nôtres.” [Morand, 1988 : 56]

Leaving Brooklyn, Morand discovers a world that he names the “New York des étrangers” [Morand, 1988:71-72]: Italians, Jews, Hungarians, Chinese, Mexicans, Germans or French. They are all in a district called the Bowery known as a “place of wickedness”, a place where there are no sky-scrapers, lifts or money anymore, all these being replaced with “misère, saleté et les **maisons** rouge sang à deux ou trois étages”. This is the place where new immigrants arrive as it is a place where races live one near the other without mixing, being, as Morand calls it, a “voyage autour du monde, à l’intérieur d’une grande ville” [Morand, 1988:74]; it is a kind of Babel tower as many languages can be heard (Yiddish, Russian, Swedish, Polish, Spanish, Chinese, Italian, Hungarian, Romanian, Danish, Norwegian, German, Greek and even French). One of the

spaces which draws Morand's attention is the **ghetto**. He considers that New York is the biggest Jewish city in the world [Morand, 1988:77] as it reunites Jews from everywhere in the world. Consequently, he consecrates some passages to the Jews and their crafts which he poetically describes through their merchandise:

"Amandes grillées et salées vendues par des marchands dont le nez crochu et gelé sort d'un bonnet d'une fourrure miteuse rapportée de Russie par les ancêtres. Aux devantures, carpes énormes et dorées, gros cornichons sucrés, volailles rituelles et cette viande kasher [...]" [Morand, 1988 : 80]

The cosmopolite side of the city of New York is counterbalanced by a less popular one which the narrator chooses to introduce by mentioning the police headquarters situated in the Centre Street. This is only a pretext in order to show the two opposed parts: the police which is "brutal" and easily to be bribed while little efficient and the American criminals involved in hold-ups or even murders. Their presentation is meant as a kind of introduction to the description of the **famous Sing-Sing**, a place where a comfortable to a certain extent life mixes with a very comfortable death as the prison is known as a combination of "brutality and philanthropic sentimentalism" [Morand, 1988:85]. The intrusion of the first-person narration underlines the strong impression which the place left on the visitor:

"[...] je me trouvai soudain dans une sorte de salle d'opération qui prenait jour par un vitrage d'atelier ; au milieu je vis un bon vieux fauteuil de grand-père, en bois : la chaise électrique. Je m'attendais à quelque chose de très martien, tout nickelé, avec des câbles à haute tension, et l'on me voiturait cette commodité de la conversation avec Dieu. De larges courroies de cuir noir attendaient des jambes, un buste et une tête... [...] Au pied et au dossier, par un tout petit fil, arrive la mort, sous forme de deux mille volts. Dans un cabinet voisin, le tableau de distribution de force, comme une dalle funéraire. [...] A droite, une chambre de clinique, avec des tables pour l'autopsie légale et six frigidaires électriques, destinés à conserver les cadavres ; dans un coin, six cercueils gris..." [Morand, 1988:85-86]

As a European, Morand is astonished by both of the sides exhibited by this famous prison which he visits in person and where he listens to the manager's explanations: the convicted were allowed to read books or newspapers, to watch movies or to listen to the radio on one side while some of them being executed on the electric chair. The death "chambers" visited by the French accompanied by the prison official who assures him that the persons executed on the electric chair do not suffer leave an indelible impression on Morand who records every single detail of this terrible place. Long sentence description alternates with short sentences conveying awful truths, such as the fact that death comes through a very tiny wire under the form of 2000 V. The Sing-Sing excerpt may be seen as a kind of frightful pause in the narration which seems to go on afterwards, at the same pace by bringing to the reader's attention some other nations present in New York, among which the Greeks, the Arabs, the Italians and the French; the Italians seem an important community as they are seen as hard-working (they get rich thanks to the building industry), but also trouble makers, getting involved in the alcohol trade and smuggling. Morand ironically notices a double dependence of this "new Italy" as he calls it:

“C’est la jeune Italie, certes toujours dévouée à ses Madones et à ses Saints, mais fière de sa race latine, soutenue par son gouvernement, défendue auprès des hommes politiques américains par ses grands quotidiens, jouant son rôle aux élections, disciplinée et enrichie, visitée régulièrement par ses commis-voyageurs et par des propagandistes fascistes qui en entretiennent l’ « italianité ». Sa presse est presque entièrement ralliée au régime nouveau.” [Morand, 1988:89-90]

The last race which Morand evokes during his walk through “la ville basse” is the French through what, at a certain moment in the past, was called “the French Quarter”. Greenwich Village is the place where a famous Frenchman named Georges Clemenceau discovered America. Unlike the Italians who kept a strong bond with their mother country, the French loses it beginning with the second generation. Morand limits his comments as much as he can and seems to hurry onwards to one of the best-known places in New York, that is **Washington Square**:

“Washington Square, centre de l’aristocratie *knickerboker*¹ des années 1840, décor des plus célèbres romans d’Henry James, des meilleures pochades d’O’Henry, des pages les plus tendres d’Edith Wharton, Washington Square d’où s’élance, radieuse et royale, sans une hésitation, à travers le cerceau de Washington Arch, la Cinquième Avenue, comme une belle tulipe !” [Morand, 1988:94]

Washington Square means, according to Morand, fame in terms of literature as it is present in different novels or short stories of the time, but not only as it is a place where Morse developed his communication system and where Mark Twain lived at a certain time. Intertext is present either by a quote from Henry James’ *Washington Square* or by an allusion to a Rimbaud’s volume, namely *Une Saison en Enfer*. Morand resorts to these two literary kinships in order to emphasize the tranquillity of the square as opposed to the hell of the New York of that time. Henry James acts as a transitional² figure between two worlds: the English and the American ones and Morand uses also a space element of transition that is the tunnel in order to close this part of the book with some remarks about England and America, respectively about London and New York, two cities that he knew very well:

“Washington Square, a *quiet and gentle retirement*, calme retraite et de bon aloi, semble l’entrée d’un tunnel souterrain qui s’en irait aboutir, par-dessous l’Atlantique, à Londres, du côté de Bloomsbury. Souvent, depuis que j’ai découvert l’Amérique, je me suis pris à être injuste envers la vieille Angleterre. Aujourd’hui, je me repens et je choisis, pour le dire, Washington Square. Si j’ai pu pénétrer et comprendre vite New York, c’est que, derrière moi, j’avais dix ans d’Outre-Manche.” [Morand, 1988:95].

Having the opportunity of knowing the two places, Morand does not only understands them both by their subtle relationship, but also understands that he could not have understood America without having first experienced England as in spite of an

¹ Descendants of the early Dutch settlers of New York; later, the term was used with a broader meaning in order to name the natives/residents of the city or state of New York.

² Henry James is known to have had Irish and Scottish descendants.

apparent enmity, the two are historically tied, being separated only by the way they evolved as one was older than the other.

The last part of the book, *Panorama de New York*, represents a kind of summary of the work. Morand begins it by using the first person of the plural which could be read both as an authorship plural and as a means of including the reader whom he intended to have beside him all along this literary journey, allowing him to become intimate with a place to which Morand gives complete access, which he is more than glad to share it in all its revealed details. At the same time, he also keeps a certain type of distance, being precautionary as not every reader might have succeeded in joining his journey completely. It is to this category of readers that he addresses by using the second person of the plural.

It is only in this part that Morand mentions the “method” that he used in order to talk about New York; he narrates about what he likes, trying to maintain as much as he can the foreigner’s look:

“Je n’ai pas eu d’autre méthode pour parler de New York que de montrer ce qui me plaisait ; si j’ai évité d’importants sujets, c’est qu’ils me semblèrent plus américains que proprement new-yorkais [...]. Je me suis efforcé de demeurer le plus étranger possible pour expliquer à des étrangers.” [Morand, 1988:196].

The motivation that Morand mentions for his choosing New York in order to write about it is a kind of admiration expressed through hyperbola, at a stylistic level and through two superlatives at a grammatical level. The “roots” of this feeling of admiration come from the fact that the American people is seen as one able to build, even after the war:

“J’aime New York parce que c’est la plus grande ville de l’univers et parce qu’il est habité par le peuple le plus fort, le seul qui, depuis la guerre, ait réussi à s’organiser ; le seul qui ne vive pas à crédit sur son passé ; le seul, avec l’Italie, qui ne démolisse pas, mais au contraire ait su construire.” [Morand, 1988:197].

Morand is trying to maintain a certain degree of objectivity as in spite of his opinion, he presents New York from two different points of view; for some people, the city represents America as a whole; for others, New York is not America. No matter for which side one might advocate, it is clear for the narrator that “New York est le grand central de l’Amérique [...] Quand nous pensons que l’Amérique est grande, haute, forte, nous pensons d’abord à New York” [Morand, 1988:202]. His statement is supported by the figures that he provides: more than 120 banks, 100 navigation lines, 11 railways, 9 000 000 inhabitants, 22 languages, 50 000 millionaires (in dollars) in 1928. All these numbers express one reality, that is money. Everything seems related to it and Morand notices a certain waste, compensated nevertheless through the way the city is managed by its mixture of nations which are seen by means of the national stereotypes:

“La ville dépense tout, vit à crédit, laisse perdre la moitié de sa nourriture, spéculé, se ruine, refait sa vie, et rit. Un mot célèbre dit : « Les Juifs possèdent New York, les Irlandais l’administrent et les nègres en jouissent. »” [Morand, 1988:204].

New York is a **city of contrasts** as seen by Morand, being at the same time puritan and libertine, wild and civilised, luxurious and sordid, rich and poor (“image double”

[Morand, 1988:205]); it is the picture of “double” and “nothing” at the same time. This perspective gives the narrator the opportunity to mention some of the negative aspects of the city (and they are not few), all being determined of a restless way of living: “New York est une ville qui ne s’arrête, ne se détend jamais.” [Morand, 1988:207] Although at a greater scale, the city provides advantages and it seems to be the anticipation of a prosperous future in itself, at a smaller level, when it comes to a person’s life, it is harmful as it destroys the family life (no servants, no kitchen in the apartments are allowed), the relationship with the children (who are sent to kindergartens when they are 18 months old), the rest (as lunch is not possible and nor is the night rest because of the ever surrounding light and because of the noise caused by the means of transport). That is why, the city remains, in Morand’s opinion, a temporary place to stay, the ones who get rich deciding to choose a friendlier and more comfortable place to live:

“On s’use terriblement, on tombe, on vous emporte et la partie continue. Si l’on est trop jeune, trop vieux, trop las, on vit ailleurs : sur l’île, on demeure entre adultes. Personne n’habite plus New York pour son plaisir. On y reste juste le temps pour faire fortune. Chacun travaille le plus possible, le moins d’années possible. Après quarante ans, les plus chanceux commencent à aller pêcher le tarpon à Key West ; à cinquante ans on part jouer au golf à Cannes ; à soixante ans, on offre un stade à l’université de Columbia, libations au dieu de la fortune, mais on habite Fiesole.” [Morand, 1988:207, 208]

The impact of the city on its inhabitants is left at the end, perhaps because of the impact that it had on Morand himself, perhaps because this is the strongest impression that he had about it; it is a destructive city, just like a monster who kills people (“New York brise les nerfs [...]. New York mange les gens, n’en laisse que la fibre ; puis il les tue.” [Morand:1988, 208]). Comparing it to London, Morand uses two words, one stronger than the other: “le spleen de Londres” vs. “le cafard de New York” [Morand:1988, 209]. Spleen is often associated with melancholy, while the French term “cafard” renders a severe depression or apathy which is exactly the feeling described above when seeing New York as a kind of monster “eating” human lives.

The end of the book marks typographically and personally a type of distance that the author decides to take; it is the doubt that it is expressed by means of the future tense associated to questions, a doubt related to New York’s later existence:

“New York, saturé, éclatera-t-il un jour ? Cette cité verticale tombera peut-être à la renverse et nous nous réveillerons... Rien ne peut détruire Paris, nef insubmersible. Paris existe en moi ; il existera malgré Dieu, comme la raison. C’est ce qui me fait souvent l’aimer moins... Mais je ne suis pas toujours sûr de ce merveilleux cadeau qu’est New York. Si ce n’était qu’un rêve, qu’un essai prodigieux, qu’un avatar, qu’une renaissance éphémère, qu’un purgatoire magnifique ?” [Morand, 1988:209]

The French spirit embodied by Morand cannot help but comparing New York to Paris, in terms of ephemeral versus lasting. New York seems a city rising and falling, while Paris is metaphorically assimilated to a ship which never sinks. Nothing compares to Paris as Paris is an inner feeling more than a city for Morand who neither describes it, nor narrates about it, but simply mentions it as an undeniable existence, an existence which cannot be changed in spite of superior powers such as God’s or reason’s. The presence of the conditional clause emphasizes the doubt which the narrator expresses by

associating New York to a dream (a quickly disappearing form of perception), to an “avatar” (an embodiment of a reality at a given moment, subjected to change or even to disappearance) or to a “purgatory” (a transitory place where the souls stop before going to paradise or hell) or more directly to an “ephemeral rebirth”.

The above expressed ambiguity is the one on which the text finishes leaving the reader to decide for himself/herself whether the answer to the final question is affirmative or negative. However, the narrator’s opinion crosses the lines of his story by means of his using the “passé simple”, a tense expressing an action which finished:

“Les vagues atlantiques reviendront-elles se déchirer sur ces rochers rouges qui furent New York et ne le seront plus, quand rien ne troublera le silence d’un monde un instant agité ?” [Morand, 1988:209]

5. Conclusion

Morand narrates his own experience in New York, by bringing in front of the reader a subjective perception of the surrounding reality rendered in the first person in singular; he never loses the contact with his reader who is summoned to be careful as he is, from time to time, called to focus as the teller resorts to the second person of the plural, after long passages giving the impression of an objective narration coming from a seemingly impersonal observer. He sees the city of New York metaphorically resembling to a living organism whose cells move¹ admitting that a city keeps changing, being subjected to a series of processes making it renew again and again, all its spaces having to transform, expand or even move in time. The diversity of aspects included in the book provides it with the merit, which Sollers underlines very well, of offering the reader the advantage of taking part in the journey, of enjoying every detail and every comment as no matter how demanding and how curious he might be, he will find in it whatever he will be looking for:

“Le livre est publié en 1930, moment du grand tournant : économique, technique, géopolitique. Il est un des seuls Européens à saisir l’événement. D’où sa tentative de le maîtriser, dans un livre qui est à la fois un essai de mythologie, une prophétie nerveuse, un guide touristique, un reportage, un traité d’ethnologie, une longue nouvelle. ». [Sollers, 1988 : 8]

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PLURALITÉ DES VOIX DANS « ŒDIPE » ET « LE ROI CANDAULE » D'ANDRÉ GIDE

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Abstract: *Our paper proposes an approach of some monologue texts, taken from André Gide's plays "Le Roi Candaule" and "Œdipe". What interests us is the plurality of voices that are "heard" in this type of theatrical discourse, defined as the "solitary speech" of the character, speech that is essentially devoted to letting the character's most hidden but revealing thoughts "be heard". Our analysis of the monologues of Gygès and Oedipus shows that both characters have a special relationship with power, which they see as a condition for happiness. The monologues show them between the two extremes of happiness: complete happiness, defined as the possession of absolute power, and lost happiness, when they realise that their power is fleeting.*

Keywords: *plural voices; happiness; power*

Préambule

Notre prise de parole, aujourd'hui, propose une réflexion, une analyse de quelques monologues tirés de deux pièces de théâtre d'André Gide : *Le Roi Candaule*, drame en trois actes, représentée pour la première fois en 1901 et *Œdipe*, toujours un drame en trois actes, de 1931. Nous nous proposons d'observer et d'analyser la pluralité et la superposition ou bien le chevauchement des voix dans les textes monologaux qui constituent notre corpus.

Tout d'abord, deux questions pour justifier notre choix :

Pourquoi les monologues ?

Tout d'abord, parce que le discours monologal est une scène où le personnage est ou se croit seul sur la scène, contexte dans lequel la sincérité de la parole devient la caractéristique essentielle, l'auto-censure étant pratiquement abolie.

Ensuite, si dans la vie sociale le monologue expose l'émetteur au ridicule, dans le théâtre cela n'arrive jamais, puisque par le monologue, le personnage n'agit pas sur les autres personnages, mais sur lui-même ou sur les spectateurs/lecteurs.

Enfin, par sa caractéristique de « pensée verbalisée »¹ (Larthomas, 1980 : 372), le monologue sert à l'investigation psychologique du personnage, intervenant le plus souvent dans des moments critiques pour le personnage et marquant un moment clé de l'action.

Pourquoi ces deux pièces et pourquoi ces deux personnages ?

Tout d'abord, c'est la question du pouvoir et de la bâtardise qui les met ensemble. Leur pouvoir est conquis non pas par l'hérédité, mais par la force (Gygès) ou par l'intelligence et par la ruse (Œdipe) et la bâtardise est la seule légitimation de ce pouvoir : ils ne doivent rien qu'à eux-mêmes.

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¹ *s'y adresser au public, c'est passer obligatoirement du plan de la pensée à celui de la parole, pour revenir ensuite, le plus souvent, par une démarche inverse, à celui de la pensée. car la fonction essentielle de cette forme dramatique est, par cette sorte de monologue intérieur extériorisé, si l'on peut s'exprimer ainsi, de nous faire connaître les pensées, les intentions, les sentiments d'un personnage que nous ne connaîtrions autrement, comme dans la vie, que par ses actes, sa mimique, ses paroles, et par les paroles et les réactions des autres à son égard.* (Larthomas, 1980: 372)

Ensuite, c'est la question de la vue que les deux personnages ont en commun : savoir voir et comprendre, renoncer à la vue par autoflagellation (Œdipe), faire de la vue l'instrument du pouvoir et ensuite annuler sa valeur culturelle par le partage avec les autres (Gygès), voilà quelques instances dans lesquelles la possession et l'utilisation de cette faculté influence et définit le moi des deux personnages.

Enfin, la veine grecque des deux pièces. Si *Œdipe* a comme hypotextes *Antigone* et *Œdipe à Colone* de Sophocle et *Les Phéniciennes* d'Euripide, *Le Roi Candaule* « est né, peut-être simplement de la lecture d'Hérodote » (Gide, 1904 : 142), doublée d'une interrogation sur la place de l'art dans l'époque¹.

Les trois voix dans les monologues de Gygès : la voix du raisonneur, la voix du pauvre, la voix du petit tyran

Appartenant à la période dite « de charnière » dans la création d'André Gide, *Le Roi Candaule* propose, en 1901, un sujet inspiré à Hérodote : *Le Roi Candaule* présente la version tout personnelle de Gide de l'histoire du roi de Lydie : Candaule, roi tout puissant et riche est follement fier de la beauté de sa femme Nyssia et il prétend en faire sa richesse et que cette richesse soit dévoilée à toute sa cour. Ainsi, il fait un geste extrême : il laisse son humble serviteur, le pêcheur Gygès, voir et avoir la reine, à l'insu de cette dernière. Gygès est rendu invisible par la force magique de l'anneau que lui offre Candaule. Ce que Candaule ignore, c'est qu'en lui donnant la reine, il donne à Gygès un pouvoir illimité et incontrôlable. Après avoir possédé Nyssia, Gygès tue sa femme Trydo et, encore, sur le conseil d'une Nyssia offensée par le geste de son mari, le même Candaule. Et Gygès devient le nouveau roi et tyran de la cité, imposant à sa nouvelle femme, Nyssia, de porter le voile.

Le monologue qui nous intéresse occupe la scène 2 de l'acte III : C'est après l'étreinte amoureuse entre Gygès et Nyssia. Le discours prononcé en solitude par Gygès montre un homme partagé entre l'ivresse de la nuit d'amour et la honte, le désespoir du serviteur qui a poussé au bout, qui a franchi l'interdit. Le monologue laisse entendre trois voix : l'une, effrayée et honteuse, du pauvre serviteur qui a franchi les limites, l'autre, timide, du Gygès qui a effleuré le pouvoir, le petit tyran naissant. Entre les deux, la voix du raisonneur qui essaie de maintenir l'équilibre. La voix tyran naissant dévoile un Gygès qui a goûté à un plaisir interdit et qui a envie d'avoir encore, qui voit dans l'anneau l'adjuvant et le signe de son pouvoir. C'est un pouvoir qui lui fait peur, mais qu'il convoite dans le même temps :

Mon anneau ! Mon anneau !

Il le presse de ses lèvres

Cache-moi ma pensée !...

Tu leur fais peur à tous, invisible Gygès (Gide, 1904 : 219)

« Gygès a peur de Gygès » (Gide, 1904 : 219) C'est la phrase clé qui, dans ce monologue, met en face à face les, les deux Gygès – le pauvre et le petit tyran –, dans leur moment de rencontre qui marque aussi le passage du pêcheur vers le tyran. Ce n'est qu'à lui-même que parle Gygès : le petit tyran naissant, jaloux déjà de son anneau et de

¹ CREON : *Étéocle t-a-t-il lu les réflexions sur le mal du siècle ? ŒDIPE : Sur la peste ? CREON : Mais non... « Le Mal du siècle », avec ce sous-titre : « Notre Inquiétude ». Il s'agit naturellement d'ordre tout à fait supérieur.* (Gide, 1931 : 29)
[...] *aujourd'hui, l'art n'est plus.* (Gide, 1904 : 140)
[...] *les détenteurs de l'art, de la beauté, de la richesse, les « classes dirigeantes »... craignant de ne pouvoir plus les montrer.* (Gide, 1904 : 142)

son pouvoir, veut déjà chasser le pêcheur Gygès, le serviteur humble qui a joui de l'étreinte d'une femme interdite, la reine, et qui est accablé par la honte. Ce dernier, le pêcheur Gygès dont la voix se fait entendre dans la deuxième partie du monologue, oscille entre l'amour pour une femme à laquelle il n'ose adresser la parole qu'ici, de manière indirecte – « tous mes embrassements trop durs t'ai-je blessée ? » (Gide, 1904 : 280) – et la honte d'avoir touché la reine, donc une femme interdite.

Amour (il faut lire « passion charnelle ») et effroi (Gide, 1904 : 280) sont les deux émotions (dans le sens aristotélicien) qui dominent le pêcheur Gygès. L'amour d'un homme qui ne peut rester indifférent devant la beauté royale de Nyssia, l'effroi du serviteur qui ne peut encore s'assumer avoir passé outre.

Le Gygès de ce monologue, déjà partagé, est tout différent du Gygès narrateur et raisonneur du Prologue : « Gygès, le fier, Gygès le sobre » (Gide, 1904 : 202) qui pose, en début de son discours monologique, la question du bonheur, faisant passer au premier plan la voix du raisonneur : « Que celui qui tient un bonheur – qu'il se cache » (Gide, 1904 : 201).

La question du bonheur est d'ailleurs celle qui constitue l'enjeu dramatique : le détenteur du bonheur, Candaule, le perd, pour ne pas avoir su le cacher aux autres. Il fait de son bonheur conjugal, un bonheur collectif. Or, c'est justement le partage du bonheur qui l'en dépossède. Par contre, Gygès apprend bien la leçon du non-partage et il fera valoir aussi ce qu'il y a d'immuable dans sa vie : la force : « ma force / Avec quoi j'ai construit ma hutte et ma fierté » (Gide, 1904 : 200). C'est de cette force qu'il construit, après avoir possédé Nyssia, son bonheur : une nouvelle hutte – le palais et une nouvelle fierté – la royauté. Et il saura bien cacher son bonheur, car le geste d'imposer le voile à Nyssia, sa reine après le meurtre de Candaule, est un geste à la fois tyrannique et de non-partage.

Les trois voix dans les monologues d'Œdipe : la voix du tout puissant, la voix du roi, la voix didascalique

Texte paru en 1931, dans une période pendant laquelle Gide avait abandonné le symbolisme en faveur d'une écriture militante, exprimant ses angoisses existentielles de manière plus explicite, *Œdipe* garde toutefois, en grandes lignes, l'histoire classique d'Œdipe, notamment dans les coordonnées essentielles : enfant perdu, sans famille connue, Œdipe, devenu roi de Thèbes et mari de Jocaste avec laquelle il a quatre progénitures, apprend avec effroi qu'il a vécu en parricide et en incestueux, vingt ans de faux bonheur. Au moment de la révélation, il est écrasé en apprenant sa vraie identité.

Il y a deux monologues d'Œdipe qui nous intéressent : le premier est la réplique qui ouvre la pièce, la deuxième marque, dans l'acte II, la découverte de l'inceste et du parricide.

Les deux monologues sont construits sur la superposition et sur l'intercalage de trois voix : la voix du tout-puissant, la voix du roi – en deux instances : la le vainqueur et le vaincu – et une voix didascalique, du faux modeste dans le monologue de l'incipit et du raisonneur, au deuxième acte.

Le premier discours monologique joue aussi bien le rôle de l'incipit classique, en figeant le temps, le lieu et le personnage qui domine l'action : Thèbes, dans la vingtième année du règne d'Œdipe. Mais, il s'instaure déjà un clivage entre l'Œdipe roi, terrestre, bâtard qui a conquis sa cité et sa femme « par la force de mes poignets » (Gide, 1931 : 5) et l'Œdipe dieu, qui fait entendre sa voix solennelle au début du monologue : « Me voici tout présent, complet en cet instant de la durée éternelle » (Gide, 1931 : 5). Il y a une sorte de faux jeu qui règle la succession des deux voix dans ce monologue, interrompu par

l'irruption de la troisième, celle didascalique. L'Œdipe dieu a la voix du metteur en scène qui dirige tout et tous, qui arrange le décor et le mouvement des acteurs et qui leur donne la parole, mais tout doit s'en tenir à sa mise en scène hautaine. L'Œdipe roi est un acteur qui ne fait plus la différence entre la vérité de son vécu et la manière faussée, imposée par le metteur en scène, dans laquelle il doit se présenter : « J'atteins au sommet du bonheur » (Gide, 1931 : 5) est la réplique qui résume le trajet d'une vie bâtarde, faussée par le discours. Encore plus, il arrive qu'Œdipe croie lui-même à ce faux bonheur qu'il affirme fièrement.

Lorsqu'il quitte le masque de l'acteur, dans le monologue de l'acte II, Œdipe prononce, par contre : « Comme si le bonheur était ce que je n'avais jamais cherché. C'est pour m'en évader que je m'élançai de chez Polybe. » (Gide, 1931 : 53) La voix du roi vainqueur est celle du bâtard qui ne doit rien à personne, qui se pose en égal, voire en créateur d'une « sacrée puissance » (Gide, 1931 : 5) Si cet Œdipe a créé « au-dessus de soi » (Gide, 1931 : 6) un dieu, ce n'est pas pour en reconnaître la toute-puissance – celle-ci il croit l'avoir conquise lui-même – mais pour justifier, devant les autres et devant sa conscience, ses actions : « Pour moi, j'agis toujours comme conseillé par un dieu » (Gide, 1931 : 6). La voix didascalique, à son tour, ne fait qu'introduire avec bienveillance les paroles hautaines du roi vainqueur.

Le deuxième monologue, par contre, apporte la modestie comme tonalité générale, là où l'emphase dominait le premier. Au discours égalitariste sur la divinité répond la parole mortifiée du roi vaincu, qui regrette ne pas avoir cherché les réponses près de Dieu¹, le *dieu* avec minuscule initiale est remplacé par *Dieu* auquel l'homme Œdipe reconnaît la supériorité du savoir. La voix didascalique appelle Œdipe à la raison, d'un ton accusateur, loin de la bienveillance du monologue initial. Enfin, la voix du tout puissant, qu'Œdipe fait sienne encore une fois est sentencieuse et accusatrice. Dieu annonce la punition et Œdipe montre avoir accepté le châtement, son unique salvation dorénavant. C'est la sentence de la dé-déification d'Œdipe : « Œdipe, le temps de ta quiétude est passé. Réveille-toi de ton bonheur » (Gide, 1931 : 56)

Conclusion

Le bonheur s'avère donc la valeur et l'objet qui conditionne le désir de Gygès et d'Œdipe. Pour les deux, la détention du pouvoir devient synonyme de « bonheur », les deux se perdent pour avoir mal-utilisé le pouvoir et pour avoir usurpé un pouvoir qui ne leur appartenait pas.

¹ « Que chercher près d'un Dieu ? Des réponses... » (Gide, 1931 : 55)

Annexe 1

GYGÈS

Que celui qui tient un bonheur, – qu’il se cache !

Ou bien qu’il cache aux autres son bonheur.

LA VOIX DU RAISONNEUR

C’est ici que le roi Candaule, dans une heure,
Aidera les flatteurs à s’enrichir à ses dépens. –
Tant pis ! – Non habile à flatter, ni à bien dire,
Et plus fort de mes bras que de ma langue,

Moi, Gygès le pauvre,

LA VOIX DU PAUVRE (FIER)

Pour les mieux posséder, je ne tiens que quatre choses sur la terre :

Ma hutte, mon filet, ma femme et ma misère.

Une cinquième encore : ma force,

Avec quoi j’ai construit ma hutte et ma fierté ;

(Le Roi Candaule, Prologue)

Annexe 2

*GYGÈS, sitôt seul, s’est laissé rouler à terre contre le banc où
était assis Philèbe, comme écrasé de honte ou de désespoir.*

Mon anneau ! mon anneau !

LA VOIX DU PETIT TYRAN

Il le presse de ses lèvres.

Cache-moi ma pensée !...

LA VOIX DU PETIT TYRAN

Tu leur fais peur à tous, invisible Gygès.

Anneau ! que ne peux-tu me cacher à moi-même ?

LA VOIX DU RAISONNEUR

Car Gygès a peur de Gygès.

Il se prend la tête dans les mains et sanglote.

Sous mes embrassements trop durs t’ai-je blessée ?

LA VOIX DU PAUVRE (EFFRAYÉ)

– Plein d’amour et d’effroi, j’ai fui ; je l’ai laissée
Dormant encore et sur le bord du lit posée...

J’ai couru dans la nuit ; j’ai fui comme un voleur,

LA VOIX DU PAUVRE (EFFRAYÉ)

Sur le gazon glacé, laver dans la rosée

La fièvre de mes mains, l’horreur de ma pensée,

LA VOIX DU PAUVRE (EFFRAYÉ)

La rougeur de mon front, le crime de mon cœur...

– J’entends venir... Où me cacher ?... C’est elle !

Il reste à terre, appuyé un peu contre le banc. Entrent Nyssia et Candaule.

(Le Roi Candaule, Acte II, Scène 2)

Annexe 3

ŒDIPE

Me voici tout présent, complet en cet instant de la durée éternelle ; pareil à quelqu'un qui s'avancerait sur le devant d'un théâtre et qui dirait : Je suis Œdipe. Quarante ans d'âge, vingt ans de règne. Par la force de mes poignets, j'atteins au sommet du bonheur. **Enfant perdu, trouvé, sans état civil, sans papiers, je suis surtout heureux de ne devoir rien qu'à moi-même. Le bonheur ne me fut pas donné ; je l'ai conquis. Aussi l'infatuation me guette ; et c'est pour l'éviter que je m'étais d'abord demandé s'il n'y a pas de la prédestination dans mon cas. Par crainte de ce vertige d'orgueil qui fait chanceler certains capitaines, et non des moins illustres... Allons, allons ! Œdipe, ne t'embarque pas dans de trop longues phrases dont tu risques de ne pouvoir sortir. Dis simplement ce que tu as à dire et n'apporte pas à tes paroles ce gonflement que déjà tu prétends éviter dans ta vie. Tout est simple et tout vient à point. Sois simple toi-même et direct comme la flèche. Droit au but... Ceci me ramène à ce que je disais tout à l'heure : Oui, si parfois je parviens à me croire lancé par les dieux, c'est pour en devenir plus modeste et reporter à eux le mérite de ma destinée. Car, dans mon cas précisément, c'est assez difficile de n'être pas quelque peu gonflé par soi-même. J'y parviens en créant au-dessus de moi une sacrée puissance à laquelle, que je le veuille ou non, je sois soumis. Qui ne se soumettrait volontiers à une sacrée puissance, dès qu'elle conduit où je suis ? Un dieu te mène, Œdipe ; et il n'y en a pas deux comme toi. C'est ce que je me dis les dimanches, et jours de fête. Le reste de la semaine je ne trouve pas le temps d'y penser. D'ailleurs, à quoi bon ? Je raisonne mal ; la logique n'est pas mon fort ; je procède par intuition. Il y en a qui se demandent à tout bout de champ et dans tous les embarras de voitures : dois-je céder le pas ? ai-je le droit de passer outre ? Pour moi, j'agis toujours comme conseillé par un dieu.**

LA VOIX DU
TOUT PUISSANT
LA VOIX DU ROI
(VAINQUEUR)

LA VOIX
DIDASCALIQUE

LA VOIX DU ROI
(VAINQUEUR)

LA VOIX DU ROI
(VAINQUEUR)
LA VOIX DU
TOUT PUISSANT

LA VOIX DU ROI
(VAINQUEUR)

(Œdipe, Acte I)

Annexe 4

(Tirésias sort.)

ŒDIPE

Va-t'en ! Va-t'en ! **Comme si le bonheur était ce que j'avais jamais cherché ! C'est pour m'en évader que je m'élançai de chez Polybe, à vingt ans, les jarrets tendus, les poings clos. Qui dira si l'aurore au-dessus du Parnasse était belle, quand j'avançais dans la rosée, vers le Dieu dont j'attendais l'oracle, ne possédant plus rien que ma force, mais riche de toutes les possibilités de mon être, et ne sachant encore qui j'étais. Oui, de la réponse du Dieu, devait dépendre ma destinée ; et je m'y soumettais avec joie... Mais il y a quelque chose ici, que je ne parviens pas à comprendre. Il est vrai que, jusqu'à présent, je n'ai pas beaucoup réfléchi. Il faut, pour réfléchir, s'arrêter. En ce temps, j'étais pressé d'agir... Quand j'ai quitté la route qui me conduisait vers le Dieu, était-ce vraiment parce que je n'avais plus les mains pures ? Je ne m'en souciais pas, alors. Il me semble même aujourd'hui que c'est mon crime qui m'achemina d'abord vers le sphinx. Que chercher près d'un Dieu ? Des réponses. Je me sentais moi-même une réponse à je ne savais encore quelle question. Ce fut celle du sphinx. Je l'ai vaincu, moi, perspicace. Mais depuis, tout n'a-t-il pas été pour moi s'obscurcissant ? Mais depuis, mais depuis... Qu'as-tu fait, Œdipe ? Engourdi dans la récompense, je dors depuis vingt ans. Mais à présent, enfin, j'écoute en moi le monstre nouveau qui s'étire. Un grand destin m'attend, tapi dans les ombres du soir. Œdipe, le temps de la quiétude est passé. Réveille-toi de ton bonheur.**

LA VOIX DU
ROI (VAINCU)

LA VOIX DU
ROI (VAINCU)

LA VOIX
DIDASCALIQUE

LA VOIX DU
TOUT
PUISSANT

(Œdipe, Acte II)

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LE VOCI FEMMINILI IN “LA CITTA E LA CASA” DI NATALIA GINZBURG

Abdellah MAASSOUM*

Abstract: *This article explores the intersections of feminist literature, the epistolary novel, and the novel "The city and the house" by Natalia Ginzburg. Feminist literature provides a platform for marginalized voices to be heard and challenges dominant cultural narratives. The epistolary novel, a genre that uses letters or diary entries to tell a story, has been utilized by feminist writers to give voice to women's experiences. "The city and the house" is a post-World War II novel that explores themes of friendship, family, identity, and the changing social and political landscape of Italy during this period. The novel's use of letters and diary entries fits within the tradition of the epistolary novel and allows for a more intimate look into the characters' lives and motivations. Ginzburg's portrayal of women characters' challenges traditional gender roles and highlights the struggles of women in dominant societies. Overall, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of feminist literature and the epistolary novel in giving voice to marginalized experiences, as well as the significance of "The city and the house" within the broader literary tradition.*

Keywords: *voices - female character; women; gaze; representation*

Introduzione

Il romanzo epistolare è una forma di narrazione che si basa sulla scrittura di lettere tra i personaggi, offrendo una prospettiva intima e personale sulla storia raccontata. In questo contesto, le scrittrici femminili hanno utilizzato il romanzo epistolare come una forma di espressione potente e innovativa per dare voce alle loro esperienze e alle loro idee, che altrimenti sarebbero state silenziate o ignorate dalla società maschilista del loro tempo.

In questa ricerca, mi concentrerò sulle voci femminili nel romanzo epistolare di Natalia Ginzburg "LA CITTÀ E LA CASA", esplorando come la scrittrice abbia utilizzato questa forma narrativa per sfidare le convenzioni sociali e per rappresentare le complesse esperienze delle donne. Analizzeremo come l'autrice abbia utilizzato le lettere scritte dai personaggi femminili per esplorare temi come l'amore, l'amicizia, la sessualità, l'identità e l'empowerment, ponendo l'accento sulla prospettiva delle donne. Inoltre, in questa ricerca, analizzeremo anche il modo in cui le scrittrici femminili hanno utilizzato il romanzo epistolare per sfidare i ruoli di genere tradizionali e per contestare la discriminazione e l'oppressione di cui le donne erano oggetto nella società dell'epoca. Esamineremo le opere della scrittrice femminile più influenti nella storia della letteratura, Natalia Ginzburg, per comprendere come abbia dato voce alle donne attraverso la forma del romanzo epistolare. In definitiva, questa ricerca si propone di esplorare il potere della voce femminile nel romanzo epistolare, dimostrando come le scrittrici femminili abbiano utilizzato questa forma narrativa per esprimere la propria visione del mondo e per sfidare le norme culturali e sociali del loro tempo. La rappresentazione delle donne nella letteratura di Natalia Ginzburg: In che modo Natalia Ginzburg rappresenta le donne nel romanzo "La città e la casa"?

L'ipotesi per la prima problematica potrebbe essere :

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- Che Ginzburg rappresenta le donne nel romanzo come forti e indipendenti, capaci di resistere alle difficoltà della vita e di affrontare i problemi della famiglia e della società.
- Che Ginzburg rappresenta le donne nel romanzo come vittime della società patriarcale e delle aspettative sociali imposte su di loro, ma che trovano comunque modi creativi per sopravvivere e resistere.

Le domande che si propongono per questa ricerca :

- Come sono rappresentate le voci femminili nel romanzo « La città e la casa » ?
- Perché Natalia Ginzburg ha scelto questo stile di letteratura ? Cosa rappresentano le donne nel romanzo ? .

Letteratura femminile

La letteratura femminile cerca di analizzare la realtà esprimendo un nuovo punto di vista femminile che sfugge ai modelli della letteratura "maschile". I romanzi raccontano spesso personaggi femminili, ponendo grande attenzione all'indagine psicologica e alle forme concrete della vita sociale e familiare. Alcune delle caratteristiche della letteratura femminile di Natalia Ginzburg includono:

1. Narrazione intima: Ginzburg scrive in modo intimo e personale, spesso raccontando la vita quotidiana delle donne e delle loro esperienze.
2. Sensibilità femminista: Ginzburg è stata una femminista attiva e la sua scrittura riflette questa sensibilità. La sua narrativa spesso evidenzia l'oppressione delle donne e la lotta per l'emancipazione femminile.
3. Linguaggio semplice e diretto: la scrittura di Ginzburg è conosciuta per la sua semplicità e chiarezza. Usa un linguaggio diretto e senza fronzoli per raccontare le sue storie.
4. Focus sui rapporti interpersonali: Ginzburg si concentra spesso sui rapporti tra le persone, in particolare sui legami familiari e su quelli tra uomini e donne.
5. Realismo sociale: Ginzburg è stata una scrittrice impegnata socialmente e la sua scrittura riflette questa preoccupazione. La sua narrativa spesso esplora le questioni sociali del suo tempo e le difficoltà che le persone affrontano nella vita di tutti i giorni.

In sintesi, la letteratura femminile di Natalia Ginzburg è caratterizzata da una scrittura intima e personale, sensibilità femminista, linguaggio semplice e diretto, focus sui rapporti interpersonali e realismo sociale. In generale, il ruolo delle donne nella letteratura era ancora in evoluzione, ma ci sono state alcune donne coraggiose e determinate che hanno aperto la strada per le future generazioni di scrittrici. La storia della letteratura femminile rappresenta un importante capitolo nella storia della letteratura mondiale. Le donne hanno dovuto lottare duramente per essere riconosciute come scrittrici e per avere accesso alla pubblicazione delle loro opere.

ROMANZO EPISTOLARE

Tra i generi letterari più popolari nella letteratura femminile si annovera il romanzo epistolare, che si basa su una struttura narrativa fatta di lettere scritte da uno o più personaggi, attraverso cui viene sviluppata la trama del romanzo. Questo genere letterario è stato particolarmente utilizzato dalle donne scrittrici del XVIII e XIX secolo. Un romanzo epistolare è un tipo di romanzo che utilizza la forma della corrispondenza tra i personaggi come mezzo principale per raccontare la storia. In questo tipo di romanzo, i personaggi si scambiano lettere, note e messaggi che diventano la forma

primaria attraverso cui si sviluppa il dialogo e la trama. In un romanzo epistolare, ogni personaggio diventa il narratore della propria storia. Ciò significa che il punto di vista è spesso limitato a quello del personaggio che sta scrivendo la lettera, il che può fornire una prospettiva più intima sulle emozioni e sui pensieri dei personaggi. Questo stile narrativo è stato utilizzato da molti autori nel corso dei secoli, tra cui Samuel Richardson, Jane Austen e Bram Stoker.

La struttura di un romanzo epistolare è spesso frammentata, con salti temporali e di luogo che si verificano tra una lettera e l'altra. Questo stile può creare un senso di suspense e mistero, poiché i lettori devono cercare di ricostruire gli eventi mancanti tra le lettere. Tuttavia, questo stile di narrazione può anche rendere la trama più difficile da seguire, poiché il lettore deve raccogliere i dettagli della storia attraverso le lettere. La caratterizzazione dei personaggi in un romanzo epistolare è spesso molto approfondita, poiché i lettori possono leggere le loro confessioni e le loro emozioni più intime. Inoltre, i personaggi che scrivono le lettere spesso rivelano i loro pensieri, i loro sentimenti e le loro motivazioni, il che può rendere la caratterizzazione più approfondita e complessa.

I temi comuni nei romanzi epistolari includono l'amore, la passione, la morte, la solitudine, la nostalgia e la separazione. Questi temi sono spesso esplorati attraverso le lettere dei personaggi, che possono rivelare le loro emozioni più profonde e le loro esperienze di vita. Un romanzo epistolare è un tipo di romanzo che utilizza la forma della corrispondenza tra i personaggi come mezzo principale per raccontare la storia. Le sue caratteristiche principali sono la corrispondenza, la narrazione in prima persona, la struttura frammentata, la caratterizzazione dei personaggi, i temi e lo stile.

Le caratteristiche principali di un romanzo epistolare sono

1. Corrispondenza: come accennato, la narrazione è costruita attraverso la scrittura di lettere, note e messaggi tra i personaggi. Questi scritti diventano la forma primaria attraverso cui si sviluppa il dialogo e la trama.
2. Narrazione in prima persona: poiché la maggior parte del racconto è scritta in forma di lettera, ogni personaggio diventa il narratore della propria storia.
3. Struttura frammentata: in un romanzo epistolare, la trama è spesso frammentata, con salti temporali e di luogo che si verificano tra una lettera e l'altra.
4. Personaggi: la caratterizzazione dei personaggi in un romanzo epistolare è spesso molto approfondita, poiché i lettori possono leggere le loro confessioni e le loro emozioni più intime.
5. Temi: i temi comuni nei romanzi epistolari includono l'amore, la passione, la morte, la solitudine, la nostalgia e la separazione.
6. Stile: la scrittura di un romanzo epistolare è spesso molto attenta alla lingua e alla forma delle lettere, e può includere anche la descrizione di eventi e luoghi.

Biografia di Natalia Ginzburg

Natalia Ginzburg è stata una delle più grandi scrittrici italiane del Novecento. Durante la sua vita, Ginzburg si dedicò alla scrittura, diventando una delle principali voci della letteratura italiana. La scrittura di Natalia Ginzburg è stata fondamentale per il riconoscimento della letteratura femminile in Italia, aprendo la strada a molte altre scrittrici che si sono affacciate sulla scena letteraria nel corso del XX secolo. La sua opera ha ispirato generazioni di scrittrici e lettrici, diventando un punto di riferimento per coloro che lottano per la libertà di espressione e la parità di genere. Natalia Ginzburg nasce a Palermo il 14 luglio 1916. Suo padre era il celebre scienziato ebreo Giuseppe Levi e sua madre era Lidia Tanzi, milanese. Suo padre in più di essere un celebre scienziato e anche

un professore di educazione che sostiene ¹l'antifascismo. Per la loro controposizione al sistema fascista, Giuseppe Levi e i suoi tre figli furono incarcerati e condannati. Di conseguenza, Natalia trascorre la sua infanzia in un'epoca poco caratterizzata dall'affermazione del regime fascista e dall'emarginazione della popolazione ebraica. Cresciuta in un ambiente culturale e intellettuale antifascista, la giovane finì ben presto sotto il costante controllo della polizia fascista in patria. Era giovane quando ha assistito all'arresto di suo fratello e suo padre. Tra l'anno 1952 e 1957 la sua produzione letteraria diventò forte. Tra i suoi testi abbiamo: "Tutti i nostri ieri" e "Valentino", in cui emerge una complessa e tragica cospirazione familiare scopri difficili relazioni interpersonali, morali ed emotive, con cui vince anche l'importante premio Viareggio, e "Sagittario". Nel 1960 il marito viene incaricato di dirigere l'Istituto di Cultura Italiana a Londra, dove vivranno per alcuni anni prima di tornare a Roma. Negli anni sessanta ha pubblicato anche altri romanzi come "Le voci della sera", in cui la voce del narratore è quella della protagonista Elsa, una ragazza che vive in un piccolo paese vicino a Torino che evoca nostalgia, sottolineando il flusso sordo e nichilista di un flusso esistenziale senza meta. Negli anni sessanta ha pubblicato anche altri romanzi come "Le voci della sera", in cui la voce del narratore è quella della protagonista Elsa, una ragazza che vive in un piccolo paese vicino a Torino che evoca nostalgia, sottolineando il flusso sordo e nichilista di un flusso esistenziale senza meta. E abbiamo anche "Cinque romanzi brevi" e il celebre "Lessico familiare". Le commedie "Ti ho sposato per allegria", "L'inserzione" e "La segretaria". Dopo che ha finito di tradurre "Una vita", romanzo che stava scritto dall'autore francese ²Guy de Maupassant. All'età di 75 anni Natalia Ginzburg muore la notte fra il 6 e 7 ottobre 1991.

LE TEMATICHE ED I PERSONAGGI IN "LA CITTÀ E LA CASA"

La storia del romanzo

Il romanzo "La città e la casa" di Natalia Ginzburg è un'opera intensamente caratterizzata da una vasta gamma di personaggi che abitano la città di Roma e la casa che funge da sfondo alla narrazione. I personaggi sono tutti individui complessi e tridimensionali, ognuno con le proprie peculiarità e sfumature, che si intersecano e si influenzano reciprocamente nel corso della storia, è un'opera che affronta tematiche universali come l'amore, la famiglia, la morte e l'identità, attraverso la descrizione dei personaggi che popolano la città di Roma e la casa in cui vivono. Il romanzo "La città e la casa" di Natalia Ginzburg è un'opera che esplora il tema della famiglia e delle relazioni umane attraverso l'analisi della vita di un gruppo di amici, e dei loro figli, loro famiglia nella città di Roma durante gli anni '50. La scrittrice italiana, con la sua abilità descrittiva e il suo stile essenziale e preciso, dipinge un ritratto realistico e toccante di un gruppo di adulti italiani, mettendo in luce le tensioni, le dinamiche e le contraddizioni che animano le relazioni tra i personaggi e il loro ambiente sociale. Nel paragrafo successivo, si esploreranno in maggior dettaglio i temi e i motivi che caratterizzano questo romanzo La Città e casa, romanzo epistolare pubblicato nel 1984, racconta la storia comune della gente comune. I protagonisti vive amori e passioni meschine e commette errori non

¹L'antifascismo : è l'opposizione organizzata al fascismo vale a dire al regime politico le cui caratteristiche principali sono lo spirito nazionalista, l'instaurazione di un potere forte e una politica reazionaria.

² Guy de Maupassant: è uno scrittore e giornalista letterario francese nato il 5 agosto 1850 al castello di Miromesnil a Tourville-sur-Arques e morto il 6 luglio 1893 nel 16° arrondissement di Parigi.

facilmente comprensibili. Personaggi comuni dai nomi un po' vecchi come Alberico, Ferruccio, Albina e Adermo. La città e la casa è soprattutto la storia di Giuseppe. Giuseppe ha ormai cinquant'anni e si è trasferito in America con il fratello. Perché, secondo lui, non c'è niente da associare a Roma. Ha un figlio di 20 anni, ma non gli piace. Ha una casa, ma la vende velocemente senza pensarci troppo. Ha degli amici, ma i suoi amici non bastano a trattenerlo. Ha una vecchia fiamma di nome Lucrezia, ma non era vero amore. Poi va in America, dove lo aspetta suo fratello Ferruccio. Comincia con la certezza che si sentirà di nuovo a suo agio accanto a lui, e alla fine scrive il romanzo che ha sempre voluto scrivere. Parte per ritrovare se stesso, ma finisce per vivere la vita di suo fratello, morto mesi dopo che Giuseppe si era stabilito in America. È sposato con la vedova di Ferruccio, lavora dove lavorava suo fratello e vive nella casa originaria di Ferruccio. A nulla vale la preghiera di un amico che gli manda un messaggio per tornare a casa. Giuseppe non tornerà mai più, come se tornare significasse fallimento. Ma ancor prima di partire, sapeva benissimo che Princeton non sarebbe mai stata la sua città o la sua casa. Cammino molto a Roma. Ieri abbiamo preso l'autobus per Piazza San Silvestro. Niente di che, Piazza San Silvestro [...]. Ma l'ho salutata a lungo e affettuosamente. Ci sono altri posti in America con turisti, mendicanti e sirene. Ma non mi importa di loro perché non c'è molto che tu possa fare nella vita. Ad un certo punto della vita, tutto ciò che vediamo per la prima volta ci diventa estraneo. Lo vediamo come turista interessato ma freddo. appartiene a qualcun altro. Roma, li salutò Giuseppe. È sempre stata la sua città, ma non è più casa sua. La dicotomia città-patria è al centro di questo breve e intenso romanzo. Se Roma è sicuramente la "città" nel titolo del libro, identificare la loro "patria" non è così facile.

Messaggio che vuole trasmettere attraverso il romanzo Il romanzo "La città e la casa" di Natalia Ginzburg affronta molteplici tematiche, e quindi non ha un unico messaggio preciso, ma piuttosto trasmette una serie di messaggi che si intersecano e si complementano a vicenda. Tuttavia, ci sono alcuni temi principali che emergono dal romanzo e che possono essere interpretati come messaggi fondamentali dell'opera. In secondo luogo, il romanzo affronta il tema dell'identità e della ricerca di un senso di appartenenza. Ginzburg crea personaggi che lottano per trovare il loro posto nel mondo e per conciliare le aspettative del passato con le esigenze del presente. Questo può essere interpretato come un richiamo alla necessità di sviluppare una propria identità e di trovare un equilibrio tra la tradizione e la modernità.

In terzo luogo, il romanzo esplora il tema della solitudine e dell'isolamento. Ginzburg mostra come i personaggi del romanzo siano legati da un senso di appartenenza e di nostalgia per il passato, ma allo stesso tempo si sentano separati e distanti l'uno dall'altro. Questo può essere interpretato come un richiamo alla necessità di cercare di superare la solitudine e di sviluppare relazioni umane significative. Infine, il romanzo affronta il tema dell'amore e delle relazioni umane, mostrando come spesso queste siano difficili e conflittuali. Ginzburg crea personaggi che sono alla ricerca dell'amore e della felicità, ma che si scontrano con le difficoltà delle relazioni umane e con la durezza della vita. Ciò può essere interpretato come un richiamo alla necessità di imparare ad affrontare e superare le difficoltà delle relazioni umane, e di trovare la felicità e il senso della vita nonostante le sfide che si presentano.

In sintesi, il romanzo "La città e la casa" di Natalia Ginzburg trasmette una serie di messaggi importanti, tra cui sviluppare una propria identità e di cercare di superare la solitudine, di affrontare e superare le difficoltà delle relazioni umane, e di trovare la felicità e il senso della vita nonostante le sfide che si presentano nell'analisi discorsiva del romanzo.

Il romanzo "La città e la casa" di Natalia Ginzburg presenta una varietà di personaggi che rappresentano una microscopica sezione della società italiana degli anni '50. La narrazione è centrata sulle due protagoniste Giuseppe e Lucrezia, ma la loro storia è intrecciata con quella di altri personaggi che gravitano intorno a loro, creando una rete di relazioni complesse e articolate. Nel romanzo abbiamo preso qualche passaggio in cui le personaggi femminili mostrano il loro sentito, esperienza, sogno e desiderio. Adesso facciamo l'analisi sulle lesvole femminili nel romanzo "La città e la casa":

Dopo Viterbo, mi sono innamorata due o tre volte. Una volta di un cliente di Piero, uno che a Perugia ha un negozio di ceramiche. Ma erasempre molto preoccupato per una sua questione di denari e non si è accortodi me. Un'altra volta di un archeologo inglese amico di Serena. L'una e l'altra volta non era importante e subito era finito. Come sai ho l'innamoramento facile. Sono passati dei mesi, ero triste e ho pensato che volevo ancora un figlio, perché avere la pancia mi piace. Piero prima era un po' contrario, poi si è rassegnato. Quando Vito aveva tre mesi, ho smesso di allattarlo e non ingrano con lo svezzamento.

In questa citazione Lucrezia parla del suo amore facile a Giuseppe, nella quale racconta le sue esperienze con altri uomini in cui si innamorava ogni volta. Questa citazione mostra che le donne che hanno l'amore facile non possono controllare il loro sentimento e vogliono sempre essere amate, desiderate e essere felici nonostante non è reciproco. Questo ci fa riflettere sulle donne che vogliono sentirsi apprezzate, amate e quelle che vogliono colmare la mancanza di affetto che non hanno avuto nella loro infanzia. La citazione trasmette una sensazione di debolezza ma anche la fragilità della donna quando si innamora.

Da ragazza, io desideravo vivere in campagna e avere molti bambini. Ho avuto quello che volevo ma intanto sono diventata diversa. I bambini mi vanno bene, ma della campagna ne ho fin sopra gli occhi. Vorrei avere intorno una città: Princeton. Invece ho intorno solo dei prati e dei boschi.

Lucrezia parla del suo desiderio quando era ragazza, quello di avere molti bambini e di vivere in compagnia ma la sua visione ha cambiato quando è diventata una donna. In questa citazione mostra che i sogni di una ragazza nella sua infanzia, quella di aver una perfetta vita con bambini, amore, una vita semplice, può cambiare quando diventiamo adulte perché l'esperienza della vita cambia le persone. La citazione trasmette una sensazione di libertà, innocenza, amore e passione.

A venticinque anni io ero sposata da tre anni e avevo già due figli, però mia madre mi comandava e io le ubbidivo. Le telefonavo dieci volte al giorno e le chiedevo come mi dovevo vestire e cosa dovevo cucinare, e lei con la sua voce grossa rispondeva a tutto, punto per punto. Piero l'avevo sposato perché a lei piaceva, lo trovavo un uomo buono, serio, calmo, «un lavoratore»

Una giovane donna che si trovava costretta a sposarsi senza amore, solo per accontentare sua madre. La sua vita matrimoniale non era felice, ma ella obbediva alle richieste della madre senza mai ribellarsi. La citazione ci mostra come la donna non abbia scelto liberamente il proprio marito, ma sia stata costretta a farlo per motivi di convenienza familiare. Il fatto che ella "obbediva alla madre" ci fa comprendere che questa era una figura molto potente nella sua vita, capace di condizionarla anche in decisioni importanti come quella del matrimonio. Questo ci fa riflettere su come le

pressioni sociali e familiari possano spesso incidere sulla nostra vita e sulle nostre scelte, limitando la nostra libertà e la nostra felicità. La citazione ci trasmette una sensazione di tristezza e di mancanza di speranza, ma ci fa anche capire che la donna aveva una grande forza interiore per sopportare una situazione così difficile e per continuare ad obbedire alla madre nonostante tutto."

Quando ti ho conosciuto mi ero innamorata di te, e adesso te lo voglio dire. Ti ho scritto anche molte lettere, ma le ho stracciate. Poi m'è passato perché io in questo sono come Lucrezia, ho l'innamoramento facile, poi un giorno mi sveglio e m'è passato. Di Egisto non mi sono mai innamorata forse perché lo trovo piuttosto brutto, così tozzo, basso e largo. Nemmeno tu sei tanto bello, è vero, perché sei magro, verde e secco. Una o due volte Egisto mi ha chiesto di venire a letto con me, io gli ho detto di no, si è offeso perché è molto permaloso, non si è fatto più vedere per diversi giorni, ma poi è ritornato e tutto era come prima. Adesso ci vogliamo bene come due fratelli. Se mi capita di andare a letto con un ragazzo glielo racconto. Però non mi capita spesso, perché io ho l'innamoramento facile, ma il letto difficile.

La citazione in questione parla di una confessione d'amore che era stata nascosta per molto tempo tra Albina e Giuseppe. Questo ci fa riflettere sul tema dell'amicizia e dell'amore, e su come spesso questi due sentimenti possano confondersi o coesistere in modo ambiguo. La confessione d'amore indica che tra questi amici esisteva una forte attrazione romantica, ma che per qualche motivo essa era stata tenuta nascosta fino a quel momento. Questo può farci pensare che i protagonisti temessero di rovinare la loro amicizia con una dichiarazione d'amore, o che forse ci fosse una qualche difficoltà o impedimento oggettivo che impediva loro di essere insieme. In ogni caso, la citazione ci fa capire che la confessione d'amore era un evento molto significativo per entrambi, in grado di convincerlo a non partire. Ci fa anche capire che l'amicizia tra queste persone era molto forte, in grado di resistere alle difficoltà e di mantenere un segreto così importante per tanto tempo. La citazione ci trasmette una sensazione di tensione emotiva, di attesa e di sorpresa, ma anche di grande intimità e di una connessione speciale tra i personaggi coinvolti.

Chissà perché dicono che la solitudine è brutta. La solitudine a Roma è bella. È un po' brutta la domenica, se aspetti che il telefono suoni e non suona mai. Gli altri giorni è bella.

La citazione in questione descrive la "bella solitudine" come un modo per sfuggire ai problemi e alla povertà della propria casa. Questo ci fa riflettere sul tema della solitudine e sulla sua relazione con la felicità e la pace interiore. La descrizione della solitudine come "bella" indica che essa non viene vista come una cosa negativa, ma come un momento di riflessione e di tranquillità, in grado di offrire un certo grado di comfort e di liberazione dalle preoccupazioni quotidiane. Ciò può farci pensare che il personaggio si senta oppresso dalla situazione in cui vive e abbia bisogno di un momento di pausa e di ricarica emotiva. La citazione ci fa anche capire che la povertà e i problemi della casa sono una fonte di grande stress e di sofferenza per il personaggio, che cerca di sfuggire da questa situazione attraverso la solitudine. Inoltre, l'uso dell'aggettivo "bella" ci suggerisce che questa solitudine può essere vista anche come una forma di bellezza, di quiete e di contemplazione della propria vita. La citazione ci trasmette una sensazione di riflessione, di pace interiore e di intimità con se stessi, ma anche di tristezza e di difficoltà nella vita del personaggio.

Mi sono svegliata e ho sentito che stavano parlando di te. Non ti dirò cos'hanno detto. Non mi sembra bello ripetere a una persona quello che gli altri dicono quando non c'è. Né il bene, né il male. Nemmeno il bene, perché allora l'assente quelle parole che non ha sentito le ingrassa e le gonfia di burro e di zucchero, e ne fa qualcosa di diverso dal vero.

Questa citazione suggerisce che la persona in questione ha un forte senso di rispetto e riservatezza verso gli altri. Il personaggio si rifiuta di partecipare al pettegolezzo, dimostrando una certa integrità e maturità emotiva. Inoltre, il fatto che il personaggio non voglia ripetere alla persona ciò che ha sentito dagli altri suggerisce che ha un forte senso di riservatezza e un rispetto per la privacy degli altri. Questo comportamento suggerisce anche una certa capacità di empatia e comprensione delle emozioni altrui, poiché il personaggio evita di causare dolore o conflitti inutili ripetendo ciò che ha sentito. In questo modo, la citazione ci suggerisce che il personaggio è una persona rispettosa, matura e che cerca di mantenere una certa intimità e riservatezza nelle relazioni interpersonali. In un mondo in cui la diffusione del pettegolezzo può causare danni irreparabili alle relazioni personali, il personaggio dimostra un comportamento etico e responsabile nei confronti degli altri.

Serena ha quasi finito la sua commedia. La reciterà qui fra due settimane. Reciterà lei sola, perché nella sua commedia c'è un personaggio solo, Gemma Donati, la moglie di Dante. Di questa Gemma Donati non ne parla mai nessuno e non se ne sa niente. Serena se n'è incuriosita proprio perché non ne parla nessuno. La vede come una persona che ha perduto la propria identità e la ritrova ragionando a voce alta con se stessa. Serena sarà vestita di bianco e camminerà avanti e indietro per il soppalco tenendo in mano un libro, cioè la Divina Commedia, che in un momento di grande collera getterà nelle fiamme. In mezzo al soppalco ci sarà un braciere con della cenere, e lei getterà il libro nella cenere. Serena voleva fare un gran fuoco di legna per terra, ma glielo abbiamo proibito per paura che tutto il soppalco andasse a fuoco.

Questa citazione suggerisce che la persona in questione ha perso il suo senso di identità e si sente alienata dagli altri. Il fatto che non parli con nessuno suggerisce che la persona si sente incompresa e non ha una rete di supporto sociale. Ciò può portare ad una sensazione di isolamento, ansia e depressione. Inoltre, il comportamento della persona suggerisce anche una mancanza di fiducia in se stessi e una certa insicurezza. Potrebbe essere che la persona abbia subito un evento traumatico o abbia avuto difficoltà nell'affermarsi, il che ha portato alla perdita della propria identità e della fiducia in se stessi. In ogni caso, la citazione ci suggerisce che la persona ha bisogno di supporto, di essere ascoltata e di sentirsi compresa. Potrebbe essere necessario rivolgersi a un professionista per aiutare a ripristinare la sua identità e la sua autostima.

“Roberta quando ci ha telefonato piangeva. Partiva. È una donna sempre pronta a correre dove c'è bisogno di lei. Ti sarà di conforto.”

La citazione "è sempre pronta a correre dove c'è bisogno di lei" può essere vista come un elogio della pronta ad aiutare gli altri e a mettere le loro necessità al di sopra delle proprie. Essere disposti a correre dove c'è bisogno di loro implica anche una grande flessibilità e adattabilità, in quanto queste persone devono essere pronte a rispondere a situazioni diverse e imprevedibili. Tuttavia, c'è anche il rischio che questo tipo di persona si sovraccarichi eccessivamente, diventando una sorta di "salvatore" per gli altri e

perdendo di vista i propri bisogni e limiti. Inoltre, se questa persona diventa troppo indispensabile per gli altri, potrebbe finire per essere sfruttata o manipolata dagli altri.

In generale, la citazione mette in luce il valore dell'altruismo e della prontezza ad aiutare gli altri, ma anche la necessità di bilanciare questo con la cura per se stessi e la consapevolezza dei propri limiti.

Non mi piaceva il fratello. Si dava importanza. Però quando muore una persona che anche non ti piace, subito ti metti a pensarci con rispetto e stima, chissà perché. Pure la morte non è mica una cosa meritoria. Presto o tardi arriva per tutti

La citazione "Quando muore una persona che anche non ti piace, subito ti metti a pensarci con rispetto e stima" sottolinea l'importanza di avere rispetto per gli altri, indipendentemente dalle opinioni personali. Questo può essere visto come un richiamo alla compassione e alla comprensione.

La morte di una persona può farci riflettere sulla loro vita e sul nostro rapporto con loro. Anche se non ci piacevano o non eravamo d'accordo con le loro azioni o le loro opinioni, la loro morte ci fa renderci conto della loro umanità e del fatto che, come noi, erano esseri umani che cercavano di navigare attraverso la vita. Ci fa anche riflettere sulla nostra propria mortalità e sulla fragilità della vita.

Questa citazione ci invita a guardare oltre i nostri giudizi e preconetti, e ad avere rispetto per gli altri come esseri umani. Ci ricorda che, alla fine, siamo tutti simili nel nostro desiderio di vivere una vita felice e significativa, e che la morte di una persona dovrebbe essere un momento per riflettere sulla nostra relazione con loro e sui nostri valori.

La mia vita, quando ti ho incontrato, non ha cambiato colore. Adesso ha cambiato colore. A te Piero ti aveva accettato, era rimasto piuttosto tranquillo, il mio con te è stato un adulterio incruento. Adesso invece il mio adulterio è di quelli che spandono sangue. Io e I. F. ci amiamo da morire e ce ne andremo via insieme, non so quando, non so dove. Prenderemo una casa in una città, non so quale. Prenderò con me i bambini. A te facevano paura i bambini, a lui no, lui non c'è niente che gli fa paura.

Questa citazione parla della scoperta dell'amore verso una nuova persona, dopo aver creduto di amare qualcun altro. Il protagonista ha trovato la sua vera anima gemella, che gli ha fatto capire che il sentimento per Giuseppe non era amore, ma solo una confusione momentanea. La citazione evidenzia l'importanza di lasciarsi andare all'ascolto dell'amore e di essere aperti a nuove esperienze, in quanto l'amore può essere trovato inaspettatamente. La citazione evidenzia un aspetto che differenzia il nuovo partner dall'ex, ovvero la passione per i bambini, che rappresenta una qualità che il protagonista apprezza particolarmente e che non aveva mai visto nel suo ex. La citazione sottolinea quindi l'importanza di trovare una persona con cui si condividono interessi e valori, oltre alla reciproca attrazione e sentimento amoroso. Inoltre, sottolinea che è importante essere onesti con se stessi e non forzare sentimenti che non sono genuini.

Riguardo a Ignazio Fegiz, Lucrezia si è illusa. S'è immaginata di vivere un grande amore e che lui fosse l'uomo della sua vita. Col cavolo. Lui non è venuto a stare con lei e io non credo che ci verrà mai. Non se lo sogna. Perciò lei è sola e incinta, con cinque bambini e un cane, in un appartamento buio e rumoroso nella Roma vecchia,

senza un filo di verde e senza nemmeno un balcone, con una donna a ore, pochi soldi e poca libertà di uscire. Un disastro.

La citazione descrive una situazione difficile in cui una persona si trova sola con cinque bambini in una casa poco accogliente dopo essere stata lasciata dal suo ragazzo. Questo può rappresentare un momento di grande sfida nella vita della persona, che si sente sola e sopraffatta dalle difficoltà della situazione. Tuttavia, la citazione suggerisce anche che, nonostante la difficoltà della situazione, la persona non si arrende e continua a lottare per sé stessa e per i suoi bambini. La mancanza di libertà per uscire e socializzare rende la situazione ancora più isolante e opprimente. L'uso delle parole "disastro" suggerisce che la protagonista si senta sopraffatta e priva di risorse per affrontare questa situazione. La citazione ci fa sentire la sua frustrazione e disperazione, e ci spinge a simpatizzare con lei e a desiderare una soluzione positiva per la sua situazione difficile.

La citazione può anche essere vista come un invito a trovare la forza interiore per superare le difficoltà e continuare a sperare in un futuro migliore.

Io sono stata sempre con lei. Le sono venuti i primi dolori, è andata in clinica e di lì mi ha chiamato. Era sola, povera figlia. I. aveva pensato bene di partire per Parigi proprio in quei giorni ed era introvabile. Lucrezia soffriva molto, è stato un parto difficile. Io ho telefonato a Piero a Perugia, ero preoccupata e volevo che ci fosse qualcuno. Piero è arrivato subito.

Questa citazione sembra descrivere una situazione in cui una persona sta raccontando le difficoltà e le sofferenze che la sua amica ha sperimentato durante il parto in una clinica. Ciò suggerisce che la persona che sta raccontando la storia sta cercando di condividere l'esperienza della sua amica con gli altri e di sensibilizzarli sulla realtà dei dolori del parto. Questa citazione potrebbe essere utilizzata per evidenziare l'empatia e l'attenzione della persona nei confronti della sua amica e la sua volontà di condividere il suo dolore con gli altri. Inoltre, potrebbe essere utilizzata per esplorare il tema dell' maternità e dei diritti delle donne nel corso del parto, in quanto evidenzia le difficoltà che le donne possono incontrare quando danno alla luce un figlio.

Dorme nella stanza piccola. Sabato se ne andrà perché verrà Piero. Mi affatica stare con le persone, ma ancora più mi affatica stare sola. I bambini li trovo pesanti. Hanno chiesto come mai I. non viene più a pranzo. Gli ho detto che non viene perché ha male al piede.

Questa citazione descrive l'esperienza di una persona che si trova a dover affrontare le domande dei suoi bambini sulla mancanza del proprio partner. La solitudine che si prova in questa situazione è evidenziata, insieme alla difficoltà di trovare le parole giuste per spiegare l'assenza senza compromettere l'immagine dell'altro genitore o se stessi. Tuttavia, la citazione suggerisce che questo può essere un'occasione per crescere insieme ai propri figli e trovare una forza interiore che non si sapeva di avere. In questo modo, la citazione evidenzia la complessità dell'essere genitore single e l'importanza di trovare la forza e il coraggio di affrontare le difficoltà.

Ieri lui mi ha raccontato tutto. Ha una ragazza. È una cosa seria, un sentimento serio. Vorrebbe sposarla. Mi ha chiesto se sono d'accordo, riguardo al divorzio, ma occorrerà comunque aspettare ancora cinque anni, e c'è il rischio che lei intanto vada con quell'altro. È una ragazza giovane, confusa, non sempre sincera. Io ero sbalordita. Credevo di essere situata sempre nel centro della

sua vita, dei suoi pensieri. Quando ho saputo che non lo ero mi è parso di rotolare dalla cima d'una montagna. Ero sbalordita ed ero anche, chissà perché, a un tratto molto triste.

Questa citazione parla di come una persona si sente quando il marito chiede il divorzio per sposare un'altra donna e lasciarla con i bambini. Questa situazione può causare un dolore profondo e una sensazione di tradimento, delusione e solitudine. Inoltre, la presenza dei bambini rende ancora più difficile gestire i propri sentimenti, ma allo stesso tempo è importante essere forti per loro. Questa citazione mette in luce anche la difficoltà di trovare un equilibrio tra la tristezza e la responsabilità di essere un genitore presente per i propri figli. In definitiva, questa citazione descrive il dolore e la lotta interiore di una persona che si trova in una situazione difficile come questa.

Mi sarei innamorata di lui, se non fosse stato un omosessuale. Così no, perché non potrei mai innamorarmi di un omosessuale. Eravamo amici, di quell'amicizia che è in un modo e non cambia mai, rimane uguale e sicura per sempre.

Questa citazione solleva una questione interessante riguardo alle relazioni e alle aspettative che le persone hanno l'una nei confronti dell'altra. L'affermazione suggerisce che la persona che parla potrebbe avere dei sentimenti romantici verso un uomo, ma non può per la sua omosessualità. In questo caso, la citazione mette in luce l'importanza dell'orientamento sessuale nella vita delle persone e la difficoltà di trovare l'amore quando ci si innamora di qualcuno che non può ricambiare i nostri sentimenti. Inoltre, la citazione evidenzia come l'orientamento sessuale non sia una scelta, ma una caratteristica intrinseca della persona che non può essere cambiata.

In generale, la citazione pone l'accento sulla necessità di accettare gli altri per quello che sono e di non giudicarli in base alle loro preferenze sessuali. Anche se la persona che parla avrebbe potuto innamorarsi di quest'uomo se fosse stato eterosessuale, ciò non cambierebbe l'essenza di chi è e il diritto di amare chi vuole senza essere giudicato o discriminato. In conclusione, i passaggi del romanzo "La città e la casa" di Natalia Ginzburg analizzati evidenziano come l'autrice sia stata capace di descrivere con grande sensibilità e profondità la vita delle donne nella società italiana del suo tempo. Le tematiche affrontate, come la ricerca dell'identità, la maternità, la sessualità, la relazione tra le donne, la solitudine e la morte, sono ancora oggi attuali e rappresentano dei veri e propri pilastri della letteratura femminile. Natalia Ginzburg, attraverso il suo romanzo, è riuscita a trasmettere un messaggio universale e atemporale alle donne di tutte le generazioni, offrendo loro una rappresentazione autentica e realistica delle loro vite e delle loro lotte quotidiane.

CONCLUSIONE

Nel suo romanzo "La città e la casa", Natalia Ginzburg presenta le donne come figure forti e indipendenti, capaci di affrontare le difficoltà della vita e di resistere alle pressioni della società e della famiglia. Le donne del romanzo sono caratterizzate da una grande determinazione e da un forte senso di autonomia, che le spinge a prendere in mano le redini della propria vita e a lottare per i propri diritti. Ad esempio, la protagonista Lucrezia è una figura coraggiosa e tenace, che riesce a mantenere la sua integrità e la sua dignità nonostante le difficoltà della vita familiare e le pressioni sociali dell'epoca. Anche Albina, Serena sono donne forti e determinate, capaci di prendere le proprie decisioni e di andare contro le convenzioni della società. Inoltre, Ginzburg rappresenta le donne come figure capaci di affrontare i problemi della famiglia e della società, come ad esempio il ruolo della donna nella famiglia, la maternità, la religione e la politica. Inoltre,

il romanzo esplora le complesse relazioni tra le donne, sia all'interno della famiglia che nella società più ampia, offrendo una rappresentazione precisa e originale della vita delle donne durante la guerra e nei decenni successivi. In questo modo, "La città e la casa" dimostra come la letteratura femminile possa rappresentare un punto di vista diverso e innovativo sulla vita e sulle esperienze delle donne.

Nonostante siano passati molti anni dalla pubblicazione di "La città e la casa" di Natalia Ginzburg, le tematiche affrontate nel romanzo sono ancora molto attuali e di grande rilevanza per le donne. La maternità, la sessualità, l'amore, la solitudine e la morte sono tutte esperienze che le donne continuano ad affrontare quotidianamente, spesso in contesti difficili e complessi. Inoltre, le relazioni tra le donne, sia all'interno che all'esterno delle famiglie, rimangono ancora oggi un tema di grande interesse e dibattito. Nonostante gli importanti progressi compiuti in campo sociale e culturale, molte donne ancora soffrono di discriminazioni, pregiudizi e violenze legate al loro genere. La letteratura femminile, come quella rappresentata da Ginzburg, continua quindi ad avere un ruolo importante nell'affrontare queste tematiche e nel rappresentare la complessità della vita delle donne, offrendo spunti di riflessione e di dialogo sulle sfide che ancora oggi le donne devono affrontare.

Attraverso il suo romanzo "La città e la casa", Natalia Ginzburg ha trasmesso un messaggio universale per le donne che ha ancora oggi una grande importanza. Il libro, attraverso le vicende dei personaggi femminili, racconta la complessità delle relazioni interpersonali, la difficoltà di trovare la propria identità, la paura della solitudine, la maternità, la sessualità, l'amore e la morte. Tutti temi universali che toccano le donne in ogni epoca e in ogni cultura. Ginzburg, attraverso la sua scrittura, è stata in grado di trasmettere la profondità e la ricchezza dell'esperienza femminile, rivelando la complessità della vita delle donne e offrendo un punto di vista diverso da quello dominante della società patriarcale. Grazie alla sua capacità di raccontare le vicende umane in modo intenso e profondo, Natalia Ginzburg è riuscita a creare un romanzo che, ancora oggi, è in grado di parlare alle donne di ogni età e di ogni paese, offrendo spunti di riflessione sulle sfide che le donne devono affrontare nella loro vita. Grazie alla natura stessa del genere epistolare, in cui i personaggi si scambiano lettere e quindi si esprimono in prima persona, le donne hanno la possibilità di mostrare le proprie emozioni e sentimenti in modo autentico e diretto, senza filtri o mediazioni. In questo modo, i personaggi femminili diventano dei veri e propri narratori delle proprie storie, raccontando le proprie esperienze e riflessioni, spesso con grande introspezione e profondità. Inoltre, la letteratura femminile epistolare ha spesso il pregio di rivelare gli aspetti più nascosti della vita delle donne, i loro desideri, le loro insicurezze e le loro lotte quotidiane, offrendo così una prospettiva autentica e realistica della vita femminile. In definitiva, le donne in un romanzo epistolare della letteratura femminile rappresentano una voce autentica e potente, capace di trasmettere un messaggio universale sulla condizione umana.

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FACETTES DE LA HONTE CHEZ ANNIE ERNAUX

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Abstract: *Shame is a characteristic that is frequently linked to other emotions, like guilt. Both may be effects of the traumas the person has experienced. Shame is an intersubjective emotion, meaning that it is always activated or repeated in response to another person, whether they are physically present or not. Its source is a broken relationship with another. In the current paper, we propose employing theoretical psychoanalytical and sociological approaches to analyse the emotion of shame. We will demonstrate a variety of its forms, using examples from Annie Ernaux's book *La Honte*. We shall observe that this emotion can appear in a variety of ways, such as social, physical, sexual and psychological, depending on its nature and the context in which it occurs. All these different types of shame, which are frequently combined into one sensation, are expertly depicted in the French author's novel. Depending on its emergence and intensity of manifestation, shame may have a destabilizing or mobilizing effect. In Annie Ernaux's book, which describes the family life of a twelve-year-old girl, both influences are there. Born into a modest provincial world, but with a mother who understands the opportunity that education can offer her child, the young girl will benefit from an education that few children of her condition could receive. She has access to a world at her private school that is completely apart from her family life. Despite her brilliant school results, the contact with this world is also painful, because of the comparisons the girl will make (always to her disadvantage and the world she comes from), but also because of the feelings of shame, embarrassment and humiliation she often feels around people who make her feel uncomfortable (colleagues, teachers, doctors). We will analyse the symbolic violence often felt by the main character of the book, but also an episode of physical violence between parents which the young girl witnessed and which constituted a real trauma. Psychoanalysis will provide us with a series of theoretical systematizations that will place the experience of shame in a different framework. A seemingly normal, even happy childhood hides deep and unmanageable fragments for a girl who has not even learned the words for emotions, let alone how to manage them.*

Keywords: *shame; intersubjectivity; identity*

La honte est un vécu douloureux qui est très souvent lié à d'autres sentiments. Ressentie invariablement de manière intersubjective, elle suppose toujours l'existence d'un autre - présent ou absent - par rapport auquel le sentiment est activé ; elle trouve son origine dans un lien défectueux avec cet autre : « [...] la honte est l'émotion qui témoigne que le lien d'attachement est rompu ou qu'il menace de l'être. » (Tisseron, S., 2007 : XII).

Selon la manière et l'intensité avec lesquelles elle se manifeste, la honte peut avoir un effet déstabilisateur ou mobilisateur. Ce cheminement entre débousolement et mobilisation est magistralement illustré dans *La Honte* d'Annie Ernaux. Le livre présente la violence symbolique et la honte vécues par le personnage principal du livre, une jeune fille de 12 ans. On y fait référence aussi à un épisode de violence physique entre les parents, dont la jeune fille a été témoin, et qui a constitué pour elle un véritable traumatisme, « une chose de folie et de mort à laquelle j'ai constamment comparé, pour évaluer leur degré de douleur, la plupart des événements de ma vie, sans lui trouver d'équivalent. » (Ernaux, A., 1997 : 30).

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La honte, sentiment intersubjectif - perspective psychanalytique de Serge Tisseron

Le psychanalyste Serge Tisseron considère que la honte témoigne d'une altération des trois domaines essentiels sur lesquels se fonde l'identité et les relations que nous entretenons avec les autres : l'estime que nous portons à nous-mêmes (narcissisme, en termes psychanalytiques) ; l'affection qui nous lie à nos proches ; la certitude de faire partie d'une communauté. (Tisseron, S., *op. cit.* : XIV)

Le premier palier se traduit par la perte de l'estime pour soi-même. Le sujet considère qu'il ne vaut rien, il perd toute considération pour sa personne. Annie Ernaux invoque ce sentiment non seulement par rapport à soi-même, mais aussi et surtout par rapport à sa famille.

Un épisode qui présente le retour de la fête de la Jeunesse des écoles chrétiennes de Rouen en compagnie de la maîtresse et de ses copines nous met en face de l'apparition hirsute et muette de sommeil de sa mère, sur le pas de la porte, habillée d'une chemise de nuit froissée et tachée d'urine. Annie est paralysée de honte devant ses collègues qui s'arrêtent brusquement de parler et dont le silence traduit un mépris que la fille comprend tout de suite : « Je venais de voir pour la première fois ma mère avec les yeux de l'école privée. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 110) « Il n'y a que nous qui sommes ainsi » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 111), se dit Annie, pensant que la vraie nature douteuse de sa famille a été dévoilée à travers la chemise sale de la mère.

L'autre est menaçant, accusateur, méprisant et annule toute la valeur et l'estime que la fille pourrait associer à sa famille ou à soi-même. La honte, on le rappelle, est un vécu intersubjectif, c'est en relation avec un autre qu'on le ressent.

Les épisodes qui illustrent la perte de l'estime de soi sous le regard critique de l'autre sont très nombreux dans le livre. En voilà un autre : se trouvant au restaurant, pendant un voyage avec les camarades d'école, Annie voit à une table voisine une fille de son âge avec son père. Elle compare sa propre relation avec son père avec ce qu'elle voit et les différences la frappent : les autres parlent, rient, sans se soucier de ce qui les entourent ; sa collègue mange avec désinvolture des plats que la petite Annie n'arrive même pas à reconnaître : « Je voyais tout ce qui me séparait de cette fille mais je ne savais pas comment j'aurais pu faire pour lui ressembler. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 125)

Une sorte de fracture passagère de la personnalité s'opère, dans l'espoir de devenir (quelqu'un d') autre, d'accéder à une identité désirable ou du moins non méprisable. En proie à la honte, les repères personnels sont déstabilisés, voire perdus, pour faire place à ceux des autres. Dans des cas plus extrêmes, montre Serge Tisseron, la honte

[...] crée une rupture dans la continuité du sujet. L'image qu'il a de lui-même est troublée, ses repères sont perdus, tant spatiaux que temporels, il est sans mémoire et sans avenir. L'individu est renvoyé à une impuissance radicale [...] qui est en fait la traduction mentale d'un effondrement [...] ; quelle que soit la cause d'un tel effondrement, le sentiment de honte est toujours rapporté à un « tiers honnisseur » : la honte est d'emblée et toujours, un *sentiment social*. (Tisseron, S., *op. cit.* : 3)

Le deuxième palier fait référence à la perte des liens affectifs, au sentiment de ne plus être aimé par ceux que l'on aime. La honte entretient une relation particulière avec l'attachement, ce qui « fait d'elle un passage obligé dans tous les mouvements d'affiliation et de désaffiliation. » (Tisseron, S., *op. cit.* : XVI) Si la désaffiliation est évidente, dans *La Honte*, par rapport à la famille, l'affiliation au monde représenté par

l'école privée et les copines de classe, tant espérée, semble toujours échouer. Durant le même voyage invoqué ci-dessus, la fille constate avec une grande tristesse : « C'était la première fois que nous étions amenés à fréquenter de près, pendant dix jours, des gens inconnus qui étaient tous, à l'exception des chauffeurs de car, mieux que nous. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 116)

Elle se sent exclue, inférieure et surtout seule. La honte représente un vécu difficile, sinon impossible à gérer par un enfant de son âge. Ses essais de se lier d'amitié avec les ses collègues bourgeoises sont le plus souvent voués à l'échec. Pendant le voyage à Lourdes, lorsqu'elle met, un jour, le costume de gymnastique qu'elle avait porté pendant un événement scolaire, une fille lui demande si elle avait participé à la fête de la jeunesse. Dans un premier temps, Annie prend cette question pour une marque de connivence, ce n'est que plus tard qu'elle réalise que la question signifiait autre chose, plus exactement : « tu n'as rien d'autre à te mettre que tu t'habilles en gymnastique » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 119) Mais, dans son monde d'origine, ce costume, comme d'ailleurs tous les vêtements, devaient être usés et l'utilisation unique d'un habit passait pour inconcevable.

Le troisième palier ajoute un autre ingrédient au deuxième : on n'est plus aimé, mais, ce qui plus est, on ne peut plus intéresser personne. On reste seul, abandonné, invisible. On se sent exclu des relations et des communautés dont on veut faire partie. Pour la jeune Annie, tout ce qui renvoyait à sa vie familiale pouvait devenir signe de honte – la maison, le café-épicerie avec ses clients au comportement douteux, la chambre unique qu'elle partageait jour et nuit avec ses parents. Par rapport à cet univers qui était le sien, « l'école privée ne manifestait qu'*ignorance* et *dédain*. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 131) Lequel des deux sentiments serait plus difficile à supporter pour une enfant qui se sent déboussolée et perdue à la frontière entre deux mondes dont elle se sent exclue en égale mesure ?

La fille a compris qu'il y avait des différences importantes entre sa famille, leurs valeurs et manière de vivre et la vie d'autres gens sur lesquels elle ne devait pas savoir trop de détails pour être sûre d'une différence, traduite en termes de supériorité inaccessible et impassible : « En 52 il me suffisait de regarder les hautes façades derrière une pelouse et les allées de gravier pour savoir que leurs occupants n'étaient pas comme nous. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 49) Ce n'est qu'une occasion parmi d'autres pour constater « l'existence de deux mondes et notre appartenance irréfutable à celui du dessous » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 126) Il s'agit d'une certitude confirmée à maintes reprises, source d'un sentiment de regret et de déchirement, doublé par la conviction que cette réalité douloureuse était impossible à changer : « Je savais qu'il existait un autre monde, vaste, avec du soleil écrasant, des chambres avec des lavabos d'eau chaude, des filles discutant avec leur père comme dans les romans. Nous n'en étions pas. Il n'y avait rien à redire. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 127)

Dans sa famille d'origine, on a appris à Annie qu'il fallait cacher tout ce qui pourrait se constituer en objet d'envie, de curiosité ou rapporté. On vit sous le regard des autres, c'est pourquoi il faut, à l'extérieur, avoir une conduite respectable pour faire une bonne impression. Dans cet univers où « tout le monde surveillait tout le monde » et où « il fallait absolument connaître la vie des autres – pour la raconter – et murer la sienne – pour qu'elle ne le soit pas » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 62), être comme les autres, ne pas se différencier, était une sorte de visée générale, d'idéal, auxquels il ne fallait pas se dérober.

La question qui harcelait ses parents « Qu'est-ce qu'on pensera de nous ? » est une sorte d'héritage qui n'opère plus de la même manière par rapport à ceux qui sont évidemment différents d'elle : les copines de l'école privée, les gens des beaux quartiers, etc. Par rapport à ceux-ci, les repères de sa famille et de son monde d'origine perdent leur

sens. Ces gens ont l'air de ne pas trop s'intéresser au regard (critique) de l'autre ; plus d'une fois, la jeune Annie se sent invisible pour ces gens qui, par leur attitude ignorante à son égard, lui induisent un sentiment de malaise, d'inadéquation et d'infériorité.

La honte est – on l'a déjà dit – est une expérience de profonde solitude : « Le pire dans la honte, c'est qu'on croit être le seul à la ressentir. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 109) Même si c'est un sentiment intersubjectif, elle isole, elle éloigne du monde. L'autre est intériorisé, il agit et harcèle de l'intérieur du sujet honteux.

Comment réparer la souffrance donnée par ce sentiment et la solitude qui accompagne cette émotion déstabilisante ? L'individu honteux est un individu désorganisé du point de vue psychique. C'est d'ailleurs l'une des raisons pour lesquelles Annie Ernaux écrit *La Honte*. Une fois mis en mots, le terrible, le dramatique a l'air de se transformer en banal, en normalité : « Peut-être que le récit, tout récit, rend normal n'importe quel acte, y compris le plus dramatique. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 17)

Il ne s'agit pas seulement de la honte induite par les autres perçus comme supérieurs, mais aussi de celle ressentie par rapport à une scène familiale de violence physique où son père avait voulu tuer sa mère. L'écriture a une fonction et une force cathartiques : « Depuis que j'ai réussi à faire ce récit, j'ai l'impression qu'il s'agit d'un événement banal, plus fréquent dans les familles que je ne l'avais imaginé. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 16)

Si la guérison par l'écriture semble réelle, elle reste toutefois partielle. Tout récit obéit à un processus de fictionnalisation incontournable. Il est impossible de revisiter le passé en toute objectivité, Annie Ernaux le sait et en est consolée. La reconstitution du passé passe aussi par la reconstitution du monde de la parole qui lui était associé et ce processus reste toujours partiel :

Ce qui m'importe, c'est de retrouver les mots avec lesquels je me pensais et pensais le monde autour. Dire ce qu'étaient pour moi le normal et l'inadmissible, l'impensable même. Mais la femme que je suis en 95 est incapable de se replacer dans la fille de 52 qui ne connaissait que sa petite ville, sa famille et son école privée, n'avait à sa disposition qu'un lexique réduit. Et devant elle, l'immensité du temps à vivre. Il n'y a pas de vraie mémoire de soi. (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 37)

Typologie de la honte – perspective sociologique de Vincent de Gaulejac

Dans son livre sur la névrose de classe¹, Vincent de Gaulejac montre que les personnes qui se trouvent en ascension sociale ou en regrès du point de vue social expérimentent très souvent des conflits identitaires à cause des systèmes de référence doubles et contradictoires auxquels ils doivent faire face. (Gaulejac, V. de, 2021 : 26) Le livre d'Annie Ernaux présente une étape d'un parcours qui pourrait être qualifié d'ascension sociale avec toutes les affres que ce processus implique.

Dans le champ de la sociologie, on reconnaît de plus en plus souvent l'importance qu'il faut donner à l'expérience vécue. La sociologie clinique est devenue un courant reconnu, qui privilégie la subjectivité et relativise l'objectivité.² Plus les

¹ La névrose de classe est, selon Vincent de Gaulejac, un concept ambigu, car il associe une notion clinique et une notion sociologique ; entre les deux il n'y a pas de rapport direct, car les classes ne sont pas névrotiques et les névroses n'entretiennent pas de relation directe avec la classe sociale.

² La sociologie clinique est à la fois une démarche socio-psychologique (ayant pour but de comprendre la manière dont les transformations sociales influencent les attitudes et les comportements des individus) et une démarche psychosociologique (qui cherche à analyser la

sociétés se développent, plus les tensions psychiques sont importantes et les recherches, surtout pluri/interdisciplinaires, le reflètent. (Gaulejac, V. de, *op. cit.*) Les livres d'Annie Ernaux ont fait l'objet de pas mal d'études sociologiques. A son tour, l'écrivaine marque l'intérêt sociologique que pourrait susciter son écriture, lorsqu'elle l'encadre dans un genre qui dépasse les limites de la littérature et qu'elle appelle autosociobiographie.

Nous allons revenir au sujet de la honte, pour l'illustrer, dans une nouvelle perspective, avec la typologie sociologique établie par Vincent de Gaulejac. Celle-ci reprend, au moins partiellement, mais d'un autre angle, les hypostases de ce même sentiment illustrées antérieurement avec la grille psychanalytique.

Selon de Gaulejac, la honte peut revêtir multiples facettes, en fonction de son contenu et de la sphère dans laquelle elle se manifeste : honte corporelle, honte morale, honte sexuelle, honte psychologique. Le roman de l'écrivaine française illustre magistralement toutes ces formes de honte, souvent réunies dans une même expérience.

La *honte corporelle* fait référence au fait d'« être sale, mal habillé, sentir mauvais, avoir un handicap. Là où le corps est pris en défaut, lorsqu'on est seul de son espèce [...], dans toutes les situations où la caractéristique corporelle conduit à se faire remarquer ». (Gaulejac, V. de, 2008 : 75) On se rappelle la scène qui présente la mère d'Annie en chemise de nuit sale devant le groupe-juge tacite des collègues ; ou celle où la petite Annie portait le costume de gymnastique pendant le voyage en groupe, tenue qui a suscité le mépris d'une copine. En voilà un autre exemple, cette fois chez le dentiste, qui demande à la jeune si ça lui fait mal aux dents quand elle boit du cidre. La question du médecin indique la place inférieure dans la société attribuée à sa petite patiente, car le cidre « était la boisson de table des ouvriers et des gens de la campagne, adultes et enfants. » En outre, à la maison, elle buvait « de l'eau comme les pensionnaires de l'école privée, quelquefois additionnée de grenadine. » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 130) et cette réalité rend encore plus offensante et humiliante la question du médecin.

La *honte psychique* renvoie au fait de « perdre l'estime de soi, avoir le sentiment de ne plus être digne d'être aimé, se sentir radicalement déprécié. » (Gaulejac, V. de, *op. cit.* : 76) On a largement passé en revue tous ces sentiments dans la première partie de notre article. Vincent de Gaulejac oppose la honte à l'amour-propre et la considère une forme de haine envers sa propre personne.

La *honte sociale* c'est

être stigmatisé à cause de son identité [...], de sa race, de la couleur de sa peau [...], de sa religion, de sa situation sociale, économique ou culturelle. [...] On touche ici au symbolique, à l'image de soi dans le regard des autres, à l'ensemble des processus qui produisent la stigmatisation, l'humiliation, l'invalidation par autrui. » (*Ibidem*)

Vincent de Gaulejac invoque ici ce que Serge Tisseron identifie comme côté intersubjectif de la honte, sa dynamique interpersonnelle. Qu'il soit présent ou absent, l'autre fait entendre sa voix : soit en interaction directe, par l'intermédiaire de la parole ou du langage non-verbal, soit indirectement, par l'intériorisation de son mépris par le sujet honteux.

La honte pénètre toutes les sphères de la vie ; elle peut se manifester, par exemple, à travers le rapport que l'individu manifeste à la langue ou au langage. Durant

manière dont un sujet intervient, en tant qu'acteur, invente des pratiques pour affronter les situations conflictuelles et pour faire face aux situations sociales). (Gaulejac, V. de, *op. cit.* : 13)

son voyage à Rouen, la jeune Annie se rend compte que pour elle et pour son père, parler bien suppose un effort, chercher un autre mot à la place de celui qui vient spontanément, « emprunter une voix légère, précautionneuse, comme si l'on manipulait des objets délicats » (Ernaux, A., *op. cit.* : 54). Dans son monde « on sait bien ce qu'il faut dire, mais ça va plus vite comme ça. » (*Ibidem*), ça veut dire dans une forme plutôt non soignée (comme c'est le cas pour toutes les petites choses qu'on fait lorsqu'on n'est pas vu).

La *honte ontologique* apparaît « lorsque l'être est confronté à l'inhumain, comme spectateur, comme acteur ou comme victime. » (Gaulejac, V. de, *Ibidem*) Ce type de honte est ressentie par la petite enfant de 12 ans lorsqu'elle se retrouve en spectateur impuissant et pétrifié devant ce qu'elle a perçu comme une tentative de meurtre dans sa famille. Son père a voulu tuer sa mère un dimanche, épisode d'une terreur impossible à dire et à métaboliser durant des décennies. Cette honte ontologique touche à « l'essence même de l'homme, à ce qui fonde le sentiment d'appartenance à l'espèce humaine : fond commun des valeurs qui s'impose au-delà des cultures (respect de la vie, interdit de l'inceste, du meurtre, du viol et de la torture. » (*Ibidem*)

Vincent de Gaulejac classe dans sa typologie d'autres types de honte, dont on rappelle la honte sexuelle et la honte morale.

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LA METAPHORE ARGUMENTATIVE DANS LE THEATRE DE VICTOR HUGO

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Abstract: *The argumentative metaphor (from the Greek metaphora = transfer) is a strategy that theater characters use in their persuasive speech. It uncovers the connotative character of language, in that it is "an indirect speech act based on an analogy or a common implication between the compared (or the proper term) and the comparing (or the metaphorical term)" (M. Tutescu, 1998: 282). In the theater of V. Hugo, the argumentative metaphor is extremely visible alongside the poetic metaphor.*

Keywords: *metaphor; argument; theater*

Dans la tradition de la rhétorique classique, la métaphore est un trope ou « même le trope par excellence » (Dumarsais, 167-168, in Perelman et Tyteca, 1988 : 534). Par la métaphore, « on transporte, pour ainsi dire, la signification propre d'un nom à une autre signification, qui ne lui convient qu'en vertu d'une comparaison qui est dans l'esprit » (Dumarsais, 103, in Perelman et Tyteca, 1988 : 535). En tant que trope par ressemblance, la métaphore consiste « à présenter une idée sous le signe d'une autre idée plus frappante ou plus connue, qui, d'ailleurs ne tient à la première par aucun lien que celui d'une certaine conformité ou analogie » (P. Fontanier, 1968, 99, in M. Tutescu, 1998, 282).

Perelman affirme que la métaphore doit être envisagée dans le cadre de la théorie argumentative de l'analogie : « la métaphore (est) une analogie condensée, résultant de la fusion d'un élément du phore avec un élément du thème » (Perelman et Tyteca, 1988 : 535), où le thème est l'objet du discours et le phore est l'objet grâce auquel se produit le transfert (Ch. Perelman, 1989 : 212), autrement dit, le comparé et le comparant. C'est grâce à cette fusion que la métaphore n'est plus une suggestion, mais une donnée, elle facilitant ainsi la réalisation d'effets argumentatifs.

La métaphore existe en vertu d'une implication commune qui gouverne la relation entre le comparé et le comparant. « Stratégie discursive fondée par un acte de langage indirect, la métaphorisation substitue à l'acte littéral un acte figuratif, c'est-à-dire un acte connotatif, analogique, dérivé grâce à un savoir encyclopédique, culturel et épistémique institutionnalisé dans une certaine communauté langagière » (M. Tutescu, 1998 : 282).

C'est J. Searle (1979) qui s'est donné la tâche de distinguer l'énonciation littérale de l'énonciation métaphorique. L'ensemble des conditions de vérité et la signification d'un mot, d'une phrase ou d'une expression déterminent l'énonciation littérale, tandis que dans l'énonciation métaphorique on a affaire au sens de l'énonciation du locuteur, sens qui est régi par un réseau de présupposés idéologiques, intentionnels et pragmatiques. L'énonciateur de l'énonciation métaphorique affirme quelque chose d'autre que ce que signifient les mots et les phrases qu'il utilise.

Le recours à la métaphore, dans le langage littéraire aussi bien que dans le langage non-littéraire, peut être expliqué par le fait qu'on ne peut pas faire autrement : on pourrait considérer la métaphore comme une conséquence de la limitation des moyens du langage, « une des marques de l'infirmité de l'esprit humain » (M. Le Guern, 1973 : 67).

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On utilise les métaphores dans le but clair de persuader, de provoquer une réaction affective dans l'esprit de l'interlocuteur : « pour l'essentiel, la métaphore sert à exprimer une émotion ou un sentiment qu'elle cherche à faire partager » (M. Le Guern, 1973 : 76).

« L'argumentation par la métaphore sert à fusionner des êtres ou des situations sous une même identité, elle produit littéralement un monde nouveau de correspondance », le considère C. Plantin dans son article *Analogie et métaphore argumentative* (http://www.cairn.info/resume.php?ID_ARTICLE=ACO_112_0110, 21.10.2014).

C'est M. Le Guern qui a essayé de mettre au point la relation entre la métaphore et l'argumentation à partir de l'hypothèse que la métaphore est pourvue à la fois d'un côté sémantique et un côté rhétorique. Il fait donc la distinction entre la métaphore poétique qui a une visée esthétique et la métaphore argumentative munie de visée persuasive. « La métaphore poétique se doit d'afficher son caractère de métaphore ; il lui faut attirer l'œil, plus courtisane que terroriste. Elle doit surprendre par sa rareté, sa nouveauté, son originalité » (M. Le Guern, 1981 : 72). Du point de vue de la sémantique, la métaphore poétique se développe autour du virtuème, sème de second rang, tandis que la métaphore argumentative joue sur un sème nucléaire qui est plus important que l'image associée. Toute métaphore argumentative a un trait essentiel : les sèmes qui la construisent sont des sèmes évaluatifs ou 'subjectivèmes' (C. Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1980 : 118).

L'efficacité persuasive de la métaphore argumentative vient du fait qu'elle est contraignante. Les destinataires virtuels du discours sont contraints d'admettre l'appartenance du sème sélectionné au lexème métaphorique : « Alors que la métaphore poétique a besoin de la complicité du lecteur, la métaphore argumentative doit se donner les moyens de s'en passer » (M. Le Guern, 1981 : 72).

La métaphore argumentative dans le théâtre de Victor Hugo

Dans le théâtre de V. Hugo, la métaphore argumentative est extrêmement visible à côté de la métaphore poétique. Prenons le cas, par exemple, de *Vous êtes mon lion superbe et généreux* (*Hernani*, III, 4) qui a suscité tant de bruit tant à l'époque que de nos jours. Mlle Mars, l'actrice de 51 ans qui a joué la première le rôle de la très jeune Doña Sol, en 1830, a refusé de dire ce vers sur la scène, elle voulait le changer, et l'a changé pendant les répétitions et la représentation, avec *Vous êtes Monseigneur vaillant et généreux*, contre tout avis de V. Hugo. Et la critique a trouvé elle-aussi ce vers comme trop audacieux.

Dans la contemporanéité, c'est M. Le Guern qui a accordé une attention tout à fait spéciale à ce vers qu'il a analysé du point de vue de la sémantique. Nous allons donner quelques exemples tirés de son étude :

« Pour comprendre le vers de Hugo, il n'est pas nécessaire de faire appel à la représentation globale d'un lion. Ce serait même en déformer le sens que de faire intervenir tous les éléments qui constituent le concept du lion : 'Mammifère carnivore. Son pelage est fauve, sa démarche est souple et majestueuse. Très fort et courageux, il est redoutable. Il vit en Afrique Centrale dans les fourrés et les forêts, chassant les herbivores'. Quand Doña Sol dit à Hernani : 'Vous êtes mon lion', peu lui importe que le lion soit un quadrupède carnivore ou qu'il vive en Afrique. [...] Le substantif 'lion' ne correspond donc pas au signifié habituel de ce mot, puisque la représentation mentale du lion nuit à l'interprétation de l'énoncé. Le signifié n'est pas davantage la représentation globale de la personne de Hernani ; il ne correspond que partiellement à cette représentation, comme il ne correspond que partiellement à la représentation du lion. Le signifié du mot 'lion' est ce qui correspond aux deux représentations, celle du lion et celle

de Hernani. [...] En prenant comme base l'analyse sommaire que nous avons donné du signifié habituel du mot lion, et en éliminant les éléments incompatibles, on obtiendra : 'Sa démarche est souple et majestueuse. Très fort et courageux, il est redoutable'. [...] ces divers éléments n'ont pas la même importance dans la métaphore du lion appliquée à Hernani et l'existence d'une hiérarchie entre ces attributs, que l'on peut considérer schématiquement comme des éléments de signification, s'impose avec évidence. Il est donc nécessaire de faire appel à la notion d'attribut dominant : cet attribut dominant est le trait de similarité qui sert de fondement à l'établissement du rapport métaphorique. Dans la métaphore du 'lion' appliquée à Hernani, l'attribut dominant est le courage. [...] la métaphore du 'lion' n'est pas le simple équivalent de la partie de la définition du lion compatible avec le personnage de Hernani, ou plus précisément avec la vision que Doña Sol peut avoir de Hernani. Pourtant, les éléments d'information contenus dans l'expression métaphorique coïncident avec cette partie de la définition, mais il ne saurait être question de ramener le fonctionnement du langage à celui d'un pur outil d'information logique. A l'information proprement dite [...] s'ajoute [...] une image associée, qui est ici la représentation mentale du lion. Mais cette représentation intervient à un niveau de conscience différent de celui auquel se forme la signification logique, à un niveau où n'intervient plus la censure logique qui écartait du signifié de la métaphore 'lion' ce qui apparaissait comme raisonnablement incompatible avec la personnalité de Hernani » (M. Le Guern, 1973 : 41-42).

Cette analyse tout entière n'est qu'une preuve en faveur de la valeur argumentative de la métaphore présente dans le vers. Nous pouvons continuer l'analyse par différentes interprétations : doña Sol est attirée par la force physique et morale de Hernani ; elle assume la condition solitaire et rebelle de Hernani et accepte de le suivre ; elle reconnaît la noblesse de Hernani ; elle veut que la générosité de l'âme de Hernani dépasse sa haine et son désir de vengeance.

Il faut remarquer que la métaphore argumentative du *lion* est assez fréquente dans le théâtre de V. Hugo. En *Hernani*, à deux fois, ce personnage n'est pas le seul lion – Doña Sol : *Vous êtes mon lion superbe et généreux* (III, 4), le page : *C'en est fait d'Hernani, c'en est fait du lion / De la montagne.* (III, 1), mais aussi Don Carlos, qui se caractérise deux fois lui-même de lion : *J'étais grand, j'eusse été le lion de Castille !* (III, 6), *Dans ma peau de lion emporter comme Hercule !* (IV, 1). En *Ruy Blas*, Don Salluste parle de Don César : *c'était un vrai lion* (I, 5), et Ruy Blas, dans sa tirade contre les ministres, dit : *Ce grand peuple espagnol [...] Triste comme un lion mangé par la vermine !* (III, 2). Par contre, en *Marion de Lorme* il n'y a aucun personnage digne d'être lion.

Chez V. Hugo, la métaphore animalière fait grande fortune, le signifié *lion* n'étant pas le seul actualisé dans les métaphores que nous venons de mentionner. L'isotopie /animal/ est à rencontrer dans toutes les pièces de Hugo. Par exemple, dans *l'aigle impérial* qui est Don Carlos et que Hernani veut *écraser dans l'œuf* (II, 3), *aigle* peut être interprété de deux manières : Don Carlos est un oiseau de proie qui cherche à enlever Doña Sol, ou bien, Hernani se réfère au symbole impérial de l'aigle à deux têtes ou aigle bicéphale, blason qui appartient à la famille du roi. A notre avis, il y a deux métaphores en une.

L'univers animalier de V. Hugo, qui offre tant de tension métaphorique, se complète par le *serpent* qui est Don Salluste (*Ruy Blas*), caractérisé de la sorte trois fois par les personnages. Commençons par le vers où Don César refuse de servir son cousin dans sa vengeance contre une femme, qui, d'ailleurs, est la reine d'Espagne, et lui réplique : *Je vis avec les loups, non avec les serpents* (I, 2). Nous sommes en présence de

deux métaphores argumentatives réalisées à l'aide des animaux : *le loup* et *le serpent*. Le premier a, dans la conscience collective, les sèmes /puissant/, /intègre/, /loyal/, /attaque en meute/, métaphore pour Don César, qui, quoique malfaiteur, ne met jamais les femmes en danger, par contre, il les défend. Le second, *le serpent*, a les sèmes /rusé/, /trompeur/, /glissant/ et /indigne/ métaphore pour Don Salluste, homme vengeur, malveillant et extrêmement orgueilleux. Ses propos ont une valeur d'injure tout comme ceux de Ruy Blas. Remarquons qu'il s'y agit de deux métaphores *in absentia*, seulement le comparant étant dit. De même, la reine affirme : *Je sentis sur ma main sa bouche de serpent !* (II, 1) où elle apporte les sèmes /froid/, /désagréable/, /dégoutant/ reconstituant ainsi sa redoutable présence physique, et Ruy Blas : *on écrase un serpent qu'on rencontre* (V, 3) avant de tuer Don Salluste.

Pour la description de ces emplois métaphoriques des noms d'animaux, nous n'avons pris en considération que les sèmes correspondant à l'univers de croyance général, à la doxa, laissant de côté les sèmes caractérisant chaque espèce. De plus, « la métaphorisation ne retient que très rarement les sèmes correspondant aux caractéristiques objectives de l'espèce ; les sèmes maintenus sont ceux qui traduisent des jugements de valeur portés par telle culture particulière sur les animaux » (M. Tutescu, 1998 : 285). La métaphore qui porte en soi un jugement de valeur entraîne une contrainte plus forte sur le destinataire que l'expression du même jugement de valeur par les termes propres.

Présence en absence

Au théâtre, les personnages se présentent eux-mêmes et caractérisent les autres, leurs destins se croisent et se séparent, leurs actions changent de situation et précipitent le devenir de la pièce. Le personnage est donc défini par un ensemble harmonieux de signes qui le décrivent aux yeux du lecteur / spectateur et aux yeux des autres personnages sans aucune ambiguïté. Mais il y a des personnages qui n'apparaissent jamais sur la scène, qui ne vivent qu'à travers les définitions des autres. C'est le cas de cette continuelle présence en absence du cardinal de Richelieu qui, funeste, dirige, fait et défait les destins des autres : du roi, de Didier et Saverny, du peuple français, d'autres peuples (le roi : *Il mord l'Autriche à belles dents*, IV, 6). Nous avons donc les caractérisations de ce personnage fatal dans des métaphores argumentatives qui abondent au cours de *Marion de Lorme*.

a) Considérons ce premier vers : *L'homme à la main sanglante, à la robe écarlate !* Dans les pièces de V. Hugo, la couleur devient personnage, le rouge représentant le symbole du cardinal.

Bouchavannes argumente, comme presque tous les autres personnages, nous allons le voir, dans le but d'associer à Richelieu l'image de la cruauté qui est un trait définitoire de la personnalité du cardinal. Ce sont deux métaphores construites sur les compléments des noms, *à la main sanglante* et *à la robe écarlate* où nous distinguons les sèmes /rouge/, /sang/ et /cruauté/. Ce sont des métaphores vives, criantes qui plaident pour la présence maléfique du cardinal à l'esprit des personnages.

b) Brichanteau continue de la même façon et fait, cette fois-ci, un parallèle entre le cardinal et le roi : *Il est le flambeau, lui. Le roi, c'est la lanterne*, où les métaphores sont formées sur l'attribut du verbe *être*. Le sème commun pour *flambeau* et *lanterne* est /lumière/, le contraste entre les deux est /pouvoir/. L'interprétation que nous donnons est que c'est Richelieu qui règne à la place de Louis XIII. La métaphore *flambeau* est reprise par Bouchavannes : *Du vent de notre épée éteindre ce flambeau !* qui exprime son désir qu'un jour le peuple puisse *éteindre ce flambeau* qui représente le cardinal et où le *vent*

de notre épée est métaphore pour le courant d'air qu'une épée produit au moment de sa manipulation avec force et où *éteindre* est utilisé pour 'couper la tête à quelqu'un'.

c) Le cardinal est le maître de la mort et du mal : *C'est un large faucheur qui verse à flots le sang*. C'est la métaphore de L'Angély qui continue ainsi le champ lexical de l'épée : Richelieu est le faucheur qui utilise la faucille pour moissonner la vie (*verse à flots le sang*). Le sème commun à *épée* et *faucille* (pour *faucheur*) est /outil qui sert à couper quelque chose/.

d) Par les mots de Bouchevannes, *Manteau fleurdelysé qui cache Richelieu !* (II, 1) c'est le roi qui est mis en question, mais s'est toujours pour diminuer l'importance de celui-ci par rapport au tout-puissant cardinal. Louis XIII est un *manteau fleurdelysé*, qui fait référence à l'emblème de la France royale, la fleur de lys cousue sur l'habit du roi. Richelieu se cache à l'abri du manteau d'où il règne.

Nous venons de relever plusieurs métaphores argumentatives pour le caractère tyrannique de Richelieu concentrées dans une seule scène (1) du deuxième acte de *Marion de Lorme*. Leur occurrence est considérable par rapport au reste de la pièce.

e) C'est le tour du roi de caractériser Richelieu dans une métaphore argumentative : *toujours sous les yeux avoir cet homme rouge* (IV, 6) qu'il émet devant le duc de Bellegarde, un de ses conseillers. Il montre son mécontentement vis-à-vis des contraintes que lui impose le cardinal et le qualifie d'*homme rouge* faisant ainsi référence à sa fonction hiérarchique au cadre de l'église catholique, fonction accordée en exclusivité par le Pape de Rome aux plus proches de ses collaborateurs.

f) Dans sa tirade où il crie tout son désespoir pour la mort à venir de son neveu, Saverny, le marquis de Nangis affirme devant le roi que le cardinal *boit le meilleur du sang* de ses sujets (IV, 7). La métaphore est faite sur un verbe, *il boit* et un nom, *le sang*, qui vont dans le même sens, /boire un liquide/, et qui sous-tendent *enlever la vie à quelqu'un*. *Le meilleur du sang* doit être compris comme la jeunesse des condamnés à la mort, et ce sont les jeunes gens qui sont importants pour l'avenir du royaume. Nous y décelons le patriotisme du vieux marquis de Nangis.

g) Marion intervient elle-aussi auprès du roi dans l'espoir d'obtenir la grâce pour Didier. Le cardinal est un *monstre* (Marion : *Mais c'est un monstre enfin que votre cardinal !* - IV, 7) qui détruit à la fois sa vie et la vie de son amant. La métaphore n'est pas aussi perçante que celles que nous venons de mentionner, pourtant elle apporte encore un trait caractéristique du cardinal : sa méchanceté.

h) Didier ne perd lui non plus l'occasion de persiffler le cardinal : *Le cardinal ne va qu'avec son coupe-tête. / Il faut bien l'employer. La hache rouillerait.* (V, 5), après avoir appris la manière dont sa vie et celle de Saverny allait être enlevée : *Nous commuons leur peine à la tête tranchée* (V, 4). Si nous prenons chaque mot à la lettre, dans ces vers il n'y a aucune métaphore, mais si nous y associons l'image du cardinal qui va un coupe-tête à la main, il nous résulte un tableau terrifiant, argumentatif pour ce personnage sinistre. L'ironie de la victime s'y fait voir.

i) Le roi dit : *sa robe est mon linceul* (V, 8). La robe du cardinal, qui fait partie de sa tenue obligatoire en tant qu'homme de l'église, devient l'espace où il enferme la volonté de Louis XIII : le roi se sent mort sous la domination de cette éminence grise qui est Richelieu.

j) Finalement, Marion clôt la pièce par une référence toujours à l'homme qui traverse le drame sans y être physiquement présent : *Voilà l'homme rouge qui passe !* (au fond de la scène). Dans ces mots elle crie tout son désespoir contre la fatalité qui a enlevé la vie de son amant. C'est la même image que celle commentée antérieurement : le roi – *toujours sous les yeux avoir cet homme rouge*.

Il faut remarquer que dans les métaphores argumentatives précédemment analysées il y a un champ lexical du ténébreux tout entier : *linceul, main sanglante, épée, éteindre, faucheur, verser à flots, sang, boire le sang, coupe-tête, hache*, tous ces mots ayant un sème commun : la mort.

Pour finir cette analyse et démontrer la valeur argumentative des métaphores prises en considération, il faut que nous les soumettions au test de *presque*. Comme la forme de la métaphore argumentative est contraignante, et qu'elle a en soi-même une valeur de superlatif, on n'y trouvera jamais de comparatif, de superlatif ou d'enchaînement possible avec *presque* à l'intérieur des structures évaluativo-anthropologiques. Une affirmation du genre **Vous êtes presque mon lion* ou **Vous êtes mon presque lion* serait au moins choquante. De même pour : **Voilà l'homme presque rouge qui passe*, où nous pourrions nous poser la question : *serait-il rouge, rose ou vermeil ?* Ou encore **c'est un peu monstre enfin que votre cardinal ! : est-il un monstre ou il ne l'est pas ?* ainsi de suite.

C'est toujours le même M. Le Guern qui surprend le caractère contraignant de la métaphore argumentative et sa stabilité dans l'analogie sous-jacente : « Certes, la métaphore dissimule bien, trop bien au gré du linguiste, l'argumentation qu'elle véhicule. Et si elle évite le *presque*, c'est qu'elle n'en a pas besoin : puisqu'elle est invulnérable à la réfutation, elle peut se passer systématiquement de certaines précautions ; puisqu'elle court peu de risques, elle peut se permettre d'être terroriste » (M. Le Guern, 1981 : 71).

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UNA ORIGINAL « MISE EN ABYME » EN «LA CORTE DE CARLOS IV» DE GALDÓS

Lavinia SIMILARU*

Abstract: *The Court of Charles IV is the second novel of the first series of The National Episodes, written by Galdós in 1873, and it is revealed as an authentic “palimpsest”, which preserves traces of one of Shakespeare’s works, or as a startlingly original “mise en abyme”, before André Gide used the technique in his Faux-monnayeurs. The very young Gabriel Araceli is raised by an actress and has the opportunity to know the world of theatre full of illicit or mercenary love stories, envy, intrigue and jealousy from within. He finds himself unwittingly involved in all this, since necessity makes him act in a play performed in the home of a noble lady. The play is Othello or The Moor of Venice, a “detestable translation” (Galdós 2022: 236) of a “very unfortunate arrangement” (ibid.) of Shakespeare’s tragedy. The actor who plays the role of Othello is really in love with the actress who plays the role of Edelmira (Desdemona) and finds out on stage about his beloved’s betrayal since the letter from the play had been replaced by a true letter, which the actress had written to another lover. The feelings of the man acting are exactly the feelings of the character in the tragedy. Like Othello, the actor wants to kill the woman. Shakespeare’s tragedy constitutes the undeniable and peremptory background of the events of Galdós’s novel.*

Keywords: *Galdós; The Court of Charles IV; mise en abyme; Shakespeare*

I Los Episodios nacionales

Gran admirador de Balzac, Galdós deseó seguramente cultivar el realismo de su época, se afanó en reflejar en sus obras la vida del “pueblo, que con su miseria, sus disputas, sus dichos picantes, hacía la historia que no se escribe, como no sea por los poetas, pintores y saineteros” (Galdós, 1945: 548).

Los *Episodios Nacionales* “o no son nada, o son el vivir, el sentir y hasta el respirar de la gente” (Galdós, 2021: 1249), Una magistral lección de historia de España en el siglo XIX, mejor que la que se halla siempre en “los abultados libros en que sólo se trata de casamientos de reyes y príncipes, de tratados y alianzas, de las campañas de mar y tierra, dejando en olvido todo lo demás que constituye la existencia de los pueblos” (*ibidem*).

Su discurso de ingreso en la Real Academia Española no deja lugar a dudas: la novela es “imagen de la vida” y el arte de escribir novelas supone

...reproducir los caracteres humanos, las pasiones, las debilidades, lo grande y lo pequeño, las almas y las fisonomías, todo lo espiritual y lo físico que nos constituye y nos rodea y el lenguaje que es la marca de la raza, y las viviendas que son el signo de la familia, y la vestidura que diseña los últimos trazos externos de la personalidad...” (<http://www.biblioteca.org.ar/libros/130020.pdf>).

Numerosos historiadores literarios, críticos y exegetas han considerado que el realismo de Galdós no se puede negar, “no es más que un escritor dedicado día tras día durante cincuenta años [...] a observar la realidad española y llevar el fruto de sus observaciones a su obra novelística.” (González; Sevilla, 2017: 11).

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Fue “el primero en asimilar la lección de Balzac y de Dickens, al par que supo dar sentido nuevo al retorno hacia el antiguo realismo español, apropiándose lo substancial y rehuyendo la trampa de la imitación externa...” (Del Río, 1982: 295) y de ser reconocido unánimemente como “el verdadero creador de lo que entendemos por realismo moderno en la novela española” (*ibidem*).

Sin embargo, últimamente no falta quien afirme que “el «realismo» de Pérez Galdós es algo bastante discutible” (Vargas Llosa, 2022: 300).

Mario Vargas Llosa no se equivoca al identificar elementos románticos en los episodios nacionales. Al fin y al cabo, la novela histórica nació en el Romanticismo. Al Romanticismo se deben el encarnizamiento de las batallas en las que rige la improvisación, la naturaleza y sobre todo “el amor, inseparable de la muerte, como en todo drama romántico” (*idem*: 8).

Según la tradición de la novela histórica, Galdós evocó en sus obras acontecimientos históricos memorables y próceres que existieron realmente y que son conocidísimos, al lado de otros, ficticios. Hoy en día es muy difícil distinguir qué prestó de la vida y qué inventó:

La realidad de la historia y la fantasía del novelista se alían armoniosamente en los episodios galdosianos para ofrecer, con las naturales y justificables licencias, una imagen verosímil y aleccionadora de la España contemporánea; lo que Galdós inventa, se ajusta muy cabalmente al sucedido histórico: está a su servicio y lo complementa (Menéndez Peláez et al., 2005: 334).

II La primera serie de los Episodios Nacionales

Las diez novelas que conforman la primera serie de los Episodios nacionales las escribió Galdós entre 1873 y 1875 y refirió en ellas lo ocurrido en España desde las postrimerías del reinado de Carlos IV y durante la guerra de Independencia. Esto quiere decir desde la famosa batalla naval de Trafalgar (1805), en la que la armada inglesa del almirante Nelson derrotó a la armada franco-española, hasta la batalla de los Arapiles, en la que el ejército anglo-español venció al ejército francés de Napoleón. En palabras del mismo Galdós,

Vino Napoleón y despertó todo el mundo. La frase castellana *echarse a la calle* es admirable por su exactitud y expresión. España entera se echó a la calle, o al campo; su corazón guerrero latió con fuerza, y se ciñó laureles sin fin en la gloriosa frente; pero lo extraño es que Napoleón, aburrido al fin se marchó con las manos en la cabeza, y los españoles, movidos de la pícaro afición, continuaron haciendo de las suyas en diversas formas, y todavía no han vuelto a casa (Galdós, 2022-3: 1076).

Galdós destaca el papel de la improvisación y del patriotismo de los españoles humildes en aquella guerra, hecha de innumerables guerrillas:

La guerra de la Independencia fue la gran academia del desorden. Nadie le quita su gloria, no señor: es posible que sin los guerrilleros la dinastía intrusa se hubiera afianzado en España, por lo menos hasta la Restauración. A ellos se debe la permanencia nacional, el respeto que todavía infunde a los extraños el nombre de España, y esta seguridad vanagloriosa, pero justa que durante medio siglo hemos tenido de que nadie se atreverá a meterse con nosotros. Pero la guerra de la Independencia, repito, fue la gran escuela del caudillaje, porque en ella se adiestraron hasta lo sumo los españoles en el arte para otros incomprensible de improvisar ejércitos y dominar por más o menos tiempo una comarca; cursaron la ciencia de la insurrección, y las maravillas de entonces las hemos llorado

después con lágrimas de sangre. [...] Los guerrilleros constituyen nuestra esencia nacional. Ellos son nuestro cuerpo y nuestra alma, son el espíritu, el genio, la historia de España; ellos son todo, grandeza y miseria, un conjunto informe de cualidades contrarias, la dignidad dispuesta al heroísmo, la crueldad inclinada al pillaje (*ibidem*).

Como es de esperar, los españoles profesan un odio mortal a los invasores, que son “los verdugos del pueblo de Madrid” (Galdós, 2022-2: 409). En *Zaragoza*, don José Montoria pilla a su hijo Agustín en la calle y le amenaza con la horca si no vuelve inmediatamente a la lucha. Hay hambre y enfermedades. Los horrores de la guerra ocupan mucho espacio en el relato, pero también la solidaridad y el calor humano. Galdós confiesa: “yo quiero que aquí, como en la Naturaleza, las pequeñas cosas vayan al lado de las grandes, enlazadas y confundidas, encubriendo el misterioso lazo que une la gota de agua con la montaña y el fugaz segundo con el siglo, lleno de historia” (Galdós, 2022-3: 1115).

III La corte de Carlos IV

III 1 La novela dentro de la primera serie de los Episodios nacionales

La corte de Carlos IV es la segunda novela de la primera serie, escrita por Galdós en 1873, y dista mucho de las demás, puesto que no relata hazañas de guerra.

Gabriel Araceli, el famoso protagonista de la primera serie, tiene 16 años en esta novela y, como es pobre, llega a servir a una cómica, Pepita González, lo que brinda a Galdós la posibilidad de describir para las generaciones venideras el mundo de la farándula en la España de la primera mitad del siglo XIX. Es inolvidable la descripción del público abigarrado y ruidoso. Según el reglamento de los teatros, los hombres y las mujeres se podían mezclar solamente en los palcos; las localidades baratas, que podía pagar la clase media, no permitían la mezcla, dando pie al desorden:

...la separación avivaba en hembras y varones el natural anhelo de entablar conversación, y lo que la proximidad hubiera permitido en voz baja, la pérfida distancia lo autorizaba en destempladas voces. Así es que entre uno y otro hemisferio se cruzaban palabras cariñosas, o burlonas o soeces, observaciones que hacían desternillar de risa a todo el ilustre concurso, preguntas que se contestaban con juramentos, y agudezas cuya malicia consistía en ser dichas a gritos. Frecuentemente de las palabras se pasaba a las obras, y algunas andanadas de castañas, avellanas, o cáscaras de naranjas, cruzaban de *polo a polo*, arrojadas por diestra mano, ejercicio que si interrumpía la función, en cambio recogijaba mucho a entrambas partes. (Galdós, 2022-1: 135).

La gente conservaba el sombrero, haciendo caso omiso del reglamento, y en ningún sitio había comodidad, ya que “los palcos o aposentos eran unos cuchitriles estrechos y oscuros donde se acomodaban como podían las personas de pro” (*Ibidem*).

La condesa Amaranta conoce a Gabriel en casa de la actriz Pepita González y consigue llevárselo al Escorial, donde presencian la conspiración. Le pide que espíe para ella, pero el adolescente se muestra muy digno y se niega. En cambio, no puede negarse a actuar en una obra que representan en un palacio.

III 2 La «mise en abyme» en *La corte de Carlos IV*

La corte de Carlos IV se revela como un auténtico “palimpsesto”, que conserva huellas de una obra de Shakespeare, o como una originalísima “mise en abyme”, antes de que André Gide utilice el procedimiento en sus *Faux-monnayeurs*.

Como criado de una actriz, el jovencísimo Gabriel Araceli tiene la oportunidad de conocer desde dentro el mundo del teatro, lleno de amores ilícitos o mercenarios, de

envidias, intrigas y celos. Se ve involucrado sin querer en todo esto, ya que la necesidad le obliga a actuar en una obra de teatro, representada en casa de una dama noble. Se trata de *Otelo o el Moro de Venecia*, “detestable traducción que D. Teodoro La Calle había hecho del *Otello de Ducis*” (Galdós 2022: 236), que a su vez era un “arreglo muy desgraciado” (*ibidem*) del drama de Shakespeare. Sin embargo, la magnífica obra del más famoso dramaturgo del mundo no había perdido del todo su esencia y, a pesar de las burdas intervenciones en el texto, seguía impresionar al público:

A pesar de la inmensa escala descendente que aquella gran obra había recorrido desde la eminente cumbre del poeta inglés, hasta la bajísima sima del traductor español, conservaba siempre los elementos dramáticos de su origen y la impresión que ejercía sobre el público era asombrosa (*ibidem*)

El actor que desempeña el papel de Otelo se llama Isidoro Máiquez, es el jefe de la compañía teatral y es hombre de pasiones violentas. Máiquez no puede corresponder a Pepita González, ama de Gabriel, porque está enamorado locamente de Lesbia, una duquesa casada, aficionada al teatro. En la función organizada en el palacio, Lesbia desempeña el papel de Edelmira (Desdemona) y se revela como “consumada actriz” (*ibidem*), que puede competir con las mejores actrices de la época, ya que es capaz de declamar “con una sensibilidad que hubiera envidiado Rita Luna” (*ibidem*). Isidoro Máiquez desempeña el papel de Otelo.

La relación de Lesbia con Isidoro es complicada y llena de meandros. Recientemente, Lesbia había traicionado a Isidoro Máiquez con otro amante, un tal Mañara. Hay una carta comprometedor de Lesbia para Mañara, que Gabriel Araceli no había podido entregar al destinatario y que estaba en poder del adolescente. Pepita González, al enterarse, le roba la carta a Gabriel. Por celos, sustituye la carta que Otelo lee en el escenario - y que el héroe de Shakespeare considera prueba de la traición de Desdemona - por la carta que Lesbia le había escrito a Mañara. De esta manera, Isidoro Máiquez se entera en el escenario de la traición de su amada:

Ocurrió una cosa singular. Isidoro leyó el papel en silencio; sus labios secos y lívidos temblaron, y como si aún creyera que era ilusión lo que veía, lo leyó y relejó de nuevo mientras el público, ignorando la causa de aquel silencio, mostró su asombro en un sordo murmullo. Isidoro al fin alzó la vista, se pasó las manos por la frente; parecía despertar de un sueño; balbuceó algunas voces terribles, cerró los ojos, como tratando de serenarse y reanudar su papel; dio algunos pasos hacia el público y retrocedió luego (*idem*: 249).

El actor tiene la reacción del hombre celoso, exactamente como el personaje de Shakespeare que encarna. Isidoro hace un esfuerzo para reponerse, consigue centrar su atención en la obra y pronuncia con mucho dramatismo los versos que el apuntador le indica: “Jamás estos versos se habían declamado en la escena española con tan fogosa elocuencia, con tan aterradora expresión. El artificio del drama había desaparecido, y el hombre mismo, el bárbaro y apasionado Otelo espantaba al auditorio con las voces de su inflamada ira” (*ibidem*). Furioso, desea matar a mujer que le había traicionado. Con una mirada terrible, desenvaina la espada y todos los asistentes se dan cuenta de que el arma es verdadera, Pepita González no había sustituido solamente la carta, sino también la espada. Poco falta para que el actor no mate a la dama.

En la nueva obra de teatro, el infame Yago, el amigo farsante de Otelo, se llama Pésaro y es encarnado por el inocente y jovencísimo Gabriel Araceli, que se ve obligado a aceptar el papel. El leal Gabriel Araceli se mete entre Isidoro y Lesbia, salvándole a ella la vida.

IV Conclusiones

La corte de Carlos IV es una novela singular dentro de la primera serie de Episodios nacionales, entre novelas que relatan generalmente acontecimientos históricos ominosos y sangrientos. *La Corte...* no narra más que los amores y celos de los integrantes de una compañía teatral y de una dama noble.

Los sentimientos del hombre que actúa son exactamente los sentimientos del personaje del drama. Igual que Otelo, el actor quiere matar a la mujer. El drama de Shakespeare constituye el fondo innegable y perentorio de los acontecimientos de la novela de Galdós.

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VOIX PLURIELLES DANS LES TEXTES ANTIBOURGEOIS ANTICLÉRICAUX ET ANTIMILITARISTES DE JACQUES PRÉVERT

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***Abstract:** Our communication aims at entering in the depth of a heteromorphic work and at rediscovering the various facets of an author who refuses to obey the rules, of an objector and of a rebel and even anarchic poet. The study wishes to present the prévertian poetic universe from the perspective of the plurality of voices, deciphering the messages transmitted by Prévert's texts.*

***Keywords:** implicit; textual voices; irony*

L'œuvre prévertienne représente une synthèse inédite entre les textes rêveurs et les écrits virulents, anticléricaux, antimilitaristes qui dénoncent toutes les formes du pouvoir et fustigent la bourgeoisie, la famille, les curés, les militaires, en prenant la défense des plus faibles, des marginaux, des étrangers, des femmes, des enfants, des animaux.

L'univers poétique prévertien, nous dévoile les deux hypostases d'un même auteur, le côté humain et le côté révolté.

Prévert réussit à associer la révolte aux plus sincères et aux plus belles pensées. Nous pouvons affirmer même qu'une partie des textes dévoilant le côté humaniste de Prévert portent en filigrane les germes d'un être complètement révolté contre les injustices de toutes sortes ou contre tous les maux. Dans ses textes, la rébellion est présentée graduellement et elle comporte plusieurs valences.

Le poète pose un regard lucide sur la réalité de son temps, dénonce et pénalise toutes les formes d'hypocrisie auxquelles l'homme est confronté.

Notre communication se propose d'analyser les diverses facettes de cette œuvre contestataire et par l'intermédiaire l'écriture prévertienne, nous découvrons la volonté de l'auteur d'échapper aux préjugés, de mêler dans son œuvre une pluralité de voix. La plume prévertienne est pleine d'humour et d'ironie. L'auteur glisse souvent dans ses textes des allusions, des insinuations, des références, beaucoup d'ironie et de nombreux jeux de mots créateurs d'implicite.

Nous remarquons le désir de l'artiste de faire tomber les masques de l'hypocrisie humaine, de présenter le vrai visage de ces acteurs représentés par ceux qui détiennent le pouvoir, qu'ils soient politiciens, curés, généraux, patrons ou enseignants et, par l'intermédiaire de l'ironie, de faire passer un message à son public ou à ses lecteurs.

Il existe des textes traitant le thème si cher à l'artiste, l'enfance, mais nous devons préciser que ces écrits dévoilent à la fois le côté humaniste de l'artiste manifesté par la sympathie et la tendresse pour les « cancre » (Prévert, J., 1992 : 298), les « *voyous des rues* » (*Ibidem*) mais aussi l'aversion contre tous ceux qui menacent leur évolution, leur développement harmonieux de la personnalité et entravent leur liberté, leur imagination.

Généralement l'enfance devrait être un univers magique, bercé d'affection, d'amour parental, mais souvent les textes de Prévert sur l'enfance expriment une certaine tristesse et on découvre dans les écrits prévertiens que l'enfance se heurte aux dures

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épreuves de la vie, de la famille et de la société et les textes révèlent plutôt du malheur que de la joie et la paix du foyer familial.

Contrairement à la première impression, offerte par le titre *L'enfant abandonné*, la lecture du texte révèle qu'il ne s'agit pas vraiment d'un enfant abandonné par sa famille naturelle mais d'un enfant «*perdu*» dans la routine, un enfant entravé dans la monotonie quotidienne de la société, un enfant incompris par sa famille, un enfant privé de l'affection réelle de ses parents, car au lieu d'éveiller sa curiosité, de stimuler son imagination, de l'encourager à rêver, les parents ne font que le condamner à une existence sans éclat, une vie dénuée de fantaisie et de la magie spécifique à l'âge merveilleux de l'enfance.

Dans *La Morale de l'histoire* nous retrouvons cette idée de l'abandon de l'enfant et de son aliénation dans la société : «*Tout seul* comme un *orphelin* ordinaire/ Or comme un *veuf* / *Tout seul* au milieu de la classe/ Dans la pénombre et dans le *désarroi*.// » (Prévert, J., 1972 :213)

Le texte *L'enfant abandonné* dévoile les premiers moments de la vie de l'enfant, ses premiers pas, son enfance monotone :

Et bientôt on lui apprend à parler [...]. Bientôt, on le traîne dans les jardins, au Parc Monceau, aux Tuileries, pour prendre l'air et jouer avec d'autres enfants perdus comme lui [...]. D'autres enfants, pâles et tristes, comme lui, portant comme lui, sur des épaules de petits comptables [...]. Petits prodiges au crâne mou avec déjà dedans des chiffres, les grattant comme des poux, nains qui font l'orgueil d'une famille de nains, obèses précoces faisant l'orgueil d'une famille de maigres [...]. Fillettes, couleur de papier peint, simulant d'une voix de ventriloque, de dérisoires réceptions mondaines, atroces et malheureuses petites orphelines parquées par des sœurs avec un pince-nez sur le cœur, enfants de troupe en uniforme, enfants de chœur en civil [...]. (Prévert, J., 1992 : 296)

Les gestes et les actions de l'enfant sont presque mécaniques et trahissent un certain automatisme ; l'enfant imite les adultes et met en pratique ce qu'on lui a appris : «*Il dit bonjour, merci, il fait sa prière.* » (*Ibidem*)

Les fillettes ont perdu l'innocence caractéristique à leur âge, «*couleur de papier peint*», sont des enfants précoces et imitent leurs mères qui discutent de derniers événements mondains «*simulant d'une voix de ventriloque, de dérisoires réceptions mondaines* » (*Ibidem*)

Ce texte révèle l'esprit ironique de l'auteur et son dégoût contre les familles qui n'accordent pas à leurs enfants la liberté nécessaire et caractéristique à l'âge et les enferment dans la monotonie, en obéissant aux convenances.

Ces familles renoncent à traiter leurs enfants comme des êtres libres et singuliers et les considèrent comme de vrais objets qui doivent contribuer par leur attitude et leurs réussites au prestige familial :

Enfants abandonnés, enfants bien élevés, [...] enfants voués au bleu ou au blanc, au tricolore et à la méningite. Enfants d'ingénieurs, de magistrats, enfants de poètes, enfants de Marie. [...] Déchirantes petites figures du musée de cire familial, exemplaire et occidental [...]. (*Ibidem*)

Nous observons que tous ces enfants perdent leur identité, s'uniformisent, deviennent des pièces exposées dans des musées familiaux et ils reflètent la société et ses normes de conduite.

La fin du texte *L'enfant abandonné* est fondée sur une antithèse qui met en lumière deux catégories d'enfants et deux univers distincts : les enfants réels, «*animaux vivants* » (Prévert, J., *op. cit* :298) c'est à dire ceux qui sont libres et qui vivent dans le monde merveilleux de la fantaisie, qui peut-être ne sont pas d'élèves modèle mais ont beaucoup d'imagination et les «*animaux savants* », les enfants qui obéissent aux règles

imposées par leurs familles et par leurs professeurs et vivent dans un monde terne, régné par les convenances et un jour deviendront une image fidèle de leurs parents, des « *grandes personnes bien élevées* » (*Ibidem*)

Petite foule d'enfants réels, petites bandes d'animaux vivants, cancre et voyous des rues montrés du doigt de loin par les autres petits animaux savants mimant le geste du gardien. Ils apprennent mal leurs leçons, ils ne font pas bien leurs devoirs, ils changent la morale des fables, ils se battent et pleurent. (*Ibidem*)

La lecture du texte *L'enfant abandonné* révèle le travestissement ironique de Prévert, et à la première impression nous pouvons croire que cette ironie s'adresse aussi aux enfants, car l'auteur utilise des *termes dépréciatifs* : « *petites prodiges au crâne mou* », « *nains* », « *obeses précoces* », « *petits gnomes* », « *enfants à tête d'éponge* », « *à bec-de-lièvre* ». En réalité, nous découvrons que ces termes peu valorisants, même péjoratifs, permettant de porter des jugements de valeurs implicites, trahissent l'ironie de l'auteur, mais nous pouvons affirmer qu'il s'agit d'une ironie mêlée de pitié. Le texte révèle d'une manière indirecte que l'ironie prévertienne s'adresse plutôt aux adultes et aux parents.

Nous remarquons aussi que les enfants sont désignés seulement par les professions de leurs parents : « *enfants d'ingénieurs, de magistrats, enfants de poètes [...]* » (*Ibidem* : 296), c'est à dire la catégorie dont Prévert nous invite à nous en méfier, les intellectuels.

Le texte *L'enfant abandonné* peut être interprété comme un message visant la société et, si Prévert est ironique, sa visée c'est justement la société qui au lieu de représenter un cadre adéquat à l'épanouissement de l'individu, devient un lieu de l'aliénation.

Les enfants présentés dans le texte *L'enfant abandonné*, même s'ils jouissent d'une situation matérielle aisée, ils manquent d'affection de leur famille et ils sont captifs des règles imposées par leurs parents ou par la société. C'est justement pour cette raison que Prévert considère que les enfants des esclaves, dont l'absence de liberté est caractéristique, sont parfois plus libres et même plus heureux.

Les enfants abandonnés représentent des individus dont on a volé l'enfance, le droit de rêver et d'espérer. Ces enfants illustrés par Prévert représentent des « *produits* » de la société qui étouffe la personnalité des individus et ces enfants deviendront les adultes de demain.

Selon Kerbrat – Orecchioni, « Ironiser, c'est toujours plus ou moins s'en prendre à une cible qu'il s'agit de disqualifier. » (Kerbrat – Orecchioni, C., 1986 : 102)

Même si Prévert ne dénonce pas d'une manière directe tous ces maux qui condamnent l'individu à une existence déplorable et à une vie sans éclat, l'auteur recourt aux messages subtils, nous ressentons la même répulsion contre la société et le même esprit railleur prévertien.

La lecture du poème *Riviera* nous laisse la même impression, car nous y retrouvons les échos de l'auteur ironique qui parle des « *petites prodiges* » représentant l'orgueil de la famille :

C'est *nos fils/ c'est nos fils* disent les présidents/ et ils hochent la tête doucement et *fièrement /et leurs petits prodiges /désespérément/se jettent à la figure leurs morceaux de piano. //* (Prévert, J., 1972 : 80)

Le poème *La Morale de l'histoire* dévoile aussi l'esprit critique prévertien, trahissant l'ironie de l'auteur concernant « *Le remarquable et exemplaire bon élève des bons pères* » (*Ibidem* : 213)

Tous ces enfants qui ont constamment besoin de l'approbation de leurs parents sont dans la vision prévertienne des êtres sans espoir, sans rêves et sans révolte.

Ainsi Prévert devient le porte-parole de tous « ceux qui en ont trop à dire pour pouvoir le dire » (*Ibidem* : 17) et dénonce à haute voix l'ordre familial qui n'obéit pas aux lois de l'amour et qui est plutôt sous le règne des règles de la société, constituant ainsi un reflet d'un monde gouverné seulement par les préjugés.

Dans nos analyses antérieures nous avons découvert des nuances de la révolte de Prévert, contre l'ordre familial, contre l'ordre établi et contre le conformisme de l'éducation, mais dans la partie qui suit, nous allons dévoiler l'aspect vraiment virulent de l'œuvre prévertienne.

Le mécontentement se manifeste d'abord d'une manière discrète par un non-conformisme spontané dans ces textes pour mener aux formes de la révolte.

Une proportion significative de l'œuvre prévertienne est inspirée par la nécessité violente de protester. Les poèmes les plus véhéments de Prévert sont sans doute ceux qu'il a écrits pour dénoncer la guerre.

Pourtant nous devons préciser que pour Prévert, la guerre ne se déroule pas seulement sur les champs de bataille ; elle existe dans les cœurs et les pensées de l'homme, dans la société et même dans le noyau familial.

Si Jacques Prévert se révolte contre la guerre, c'est parce que la guerre ne se rapporte pas seulement à ceux qui prennent les décisions importantes mais elle fait des victimes parmi ceux qui sont innocents. De cette manière il s'engage à travers ses écrits et il réagit violemment par la voix de ses textes.

Par l'intermédiaire de ses textes, Jacques Prévert adopte une attitude constamment réfractaire face à la guerre et il ne manque pas non plus une occasion d'en rappeler les tragiques conséquences sur les innocents. Le ton est violent, à la hauteur de l'aversion profonde que Prévert ressent pour ce mal universel.

Prévert affirmait qu' : « Il n'y a jamais de victoire, il n'y a jamais de défaite. Il y a arrêt momentané du massacre [...] Les massacre des innocents est toujours prémédité. Il n'y a pas de bonne ou de mauvaise guerre. » (Prévert, J., Pozner, A., 1972 :104)

Il condamne surtout les auteurs moraux des guerres, il envisage de démasquer les visages de tous ces hypocrites et exploiters et il ne pardonne ni à ceux qui consentent ou s'y résignent.

Selon Prévert, la religion accepte la guerre et même l'encourage et il déteste l'alliance de l'armée et de l'église.

Souvenirs de famille ou L'Ange garde-chiourme représente l'un des textes qui dénoncent le pacte tacite de la religion et de l'armée.

Toute sa vie, l'auteur a été perçu comme anticlérical, la religion, les curés et l'Église étant parmi ses cibles privilégiés. Aux yeux de Prévert les ecclésiastiques représentent l'image fidèle de la cupidité, de l'hypocrisie et même de l'immoralité.

D'après Michel Trihoreau « L'anticléricalisme de Prévert prend sa force dans l'humour qu'il traverse. » (Trihoreau, M., 2005 :168)

Son refus de la religion et son anticléricalisme pourraient aussi s'enraciner dans son non-conformisme absolu. Ce n'est pas à Dieu que Prévert s'en prend principalement mais à tous ceux qui font de Dieu la source d'interdictions et de tabous.

Dans ces œuvres, les jeux de mots, plus précisément les contrepétories représentent une caractéristique des figures prévertiens. L'auteur glisse souvent dans ses textes des erreurs volontaires, c'est-à-dire des phonèmes pouvant intervenir dans la prononciation d'un mot et même détourner son sens littéral, ayant une visée ironique ou ayant comme dessein de susciter l'intérêt du lecteur et l'inviter à rechercher les sens connotatifs.

Un bon nombre de contrepèteries nous est fourni par les textes anticléricaux de Prévert. Tout comme au niveau thématique, l'auteur ironise aussi au niveau phonique et graphique, les représentants de l'Église, il caricature tout ce qui représente Dieu et Jésus-Christ, les saints, dans la vision chrétienne, il s'en prend aux dogmes et aux mœurs des croyants, à la pratique religieuse. Il tourne en dérision les textes sacrés et il se propose de démythifier les sermons prônés par la Bible.

Prévert s'en prend aussi du fils de Dieu, Jésus-Christ et le narrateur ironique des *Souvenirs de famille ou l'Ange garde-chiourme*, veut mettre en lumière le fait que la religion et les sermons ne sont qu'une illusion.

Dans sa vision tout ce qui est prêché dans les Évangiles ne représente pas la vérité, au contraire, les paroles de Jésus-Christ et ses discours religieux ne font que tromper les humbles : « Heureux les pauvres d'esprit, ceux qui ne cherchent pas à comprendre, ils travailleront dur [...] ils feront des heures supplémentaires qui leur seront comptées plus tard dans le royaume de mon père. » (Prévert, J., 1972 : 30)

On retrouve dans le texte *Souvenirs de famille ou L'Ange garde-chiourme* des contrepèters, mais cette fois-ci le narrateur vise une autre cible, plus précisément l'armée et ses représentants.

L'esprit railleur n'épargne non plus le père de famille de ce récit car on y découvre que le personnage au lieu d'être décoré pour ses « mérites » et d'être récompensé par la Rosette de la Légion d'honneur, il reçoit « la Roséole de la légion d'honneur ». (*Ibidem* : 29)

En faisant appel à cette contrepèterie, le narrateur ébauche le portrait d'un homme atteint par une maladie infantine et laisse sous-entendre qu'il n'est pas vraiment un véritable héros qui reçoit un insigne pour ces actions courageuses.

Un autre contrepèter présent dans le même texte, peut-être le plus célèbre de Jacques Prévert, est « Martyr c'est pourrir un peu. » (*Ibidem* : 33).

Prévert se sert d'un vers célèbre du *Rondel de l'adieu*, d'Edmond Haraucourt, « Partir c'est mourir un peu », et il le reprend à sa manière, produisant un effet comique. Cette contrepèterie trahit aussi le mépris du narrateur concernant le personnage auquel on se réfère, mais aussi cette figure prévertienne laisse sous-entendre la conception de l'homme Jacques Prévert, un auteur pour lequel il n'existe pas de vrais héros ou des martyrs. D'ailleurs on peut dire que par cette contrepèterie, Prévert ironise à la fois le clergé mais aussi l'union de l'Église avec l'Armée.

Souvenirs de famille ou L'Ange garde-chiourme, représente l'un des textes prévertiens où l'ironie et l'esprit critique de l'auteur se manifestent pleinement. Il s'agit d'un texte clé où l'auteur attaque avec virulence la religion, la guerre, ses cibles étant la famille bourgeoise, les ecclésiastiques et les représentants de l'armée.

Dans *Souvenirs de famille*, la visée de Prévert est de régler les comptes avec la famille bourgeoise traditionnelle.

Dans son étude *Prévert, portrait d'une vie*, Carole Aurouet considère que *Souvenirs de famille ou L'Ange garde-chiourme* « est écrit avec une ironie féroce qui permet de procéder à un véritable jeu de massacre dans lequel seuls les enfants sont épargnés ». (Arouet, C., 2007 : 120)

Même le titre du texte *Souvenirs de famille ou l'Ange garde-chiourme* trahit les intentions d'un auteur ironique car on pourrait découvrir même à l'intérieur de ce titre, la présence d'un paradoxe¹ « l'ange garde-chiourme ».

¹ L'ironie et le paradoxe constituent des énoncés polyphoniques, qui font entendre deux énonciateurs qui correspondent à deux voix. Si l'ironie signifie affirmer « le contraire de ce qu'on

L'*ange* représente à la fois une créature appartenant aux sphères spirituelles, un intermédiaire entre l'homme et la divinité ou une personne parfaite, très gentille et douce. Le *garde-chiourme* est un surveillant des galériens, des forçats, il s'agit d'un surveillant brutal et sévère. L'union de ces deux mots « *ange* » et « *garde-chiourme* » dans le même contexte pourrait trahir les intentions d'un auteur ironique mais aussi ses convictions conformément auxquelles tout ce qui appartient à la religion connote la sévérité des dogmes, les règles trop rigides imposées par l'Église.

Donc ce titre assez étonnant et cette association paradoxale, dévoilent les opinions de l'auteur, selon lesquelles, la religion, au lieu de libérer l'esprit de ses adeptes ne fait que de contraindre et assujettir les individus.

Ce titre pourrait être capable de susciter l'attention et l'intérêt du lecteur et pourrait représenter le premier indice du fait qu'il s'agit d'un texte visant une critique impitoyable de la part du narrateur, invitant ainsi le public à une longue réflexion.

Des allusions à d'autres événements se font aussi entendre dans le texte. Par exemple, le père des trois enfants, héros de son texte, est un « *savant* », dont le travail consiste dans la réalisation « d'une jambe artificielle perfectionnée », mais la réussite de l'invention dépend d'une guerre, « la guerre des Berceaux » car le père fait allusion à la Revanche :

« Mon père était l'inventeur d'une jambe artificielle perfectionnée ; aussi, à chaque repas, évoquait-il en hochant douloureusement la tête le calvaire des cigognes françaises captives dans les clochers de Strasbourg. » (Prévert, J., 1972 :28)

Si on lit entre les lignes et on cherche le sens derrière ces affirmations, on découvre une allusion à l'épisode de la résistance des Canadiens, dont le but était de faire plus d'enfants que les colons anglais afin de devenir supérieurs en nombre.

La présence des « *cigognes françaises captives* » renforce cette idée, la cigogne connotant la fertilité, d'autant plus que dans certains pays on dit qu'elle apporte les enfants ou qu'elle est le messager de la naissance d'un bébé.

L'auteur fait allusion aussi dans le texte au fait que la cigogne blanche est devenue en Alsace un emblème et un oiseau totem, rappelant le revanchisme et l'histoire houleuse et compliquée de cette région.

« Le calvaire des cigognes françaises captives dans les clochers de Strasbourg » pourrait être interprété comme une allusion à l'occupation de Strasbourg par les Allemands, à la défaite de la France de 1870 et à l'espoir de la Revanche, signifiant la reconquête des « provinces perdues », l'Alsace et la Lorraine. En réalité, l'auteur y mêle les périodes et juxtapose deux moments historiques différents.

Le thème de la guerre est étroitement lié à celui du profit et de l'argent. Le père a inventé cette « jambe artificielle » et voit sa fortune « liée à celle de la Revanche ». D'ailleurs il imagine déjà ses enfants infirmes, portant fièrement sous leur pantalon « l'objet d'art, la délicieuse mécanique, la jambe *paternelle*. » (Prévert, J., *op. cit.*: 28)

Le père préfère voir souffrir ses fils, les sacrifier au nom de la patrie, de la gloire et surtout au nom du profit, les voir décorés et même mutilés : « Et, me regardant, puis regardant mes frères avec une immense tendresse, il cherchait à deviner lequel d'entre nous, plus tard, *aurait la chance de porter* sur sa poitrine, *la croix des braves* et sous son pantalon [...] *la jambe paternelle*. » (*Ibidem*)

veut faire entendre, et non dire le contraire de ce qu'on pense » (Kerbrat – Orecchioni, C., *op. cit.* : 134), le paradoxe cache souvent, sous une formule ou une idée qui paraît étonnante, une vérité que l'on peut soutenir. Le plus souvent le paradoxe vise à éveiller la réflexion ou la critique.

Le geste le plus irresponsable et le plus lâche du père est sa fugue, l'abandon de ses fils et le renoncement aux obligations familiales :

« Effrayés, nous étions dans notre chambre, quand Marie-Rose nous apporta une lettre et s'écroula sur le sol en hurlant : "Monsieur est parti, parti, parti !..." »
(*Ibidem* : 33)

Le narrateur présente aussi la lettre d'adieu du père et met en lumière l'égoïsme de ce parent, son insouciance concernant la vie de sa famille :

« Je lus la lettre à haute voix : " Mes enfants, considérez-vous comme orphelins jusqu'à mon retour peu probable. Ludovic". » (*Ibidem*)

Le narrateur ajoute aussi à cette lettre une trace d'humour, en affirmant que le nom réel du père n'était pas Ludovic mais Jean-Benoît :

« Cette lettre nous parut d'autant plus surprenante que notre père portait depuis toujours le nom de Jean-Benoît. » (*Ibidem*)

Ce détail étonnant concernant le prénom du père pourrait acquérir des sens divers ; il pourrait laisser sous-entendre que le personnage était atteint par la sénilité et souligner son aliénation, il pourrait aussi symboliser que ce personnage était en réalité un inconnu pour sa famille et demeure une énigme même pour ses enfants ou bien il pourrait représenter un élément insolite glissé par le narrateur pour compléter ce tableau étrange.

Le retour du père est présenté comme le retour du fils prodigue des Évangiles, offrant au narrateur, la possibilité de prendre en dérision les livres saints mais aussi le père :

« Ah, sublime quroquipi, charmant quiproquo familial, ce vieux papa prodigue, cette vieille servante, ce vieil âne dans cette vieille maison avec les vieux arbres de ce vieux jardin ! » (*Ibidem* : 37)

Le père est associé à un « nuage de poussière », chose qui pourrait connoter à la fois sa tenue négligente et usée, mais aussi ses idées confuses et son « discours assez décousu » : « Le nuage de poussière, c'était notre pauvre père vêtu d'un vieux costume de sport et coiffé d'un sombrero mexicain. » (*Ibidem* : 36)

La fin du récit nous présente la mort de ce père de famille :

« Mais il tombe du buffet, raide, si raide qu'on dirait du meuble qu'il craque et que c'est une planche qui tombe. » (*Ibidem* : 39)

Un autre personnage intéressant est le frère qui avait été délégué par l'auteur, dès le début du texte, de raconter ; il est le narrateur ironique de cette autobiographie fictive, il est le porte-parole de Prévert et c'est grâce à son regard critique et attentif que le lecteur apprend l'histoire de cette famille bourgeoise.

Nous découvrons que ce narrateur partage un bon nombre de révoltes prévertiennes, on pourrait affirmer qu'il est un sorte de double de l'auteur, sa voix exprimant les mécontentements et les ressentiments de Prévert envers la famille bourgeoise traditionnelle, la société qui étouffe l'individu et le condamne à une triste existence, l'éducation trop rigide, la religion, les guerres, le colonialisme.

Comme Prévert, l'enfant rejette les dogmes religieux, il n'aime pas aller à l'Eglise ou il déteste entendre les cloches sonner. L'enfant des *Souvenirs de famille* affirme : « tout s'en mêlait [...] les cloches pour les morts, pour ceux qui se marient. » (Prévert, J., *op. cit.* 34)

Le récit ironique de l'*Évangile* revient toujours à la charge du fils aîné qui fait semblant de relater les événements comme si c'était l'histoire racontée par l'abbé-même.

En lisant ce passage, attribué à un narrateur ironique, nous découvrons l'un des textes prévertiens les plus anticléricaux et les plus violents en ce qui concerne la Bible, Jésus-Christ et la religion chrétienne.

Selon le narrateur, les livres saints racontent :

[...] la triste et banale histoire d'un homme d'autrefois qui portait un bouc au menton, un agneau sur les épaules et qui mourut cloué sur deux planches de salut, après avoir beaucoup pleuré sur lui-même dans un jardin, la nuit. C'était un fils de famille qui parlait de son père. (*Ibidem* : 29)

Le texte des *Saintes Écritures* est revu et corrigé de manière à en faire apparaître des lacunes et y semer des détails susceptibles d'inspirer le doute. Ainsi le narrateur de *Souvenirs de famille*, présente sa version des événements relatés dans les Évangiles et son avis sceptique de ce qui pour la religion était considéré comme l'effet d'un pouvoir surnaturel et de l'influence de la divinité : « le tonnerre fait son bruit habituel », « lorsque les orages touchaient à leur fin, il étendait la main et la tempête s'apaisait ». (*Ibidem* : 30)

De cette manière, *Souvenirs de famille* ou *L'Ange garde-chiourme*, pourrait être interprété comme une parodie de l'éducation, de la religion et de la société.

Nous reconnaissons dans les actions des personnages et le développement du récit - le retour du père, celui de la bonne, même avec un nouveau chien, celui de l'abbé, prêt pour la nouvelle guerre, que l'on attendait dès le début du texte, et finalement la mort du père - le style burlesque caractéristique aux scénarios prévertiens.

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ADAPTING TO PLURALISTIC GROUPS OF STUDENTS BY MEANS OF INTEGRATING SOFT SKILLS IN UNIVERSITY ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSES

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Abstract: *It goes without saying that in this day and age hard skills are a must in a student's background and preparation. However, the pandemic and the globalized world has taught us that soft skills are real assets in every field of expertise and they are here to stay. It is my firm belief that our purpose as teachers/trainers/educators/facilitators, besides teaching language and literature we should also need to help them develop be successful in their career, whatever profession they might choose, due to the fact that most people are looking for soft skills in the people they hire. Hence, I will focus on some concepts that can reinforce the need for soft skills.*

Keywords: *soft skills; collaboration; cultural competence; resilience*

General framework: definitions and categorization

Soft skills can either be embedded in the character of a person or learned throughout life. Apparently, research shows that employees with strong soft skills are more productive, as they use their initiative more frequently and handle frustration better. The present paper is based on the idea that hiring criteria for our graduates/alumni are not only based on hard skills, but also on soft skills.

Our students' employability is a goal we strive for. For this purpose, as Charvet (2019) puts it, our students need to be able to master several skills to succeed: certain values, beliefs and attitudes (e.g. action orientation, initiative, creativity etc.); soft skills, including interpersonal communication and networking skills; enough subject-matter expertise, as well as relevant knowledge from the field they are working in (teaching, translation studies, grammar, language, literature, phonetics, vocabulary). Consequently, communication, work ethic, leadership, personal responsibility and listening stand for the skills that are increasingly important for young adults who are on the verge of entering the workforce.

The relevance and importance of soft skills can be highlighted by means of the definition of the concept as such. *Soft skills* is not only a buzz word, but also a concept that an increasing number of academia and researchers have shown a vested interest in. Generally speaking, soft skills are a major part of the way we communicate, get involved in our work and persuade people to do things. What is more, according to research, 85% of career success is due to mastering soft skills (Rosenberg, 2021).

When it comes to defining the concept, it is not that straightforward to do so since soft skills are not measurable, as compared to hard skills which are easy to define and measure. Terminology-wise, soft skills can also be called personal or even interpersonal skills and they can be used across a wide range of different professions. Some of the most challenging and worth mentioning soft skills both teachers and students should focus on, among others, are *leadership, communication, teamwork, multitasking, punctuality, organization, time management, resilience, patience, goal setting, creativity, social and emotional intelligence, cultural competence, or problem solving.*

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Not only should professors/teachers consider mastering the above-mentioned skills, but also the students. For instance, teamwork and multitasking skills could be vital, even though, there are some schools of thoughts that do not support multitasking, whether we like it or not it is central to our job since as teachers we need to be balancing a lot of different things in our mind at once which could set an example for students too.

Since teaching can be an exhausting job, one should develop resilience skills, so that you can manage through challenging times. Moreover, making our content engaging and fun can happen if it is creatively introduced in the classroom, so there is a good chance that the students are not bored and they will be engaged. All things considered, social and emotional intelligence refers to the ability to understand the emotions in a situation. For this reason, teachers need to look at their own emotions and self-regulate their own emotions at all times.

Another soft skill is cultural competence: in today's day and age, classrooms are pluralistic, since they consist of students from a wide range of cultures (both Romanian and Erasmus + students from Turkey, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Portugal, Albania, Ukraine, etc). Therefore, teachers need to have a lot of cultural awareness and cultural competence when they walk into a classroom and be prepared for potential discussions of sensitive issues, especially on the background of the wars that have recently been waged.

Apart from the cultural aspect, teachers might also come across other issues too. One of the most common problems is when their students are not learning in the way teachers thought they would learn. The teacher might have taught a lesson and at the end of the day, the students still did not understand what the teachers was trying to say, or even worse, they are completely and utterly unaware of the topic under discussion. Under these circumstances, the teacher needs to stop and find out why the previous lesson did not go well and how he/she can help students understand. This skill goes hand in hand with adaptability – every teacher is going to have to adapt, since this fast-paced society we live in will bring new technologies and consequently changes to the curriculum/content/skills over the years.

Last but not least, teachers obviously need to be compassionate and sympathetic with their students. Oftentimes we have more knowledge than our students and we think that what we are teaching is very straightforward, but for those students, it might have been the first time they have ever come across these new ideas (Drew, 2022). Fortunately, the latest discoveries in neurosciences are indicative of the fact that we can develop and improve all these soft skills.

The Target Group

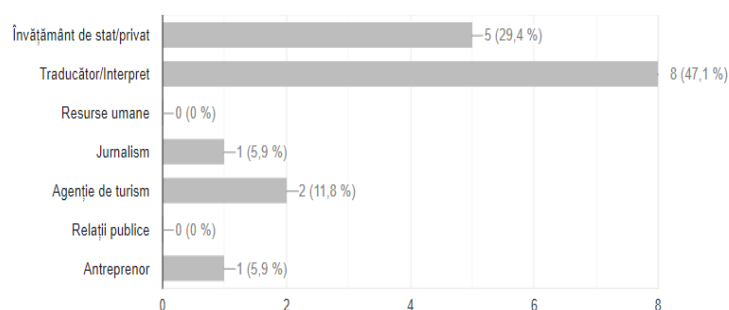
As a 21st century teacher, one needs to cater for all types of learners. Judging by the increasing levels of drop out after the first academic year in the National University of Science and Technology Politehnica of Bucharest, University Centre of Pitesti, Faculty of Theology Letters, History and Arts, I firmly believe the lectures delivered especially during the first academic year could be of paramount importance (I do not imply that merely the way classes are delivered is an impactful aspect in a student's decision to carry on studying or dropping out and motivation will be addressed in this paper too). The lectures I give to first year students are Old English Literature to Shakespeare, Grammar Practical Courses, Contemporary English (the Verb), as well as British and American Cultural Studies.

Age-wise, our Romanian students are 18/19-years old (mostly female) along with an increasing number of Erasmus+ students from Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Portugal, Turkey, Ukraine, or Azerbaijan. Some of them are either fidgety or stuck to

their phone screens, addicted to social media, lacking motivation, prone to panic attacks, as well as boasting low self-esteem. Some find no meaning in what they are doing, but they still aim at a certain career based on the following google form which was submitted at the beginning of the academic year 2023-2024. On top of that, after initial assessment and class observations some of them lack both hard and soft skills. As such, they are in dire need of both soft skills, and hard skills.

În ce domeniu vă doriți/vă vedeți profesând după finalizarea studiilor de licență? [Copiază](#)

0/17 răspunsuri corecte



It goes without saying they have no work experience/ no expertise in a particular field. They seem to be these teenagers living in what some people consider to be their fantasy world (games, becoming rich and famous overnight, willing to become entrepreneurs based on the models they see on social media, e.g. Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, etc.). Others have no idea whatsoever about their future professional life (they even seem to have the wrong idea about their prospective careers: I once had a student who declared that he would like to become a translator, but since the activity involves hard work, practice and knowledge, he would first become a teacher since it is more straightforward and when he feels ready, he will do something about becoming a translator).

Nowadays, we should become aware of the fact that in many ways, it is quite challenging to be a learner, which can be noticed if we take into consideration the results from the PISA study. Globally, they show sharp declines in academic performance, which is a continuation to the negative trends going back over a decade. Therefore, mental health conditions along with “navigating a maze of lifelong learning and upskilling options” (Belenky, 2024) while adapting to rapid changes in the workplace are valid reasons why most learners are struggling. These challenges can bring up issues when it comes to motivation and confidence levels which may go down during the transition from high school to university. Hence the high levels of insecurity. On top of that, the cultural, technological and environmental aspects might have a profound impact on communication and learning approaches worldwide.

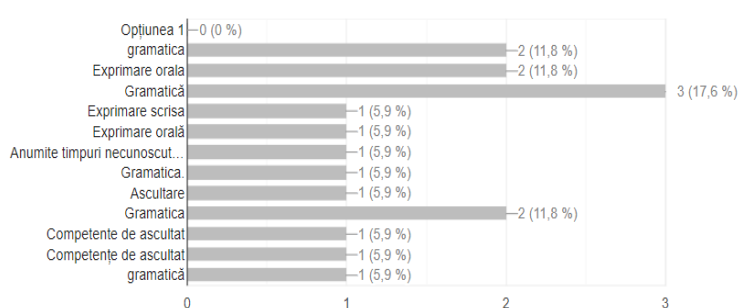
Even though we live in the age information which is one click away, the huge amount of knowledge and information, which everyone is exposed to, can be a blessing in disguise. Information does roam free and is readily accessible, but one can also feel bombarded and under a constant “threat” of missing out on things, which brings up the FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) condition and its consequences as well the misinformation and fake news. Let us not forget that our students are the so-called “digital natives” as compared to their teachers who are “digital immigrants.”

Fostering the development of self-efficacy (feeling confident, capable and resilient)

One of the many factors that impact the students' success are their beliefs about their time in class. At the beginning of the academic year I conducted an online survey based on the first year students' self-assessment of their linguistic skills (grammar expertise, speaking, reading, writing, and listening). From the chart below, one can notice that they are mostly mixed abilities students.

Care vă sunt punctele slabe în ceea ce privește limbile străine? (exprimare orală, exprimare scrisă, competențe de ascultat, gramatică) [Copiază](#)

0/17 răspunsuri corecte



Given this self-assessment of linguistic skills, we should keep in mind that it is all about whether they think they are good or bad at English. At the core of this question is the “implicit theory of intelligence” which has been pioneered by Carol Dweck. According to her, people tend to either assume that abilities are “fixed” (nature) or “growth-oriented” (nurture). The fixed mindset is something you are born with and one cannot do much to change, while the growth mindset can be changed and improved with the right kinds of practice and effort. This growth mindset has been associated with many positive outcomes, such as increased interest, persistence, and, in some studies, achievement. As Belenky states, “it is more critical than ever for people to develop *resilience*”, i.e. the ability to persist in making progress towards goals while regulating emotions to maintain a sense of well-being, or, return to a balanced state soon after a stressor (*Ibidem*).

In order to enable students to develop their growth mindset, first and foremost, we have raised awareness about this concept with the UPIT Book club at university level in which we tackled the topic proposed by Carol Dweck in her page-turner *Mindset*. Secondly, the assessment of the students' performance has not been based merely on earning points through correct responses or perfectly submitted assignments, but also on continuous improvement. Similarly, feedback can be tailored to communicate progress and what to focus on next, rather than simply marking correct or not right. We have focused on effort not necessarily on talent.

The way we have helped students believe in their abilities is based mainly on modelling how to approach challenging tasks: teacher-oriented or strong student-oriented. For instance, during English literature courses, narrating the main ideas in the Anglo-Saxon heroic epic poem *Beowulf* was based on key words, since mechanical learning is useless and truly frustrating. Therefore, we have modelled the narration process and then asked the students to create a video from the comfort of their homes and send it privately. I firmly believe that if we create an environment of success – highlighting how students

are using the right techniques and strategies to do well – can make it more likely that struggling students see the value in those efforts.

Another aspect that we considered and it really paid off is centred around the instances when students are feeling fatigued, stressed, or tense. We have incorporated practical activities/bonding activities that help students clear their minds and be centred on learning. Most of the resources have been taken from Chaz Pugliese’s book *Creating Motivation: Activities to make learning happen* (Pugliese, 2017). One of these activities involves the use of post its on which students should write *I’m feeling kind of... because*. The post its will be passed around and deskmates are asked to give advice or leave a message of encouragement for their peers. Not only does the activity help the students bond, but also it is a relief method that enables them to stay focused on task, feel seen and understood, part of a community that shares values, fortunes and misfortunes.

Another way to boost the students’ confidence could be accountability/responsibility. Confidence levels are constantly fluctuating and varies among students, irrespective of age or background. Unfortunately, less confident students can miss out on a lot in university as well as in later life. One way to boost confidence levels in students is to empower them and to ask them to step into their teacher’s shoes. Throughout the year, my students are asked to deliver presentations on different topics, to set up a sort of assessment activity at the end of the presentation either through some previously mentioned questions or an online quiz on kahoot/quizziz/wordwall. By doing so, they feel like they have a meaningful role within the group.

Responsibilities can also be extended outside the classroom too. Some students might act as ‘parents’ with their friends, tutoring them and finding more about the challenges they could be experiencing, things that students could not be feeling at ease to share with their teachers. This way, teachers can get an insight into some students’ life, without spying or gossiping about them. All the information is highly valuable for the good collaboration between students and teachers, allowing the latter to design activities that can make learning happen in a more natural way.

As teachers we might tend to spoon-feed our students, we might not allow them to solve a problem on their own, since we interfere, which means we are actually interposing with their growth and resilience building. We need to allow them to find their solution “the hard way” or “when the tough gets tougher.” Therefore, allowing learners to work and solve problems on their own, using their own strategies and making choices, is crucial in fostering soft skills.

Connecting to purpose and personal values

It is common knowledge that motivation is of paramount importance for learning. One theory of motivation is called “expectancy-value theory”. When faced with an activity, your mind makes a judgement on how much you get from doing the task (value), and how likely you are to succeed at it (expectancy), and your motivation is the result of that calculation. As such, it is important for teachers to think about the factors that influence the students’ expectations of success and their perceptions of how valuable the outcomes are. *Expectancy* stands for “how well do you think you will do it?” whereas *value* is represented by the students’ valuing what they are being taught so that their level of retention is high (Belenky, *op. cit.*).

Expectancy has many components, including belief in one’s abilities, which is the belief that you can actually influence the outcome. Value is derived from many sources. One is the intrinsic value of the task itself; how enjoyable is the activity? Things that are more fun will obviously be easier to motivate yourself to do.

Should professors follow an outdated teaching style, there are high chances that students will not be attentive. Consequently, addressing *soft skills* during classes and introducing specific elements into lesson plans can make a difference (Attia, 2017).

Consequently, before embarking on teaching any type of content, one should make it clear the “*why*” behind learning that particular subject, the impact it might have on/how it could affect students, or the way they can use the information. We should indeed be coaching our students for exams/prospective careers, but the utility factor/usefulness aspect should receive priority in our lessons.

When it comes to revision and content recycling, empowering students is tremendously beneficial. My lectures are always rounded off with a reflection activity: students are asked to share one piece of information they have just learned, one topic they would like to receive further details on, something they enjoyed and something that was quite challenging. Another hands-on activity prompts students to address three *-wh* questions at the end of each lecture; they will be read/presented and answered in full class. This is a means by which the teacher obtains real time feedback from the input of the content that has just been taught and also has the opportunity to shed light on the unclear information or even more, design further activities for better understanding.

What is more, providing feedback has also been part of the strategy to adapt to pluralistic groups: in the case of writing tasks students received a video recording of their papers which were read out loud in English by their teacher while being checked; the activity has a double purpose and functionality: on the one hand, students understand that they are seen and their work matters, and on the other hand, they undergo a listening activity, as they need to pay attention to the corrections and recommendations for further improvement. On top of that, both at the beginning of the academic year as well as its end, students are shown how to conduct a SWOT analysis, focussing on their strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats, academically speaking.

Building Social Connection

If you want to live a long, happy life, research suggests focusing on social connections. In fact, the Harvard Study of Adult Development has found that this is the best predictor of well-being. In the world of education, social connection is crucial for both deepening learning and supporting students’ emotional and motivational states. This is why working collaboratively can lead to more robust learning as learners discuss and build upon each other’s efforts rather than working individually. Being part of a group that struggles and overcomes challenges together is part of social connection and building resilience along with fostering soft skills. In addition, social connections can reduce feelings of isolation and stress, and improve the emotional experience of the learning environment.

Bouncing ideas from each other is extremely beneficial. A case in point for the previously mentioned concepts took place during the British and American Cultural studies course, when students were asked to be part of a debate concerning some of the literary works we had previously discussed: *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville, *The Great Gatsby* by F.S. Fitzgerald or *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The topics they were supposed to agree/disagree or use their critical thinking skills focused on sin, love, race, justice, redemption, fate, supremacy, etc.

In order to make sure that the debating activity is successful and benefits the students, teachers should set clear rules and model those kinds of behaviours themselves. As such, we can either show a video with the stages of the debate, or even better, enact one with some strong students. During the students’ performance we should do our best

to be respectful, supportive, and courteous, even when students are not necessarily showing the same courtesy, and remind students of our expectations when they are not being met (Belenky, *op. cit.*).

Most of the subjects that students have in university are related to content, to learn hard skills, to develop their knowledge about the topic they will be engaged in. In our endeavour to foster soft skills we have been organizing the following extra-curricular activities which additionally can enable them to boost their reading skills (whether we like it or not, 21st century students do not read the books we want them to read; still, they are avid readers and by means of the book club we have empowered them to introduce us into their favourite genres). The monthly UPIT Book Club features both fiction books, as well as self-development books which are proposed by students and then approached during the on-site or online meetings.

During Grammar practice I have used some slips of paper for practising different grammar structures. The group is allotted a certain time slot to prepare sentences, then a spokesperson will be timed while making as many sentences as possible with those particular slips of paper. Students have the chance to express their views, but also to learn to listen actively and respectfully and to be willing to negotiate. This way, they learn how to listen to each other, learn together and collaborate.

In case one wants to create the right setting so as to develop collaboration, I have designed a wide range of collaborative activities for the English contemporary Courses, Translation Studies, and English Literature in the form of team presentations, portfolios, videos, fairs, debate sessions, team contests, etc. I genuinely support collaborative learning and especially when teaching at university and we tend to have large groups (20-60-70 students). By means of collaborative work you maximize the possibility of students participating instead of leaving one student talking.

For the past 13 years, our students have had the opportunity to communicate, collaborate, show creativity, patience or resilience when organizing *UPIT Shakespeare Day*. The event entails team presentations, quizzes, stand-up comedy moments, or roast episodes, reinterpretations of William Shakespeare's sonnets or plays, sketches and portraits to be auctioned, as well as a food fair for charity purposes. Everyone has a role in the team and this may mean coordinating other members' efforts and building up leadership, creating visuals, editing the video, the script, the jokes, the recipes, the organization of stalls, etc.; this type of activity caters for all types of learners. Not only do they interact, but they also practise the language.

Collaborative work fosters reliability and a positive work ethic, and shy, introverted students develop empathy and open up. In case you face complete silence after a question, if you pair students up, then they will open up instantly since they do not consider themselves to be on the spot or under everyone's attention.

Bridging Cultural Differences

Fostering soft skills helps to bridge cultural differences, especially while teaching Erasmus+ from different countries. Communication, rapport, acceptance of others, cultural awareness, and persuasion are the soft skills we need to focus on when it comes bonding with students from different backgrounds.

Without establishing rapport, our teaching experience could be more than difficult than we might have expected. Our students have a different model of the world and we need to accept it. They can become so focused on preventing negative perceptions that they disengage, or used ineffective strategies to try and get by, rather than fully embracing the challenge and their abilities to succeed. In particular, students from

underrepresented backgrounds may struggle with thought that they do not belong in a given academic setting, or that they cannot succeed, leaving them, with fewer cognitive resources to actually do the academic work. Surprisingly, some of our students (both undergraduate and Erasmus+) whose linguistic level was still work in progress or whose pronunciation would be quite challenging were excellent in creating rapport, especially during collaborative tasks. This was due to allowing them to choose the role they played in the team work activity. Some of them had good organization skills, knew how to pay attention to details and could spot mistakes or lack of information, while others mastered hard skills. Together, they actually created the perfect team.

A cultural awareness exercise can be performed while practising conditional clauses. Students are asked to describe stereotypes, superstitions, traditions, food, beliefs and values pertaining to their culture. The activity aims at broadening their spectrum of cultural knowledge, bonding, as well as practising grammar. Another activity raises awareness about the difference between facts and opinions. The outcome of this activity was both thought-provoking and eye-opening, as most Erasmus+ students were quite opinionated when it comes to Romanian students before actually meeting them. The same goes for the different opinions that teachers create for the same group of students.

Conclusions

In a nutshell, if you think that you can teach your students the same way you were taught as a student you could be completely wrong, since 21st century students are completely different. In this fast-paced society, so much information is readily available at your fingertip, that it can be quite challenging to capture and hold your students' attention. Do you fancy terrifying your students and forcing them into studying? You might be in for a surprise. In case you want to be productive you need to pique their curiosity to encourage them to learn. For this reason, while teaching pluralistic groups a teacher needs to be equipped with both hard and soft skills, that should be modelled for the students to follow.

Even though the advent of technology and especially Artificial Intelligence has influenced humankind, luckily, chances are high that they will not replace soft skills in the near future, which is why I have realised this is something that I have to do through experience; students need to live and learn, just like riding a bicycle (there's no book for that). It was a question of having them experience the situation in which they need to apply these skills, have them fail, have them make mistakes and learn from them.

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LE RÔLE DU CONSTRUCTIVISME DANS L'ENSEIGNEMENT DES LANGUES ET L'ACQUISITION D'UNE LANGUE SECONDE

Elena-Teodora CATANĂ*

Abstract: *The article introduces the term constructivism as a learning theory. Constructivism is a theory of how learning occurs. It explains how people learn to construct something according to their own understanding by connecting previous knowledge and new information. In doing this, constructivist learners attempt to be active creators. In this regard, the principles and assumptions of the theory of constructivism as proposed by its proponents, namely: Emmanuel Kant, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, have been revisited to establish its connection with language teaching and second language acquisition. To highlight the implications, this article analyzes the link between constructivism and language teaching and second language acquisition. The analysis points to some key observations. One of these observations is that language teaching-learning and language acquisition, are both activities that involve interactions between the teacher and the learner. However, to create knowledge, the teacher is required to facilitate and guide learners towards "discovery". In accordance with constructivist learning theory, learning is not only individual but also active, as knowledge creation is socially constructed. In this way, the language learner must be able to learn independently and interact socially with others in order to acquire the knowledge and language skills that they will eventually use to interact with others in the world real. These practices draw inspiration from constructivism because it deals with the nature of knowledge and how knowledge is created. The article therefore concludes that in language teaching and learning, nature and nurture must be supported by the creation of an enabling environment in which linguistic knowledge is constructed.*

Keywords: *learning; language skills; constructivist approach*

Introduction

Le constructivisme, fondé par Emmanuel Kant, aide l'homme à connaître les choses qui l'entourent principalement à travers des constructions sociales. Partout dans le monde, on considère que l'éducation ouvre le monde et amène l'homme à la lumière. Le constructivisme représente donc une approche importante en éducation, en particulier dans l'enseignement des langues étrangères, où les objectifs de la classe sont axés sur l'intégration de toutes les composantes de la compétence communicative (c'est-à-dire grammaticale, discursive, fonctionnelle, sociolinguistique et stratégique). De plus, avec l'approche constructiviste, les stratégies d'enseignement des langues étrangères sont conçues pour engager les apprenants dans une utilisation authentique, pragmatique et fonctionnelle de la langue à des fins significatives. Pour impliquer les étudiants dans des conversations interpersonnelles réelles, l'enseignement se fait en intégrant les quatre compétences linguistiques : parler, écouter, lire et écrire. La maîtrise de ces compétences est essentielle si l'on veut que les apprenants parlent correctement et couramment la langue seconde.

Qu'est-ce que le constructivisme ?

Le constructivisme est considéré comme faisant partie de la révolution cognitive, un mouvement intellectuel né dans les années 1950 en réponse aux théories traditionnelles du comportement. Alors que les théoriciens behavioristes considèrent

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l'apprentissage comme un processus passif, les théoriciens cognitifs estiment que les apprenants jouent un rôle actif dans la construction de leurs propres connaissances. En d'autres termes, les apprenants doivent s'engager activement dans l'expérience d'apprentissage pour retenir les informations et construire leurs connaissances.

Le constructivisme en tant que théorie de l'apprentissage est né des travaux de psychologues cognitifs tels que Piaget, Vygotsky et Bruner. Avec le développement de la psychologie culturelle, les deux perspectives deviennent dominantes. Ils relèvent du constructivisme individuel et social. Le constructivisme individuel se concentre sur la construction de sens à l'intérieur de la personne tandis que le constructivisme social se concentre sur la construction de sens entre les gens.

Tout comme la théorie cognitive, le constructivisme suit une approche modulaire de l'apprentissage. Les apprenants utilisent leurs connaissances antérieures pour construire de nouvelles significations en assimilant les informations antérieures avec de nouvelles informations. Vygotsky a également souligné l'importance de l'interaction sociale au cours de ce processus. Il a déclaré que la connaissance ne se construit pas seulement, mais peut être co-construite via des interactions et des discussions avec les personnes qui vous entourent. L'origine socioculturelle et les expériences antérieures d'un individu peuvent affecter la manière et le contenu de son apprentissage, et les expériences de chaque individu rendent son processus d'apprentissage unique.

Constructivisme et éducation

En ce qui concerne l'éducation, le constructivisme repose sur deux grands principes utiles au processus d'apprentissage. Il s'agit de la manière dont les apprenants interprètent les événements et les idées, et dont ils construisent des structures de sens dans des situations d'apprentissage. L'interaction dialectique constante entre interpréter et construire est au cœur de l'approche constructiviste de l'éducation et non de la découverte de la réalité ontologique ou objective. En fait, pour les constructivistes, il n'y a pas de réalité objective car elle est socialement construite et porte des significations différentes selon les individus (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007 : 22).

En éducation, nos convictions épistémologiques dictent et devraient au moins fortement éclairer notre vision pédagogique (Piaget, 1954). Les discours philosophiques sur l'éducation ont toujours été conçus comme visant la poursuite des objectifs éducatifs les plus appropriés pour une communauté donnée au cours de chaque période de son existence. Ainsi, les théories personnelles de l'apprentissage des enseignants ont longtemps été considérées comme ayant une influence considérable sur presque tous les aspects de leurs décisions en matière d'enseignement (Glaserfeld, 1995 : 4). En conséquence, la vision que les enseignants ont de l'apprentissage les guide lorsqu'ils prennent des décisions sur les moyens souhaitables pour mettre en œuvre et évaluer l'enseignement. Par conséquent, les constructivistes soutiennent que la capacité des apprenants à collaborer avec les autres les rend critiques et leur permet de voir le point de vue des autres, d'apprendre plus efficacement des stratégies de résolution de problèmes et/ou de partager leurs connaissances culturelles (Solomon, 1994 : 43).

Construire du sens, c'est apprendre selon cette théorie. Les conséquences dramatiques de cette vision sont doubles. Le constructivisme repose sur l'idée selon laquelle les élèves devraient toujours construire de manière active et réfléchie (O'Donnell, 1997 : 1). Cette affirmation affirme qu'il n'existe pas de connaissance indépendante de celui qui connaît, mais seulement une connaissance que nous construisons nous-mêmes à mesure que nous apprenons.

Cependant, Solomon a noté que la connaissance consiste à apprendre à connaître le monde réel. Les systèmes éducatifs doivent comprendre ce monde, l'organiser de la manière la plus rationnelle possible et, par l'intermédiaire des enseignants, le présenter à l'apprenant. À son tour, Piaget pensait que les enfants apprennent en interagissant avec les environnements dans lesquels ils se trouvent. L'apprentissage se produit, a-t-il soutenu, à travers le traitement cognitif des interactions environnementales et la construction correspondante de structures mentales pour leur donner un sens.

L'impact du constructivisme s'est étendu aux documents de réforme nationale produits par les praticiens de l'éducation. Par exemple les changements évidents apportés au programme d'études, passant d'un programme traditionnel basé sur le contenu à un programme basé sur les compétences, conçu pour aider les apprenants à relier les connaissances et les compétences acquises à leur monde réel.

La classe constructiviste

La marque d'une classe constructiviste est l'utilisation de techniques d'apprentissage actives. Cela peut paraître ambigu, mais si nous approfondissons, le sous-texte devient plus clair. Les étudiants apprennent par l'expérimentation, la résolution de problèmes réels, la réflexion et la discussion. Alors qu'une classe traditionnelle se caractérise par le fait que l'enseignant transmet les connaissances dont les élèves ont besoin, ici l'enseignant guide les élèves dans leur apprentissage. Les étudiants sont encouragés à poser des questions, à discuter puis à réfléchir. Ils apprennent non seulement de nouvelles choses, mais aussi comment apprendre. L'apprentissage pratique est la base d'une classe constructiviste.

Classe constructiviste - Principes directeurs

Les nouveaux apprentissages s'appuient sur des connaissances antérieures

L'école du constructivisme considère que les nouveaux apprentissages reposent sur des connaissances antérieures. Les constructivistes croient que l'apprentissage se produit parce que chacun de nous crée ou construit de manière unique ses propres connaissances, ce que nous savons déjà. Cela prend une nouvelle dimension significative dans le cas de l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde en classe puisque dans ce contexte, l'enseignant doit non seulement respecter le contexte culturel des élèves, mais également l'utiliser comme ressource d'apprentissage et faciliter l'apprentissage. Cela implique également que dans ce contexte, il ne peut y avoir de programme d'études prédéterminé – le parcours de l'étudiant qui façonnera le programme d'études.

L'apprentissage passe par l'interaction sociale

La culture et la langue jouent un rôle dans la façon dont les élèves apprennent. De Kock, Slegers et Voeten (2004) suggèrent que même si le langage est construit individuellement, il est médiatisé par l'interaction sociale et les contextes culturels. L'interaction sociale fournit les échafaudages nécessaires aux étudiants lorsqu'ils traitent le contenu. Mais il est essentiel que les groupes et les activités sociales soient délibérément planifiés, en gardant à l'esprit que collaboration et compétition ne peuvent être combinées.

Néanmoins, il ne faut pas oublier l'objectif le plus important de l'éducation qui est la résolution de problèmes, le raisonnement, la pensée critique, l'utilisation active et réfléchie du langage et les compétences d'autorégulation.

Apprentissage et résolution de problèmes

Ce principe concerne le déséquilibre et la zone de développement proximal (ZPD). Les étudiants doivent gérer de manière appropriée le contenu ; si c'est trop facile, la motivation en sera affectée ; si c'est trop difficile, les élèves n'auront pas le contexte dans lequel de nouvelles structures cognitives peuvent se former.

De plus, l'acquisition de la deuxième langue est plus efficace dans une situation d'apprentissage authentique et complexe, par conséquent l'enseignement par projet est un moyen viable. L'enseignement des langues axé sur le contenu est extrêmement bénéfique pour l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde. Il est également important que les enseignants et les élèves parlent ouvertement du choix des nouvelles informations ainsi que de la manière de les introduire lors des échanges en classe. La négociation du programme d'études devrait également intégrer la contribution des étudiants au programme éducatif. Cela donne aux étudiants le sentiment de leur investissement à la fois dans le processus, le contenu et les résultats de l'apprentissage.

Les caractères de l'apprenant dans la classe constructiviste

Selon Can (2007), l'autre point à considérer lors de l'application du constructivisme en classe concerne le caractère de l'apprenant lui-même.

Dans cette situation, l'enseignant doit transmettre naturellement aux apprenants des valeurs telles que la responsabilité de leur apprentissage, le développement de la conscience et de l'autonomie, l'établissement d'objectifs d'apprentissage atteint à travers des initiatives et des stratégies, tout en acceptant la complexité de la vie, et en étant respectueux des multiples perspectives et visions du monde.

Contribution du constructivisme à l'apprentissage des langues étrangères

En tant que père de la théorie du constructivisme, Piaget a construit un principe majeur dans sa théorie du constructivisme. Le principe principal de la théorie de Piaget est que les connaissances doivent être construites par les étudiants en tant que créateurs actifs de ces connaissances. Cela signifie que les étudiants doivent être actifs dans toutes leurs activités d'apprentissage ; ils devraient être capables de capter et d'exploiter de nouvelles informations et de les traiter en fonction de leurs besoins. On ne s'attend pas à ce qu'ils soient passifs.

En lien avec le constructivisme de Piaget, Jérôme Bruner a développé en 1915 le constructivisme avec une approche interactive du développement du langage qui explorait des thèmes tels que l'acquisition d'idées communicatives et le développement de leurs expressions linguistiques, le contexte interactif de l'utilisation du langage dans l'enfance, et le rôle de la contribution des parents et du comportement de l'échafaudage dans l'acquisition de formes linguistiques. L'idée du constructivisme développée par Bruner illustre que le constructivisme implique des processus interpersonnels, intersubjectifs et collaboratifs pour créer un sens partagé. L'explication de ce processus est devenue le point central des travaux suivants de Bruner. Puis David Ausubel (1918-2008) a également envisagé une subsomption de la théorie dans laquelle il a introduit l'apprentissage en double boucle popularisé par Chris Argyris en 1973. Cet apprentissage en double boucle pilote le système et gère les individus en apprentissage. Chaque étudiant doit contrôler et gérer son processus d'apprentissage selon les principes dont il a besoin. C'est le résultat du processus d'apprentissage collaboratif visant à parvenir à la pensée rationnelle.

Un autre principe du constructivisme fait référence à une expérience linguistique holistique et axée sur le contenu et se déroule généralement dans une classe bilingue ou

dans l'enseignement d'un projet. Selon cette approche, l'acquisition d'une langue étrangère sera efficace dans un environnement ou un milieu d'apprentissage authentique et complexe. Cette explication est conforme à l'opinion de Reinfried qui affirme que le constructivisme radical ne servira pas de métathéorie méthodologique pour l'apprentissage des langues car il présente un certain nombre de faiblesses au niveau de l'explication et également du degré d'incohérence. Il soutient qu'une théorie constructiviste réaliste défie une théorie centrée sur l'étudiant qui prend une position absolue dans l'apprentissage des langues. En outre, Gul (2016 : 80) a examiné plusieurs études et a montré que l'enseignement constructiviste est meilleur que les approches traditionnelles. Les techniques constructivistes aident les étudiants à améliorer leur compréhension en lecture davantage que les méthodes traditionnelles d'enseignement du français.

En appliquant la théorie du constructivisme, les étudiants peuvent acquérir des connaissances supplémentaires telles que l'écriture de poésie, des pièces de théâtre courtes, des scénarios, etc., car cette théorie du constructivisme ouvre la curiosité de l'apprenant pour quelque chose de nouveau. Dans d'autres cas, les étudiants peuvent également développer leurs connaissances pour créer et concevoir quelque chose à leur goût.

Conclusions

Le constructivisme joue un rôle important dans l'interprétation des résultats d'apprentissage et dans la conception d'environnements propices à l'apprentissage. Selon la vision constructiviste de l'apprentissage, les individus doivent avoir un bagage de connaissances, d'expériences et d'intérêts afin de pouvoir créer une relation unique dans l'acquisition de leurs connaissances.

Les étudiants et les enseignants jouent un rôle dans la facilitation et la production de connaissances. Les étudiants sont encouragés à élargir leur propre compréhension et à expliquer leurs propres points de vue afin qu'ils soient responsables de ce qu'ils font.

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THE OLD AND THE NEW IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract: *This article examines various modern and traditional techniques, approaches and methods of teaching foreign languages and underlines their role in the educational process over the years. The traditional methods analysed in this article are the following: the Direct Method, the Grammar-Translation Method, the Audio-Lingual Method and the Communicative Language Teaching. Particularly attention is also paid to the innovations in the field of didactics, mainly to those methods that are in use today.*

Keywords: *foreign language; teaching of a foreign language; traditional methods; modern methods*

Introduction

The main purpose of this article is to provide a clear picture of the role played by the main methods of foreign language teaching in the educational process. Therefore, this article aims to present some of the main traditional and modern methods, techniques and approaches to foreign language teaching.

1. Traditional methods of teaching foreign languages

According to the teaching methods devised, we can mention several types of approaches:

- the grammar-translation method (GTM);
- the direct method (DM);
- the audio-lingual method (ALM);
- the communicative language teaching (CLT).

1.1. The Grammar - Translation method

The *Grammar-Translation Method* –also known as ‘‘the classical method’’ was the only method used by teachers all over the world. It was used for teaching Greek and Latin in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The most important aspect of the grammar- translation method was that the translation was frequently used in the process of learning. It was used both as a means of explaining new words, grammar forms and structures and as a means of mastering the foreign language. The method mainly focused on *reading* and *writing* skills and did not pay much attention to listening and speaking skills. Consequently, learners could manage quite well with the written word, but they had a lot of difficulties in dealing with real-life situations.

The main reasons why the grammar-translation method proved to be inefficient are the following:

- the highly ‘‘intellectualized’’ approach of grammar-translation teachers: their main focus fell on *the text* – on analyzing and learning its linguistic and informational subtleties – ignoring the real aim of language learning: i.e. use in the real world;
- disregard for basic, ‘‘essential’’ vocabulary, so necessary for daily communicative situations;

- absence of classroom interactions and, hence, of communicative skills: the learners had no opportunity to dialogue and negotiate meaning, the way people do in ordinary communicative exchanges.

1.2. The direct method

Taking into consideration the fact that teaching is not static but changing to respond to new needs and demands that language learners may have, a shift to teaching foreign languages was necessary at that time. That is why, a new teaching method appeared as a reaction against the *Grammar-Translation Method*. This method assumed the direct contact with the foreign language in meaningful situations and this approach supposed a better language learning from the part of the students.

Thus, the *Direct Method* also called the “the Natural Method” had a new orientation different from that of the grammar-translation method by substituting language contact for grammar recitation and language use for translation. Its main focus is improving *oral communication* and it is taught by means of repetitive drilling. The inductive method is used when teaching grammar and students are left to pick up the rules from the teacher’s oral presentation.

1.3. The Audio-Lingual method

The *Audio-Lingual Method* was considered to be a further development of the direct method line. The Audio-lingual Method, like the Direct Method, is an oral-based approach. It was equally based on linguistic and psychological theory, one of its main premises being the scientific descriptive analysis of a wide assortment of languages.

This new type of approach attempted to develop target language skills without any reference to the mother tongue. Starting from the idea that language learners need to cope with different communicative situations, the audio-lingual method focused on developing such *oral skills*, making use of the new technology: with the help of the record player and the tape recorder, teachers could bring the voice of the native speaker in the classroom, and, at the same time, create a student- friendly and encouraging environment. This innovative and friendly teaching approach has replaced that strict, coercive and punitive one previously used by teachers in the classroom.

The Audio-Lingual method was supported by J. Skinner, who considered that foreign language learning is a process of habit formation through acquisition of specific language skills. Consequently, he suggested that the complex language skill should be down into a series of language habits, and that the language be introduced in the form of language *patterns* and *structures*. Skinner suggested that the patterns should be taught in a series of small steps (*stimulus-response-reinforcement*), so as to avoid errors and ensure formation of good habits.

Audio-linguists also proposed an easy way of acquiring new words and phrases as well as grammar structures: *teaching vocabulary and grammar in context*. By using this method, students tend to easily memorize such structures which leads to the formation of good linguistic habits.

In short, the basic techniques proposed by audio-lingual teachers are:

- using commands to direct behavior, i.e. students perform actions as indicated by the teacher/other students;
- repetition and memorization, to facilitate habit formation;
- drilling, i.e. practicing the new vocabulary and grammatical patterns in:
 - exercises, e.g. repetition drills, substitution or transformation exercises ;
 - question-answer (teacher-student or student-student) exchanges, based on the

- text;
- grammar/vocabulary games ;
- conversation practice, role play: i.e. dialogues similar to the text are performed by pairs of students in front of the class, etc.

The techniques mentioned above contributed significantly to the development of the teaching methodology of foreign languages and were of great importance for both teachers and students, but, unfortunately, they did not cover the requirements of the age.

1.4. Communicative Language Teaching

Unlike the audio-lingual method that focused on memorizing different words and structures, the *communicative approach* to teaching foreign languages emerged due to the changes in the British language teaching tradition in the late 1960s. The communicative approach is not a highly structured method, but rather a broad set of ideas generally accepted as good teaching practice. It was seen as an innovation tool in the British educational system.

The teacher's fundamental *goal* is the shaping of the learner's *communicative competence* and the development of his basic *communicative skills*, i.e. communicative language teaching targets the learner's communicative proficiency rather than his mastery of structures. They view language learning as a two-way process: *learning the language in order to use it and using the language in order to learn it*, i.e. the student must learn the foreign language *by struggling to communicate*. This way, *discourse* becomes both *subject* of and *context* for communicative language teaching. (Vizental, 2014:45).

Consequently, the main improvements that the communicative approach brought about for students were the following:

- a student-centered classroom, focused on the learners' needs;
- the learners' active participation and affective involvement in the activities and in the actual process of language learning;
- development of language skills (e.g. listening skills, speaking skills, etc.) and of the learners' communicative (not only linguistic) competence;
- emphasis on the learners' confidence as language producers, on their creativity and imagination; on spontaneous production of language and on interaction;
- emphasis on the functional potential of the language; focus on the meaning of the message, rather than on correctness of form; emphasis on the fluency and on the appropriacy of the message;
- use of authentic material and of task-based activities approximating real-world situations ;
- focus on the socio-cultural context of the interactions, on the learners' psychological world; etc.

2. Modern methods of teaching a foreign language

According to many researchers, the communicative language teaching was considered the most authoritative methodology in language teaching. Its popularity was due to the fact that its main focus was on learners and communication, but later on CLT lost its dominant position. Therefore, many methods and techniques were developed that had a huge impact on both the learner's needs and on the language teaching methodology itself.

2.1. The use of games

Currently, there is much emphasis on learning a foreign language and on finding the best method to learn it. Due to globalization and digital revolution, learning a foreign language is more and more challenging. The new methods try to raise students' motivation and desire to learn a foreign language.

Thus, teachers make use of games that are appropriate to the class conditions and to the level of the language learners. The use of games requires quick thinking, active participation of the students, is a useful tool for vocabulary acquisition and assessment. In short, games are used not only for entertainment, but, most importantly, to repeat useful lessons and language lessons, thereby achieving the goal of improving students' communicative competence. Learning vocabulary through games is an effective and fun method that can be applied to any classroom.

2.2. The integration of technology

With the advancement of technology, modern methods of teaching a foreign language have been introduced, such as: *Content-Based Instruction (CBI)* and *Task-Based Learning (TBL)*.

2.2.1. *Content-Based Instruction* is an increasingly prominent pedagogical technique that has garnered significant attention and recognition. This approach facilitates the integration of foreign language acquisition with content-based instruction, so students acquire it proficiency by actively interacting with academic topics such as science, history, or literature. The implementation of contextual learning not only enhances the relevance and engagement of the language learning process, but also facilitates the organic acquisition of intricate vocabulary and concepts by students.

2.2.2. *Task-Based Learning* places focus on the use of language as a means to achieve certain objectives. Within Task-Based Language (TBL) classes, the conventional approach of introducing a language element followed by practice and production is substituted with the use of activities that necessitate students to employ the foreign language in a genuine manner. This may encompass the resolution of problems, the execution of tasks, or the enactment of role-playing scenarios. These activities possess a high level of motivation and accurately reflect the usage of language in real-world contexts.

2.2.3. The use of video materials

With the help of the new technology, the learning process becomes more and more challenging. Today, the use of video materials in language teaching has become a necessity and a more attractive way of learning a foreign language.

Here are some advantages of using video in the teaching-learning process.

- This technological tool offers students a new experience of real feeling of realizing learning with authentic materials.
- Harmer raised earlier this designation that the video is the best tool that enables learners not only to listen to the language but to see it, too. Moreover, videos enclose visual hints such as gestures and expressions that are considered as a guidance for learners to go beyond of what they are listening in order to infer the video's content. Therefore, it supports and helps the students for more comprehension (Harmer, 2001).
- Videos endow learners with real language used by native speakers in their everyday interactions and communications.

- Through watching a video, students can acquire best the cultural aspects that go together with their foreign language in its appropriate context.

Some conclusions

The present article dealt with the main methods and approaches to foreign language teaching. Some of them may be considered obsolete from the scientific point of view whereas others seem to be more current, but in fact all of them have had a great contribution to the development of teaching- learning process and have introduced innovations at a given moment; However, all methods follow at least two principles: 1. To be the best one at a certain moment and 2. To have a set of rules that teachers have to follow as accurately as possible.

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L'INTERCULTUREL EN CLASSE DE FLE : UN ENJEU ABSOLU POUR LA DIDACTIQUE DES LANGUES

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Abstract: *Educating and training in intercultural, interacting and dialoguing are imperatives for today's society. In this new context of mutations, large-scale population movements and permanent socio-cultural contacts, the questions of relationships with others, learning about diversity and otherness question and reconsider our societies. What is intercultural? How to teach it? What are its challenges or limitations? Here are the questions that guide this article.*

Keywords: *intercultural; didactics; teaching of the FLE*

La notion d'interculturel

Du point de vue conceptuel, la notion d'interculturel a eu pendant les dernières décennies de multiples définitions ou acceptions mais nous avons essayé de retenir celles qui nous ont semblé les plus appropriées à notre sujet de recherche.

Étymologiquement le terme *interculturel* est composé d'un préfixe dérivé du latin *inter* « entre », « exprimant l'espace, la répartition ou une relation réciproque » (Le Robert, 2023 : 1352) et l'adjectif *culturel* qui « est relatif à la culture, à la civilisation dans ses aspects intellectuels » (Le Robert, 2023 : 603). Par la suite dans le dictionnaire le Petit Robert l'adjectif *interculturel* est défini du point de vue de la didactique comme une notion « qui concerne les rapports, les échanges entre cultures, entre civilisations différentes » (Le Robert, 2023 : 1353).

Cette définition a, selon nous, le mérite de mettre en évidence les mots-clés pour la notion d'interculturel : rapports, échange et culture. Ce triangle devrait être construit et en même temps soutenu par l'apprenant qui veut communiquer, comprendre et surtout se faire comprendre.

Même si le terme *interculturel* fait son apparition dans le milieu scolaire à la suite du phénomène de la migration des populations, aujourd'hui « l'interculturel recouvre une diversité d'applications et une multiplicité d'orientations » (Abdallah-Preteceille, 2020 : 45).

En comparaison avec le multiculturalisme qui suppose la coprésence de plusieurs cultures : « L'interculturel est une dynamique et un processus d'acceptation et de compréhension des identités culturelles » (Chaves, Favier *et alii* 2012 : 13).

En plus son objectif n'est pas du tout limité vu le fait que l'apprentissage doit être transversal et qu'il dure tout au long de la vie : « Faire de l'interculturel, c'est dépasser la simple comparaison et ou l'identification à un autre groupe culturel et bâtir des passerelles entre les cultures dans le but d'un échange et d'un enrichissement mutuels » (Chaves, Favier *et alii* 2012 : 13).

Dans son *Dictionnaire de didactique du français langue étrangère et seconde*, Jean-Pierre Cuq, en essayant de définir cette notion, met en évidence l'idée du gain des individus impliqués dans un échange : « L'interculturel, en effet, suppose l'échange entre les différentes cultures, l'articulation, les connexions, les enrichissements mutuels » (Cuq, 2003 : 136).

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Au-delà de ces constats, les débats ont tourné autour de ces termes ou structures : l'inter, l'interculturel, l'interculture, l'interculturalité, l'interculturalisme, l'approche interculturelle, la pédagogie interculturelle, la compétence interculturelle, la dimension interculturelle, la rencontre interculturelle, les relations interculturelles, l'objectif interculturel, le locuteur interculturel, la perspective interculturelle, voilà tant de concepts que les enseignants et les apprenants devraient bien comprendre pour qu'ils puissent vraiment être conscients de leur usage ou de leur impact dans la vie. En plus, il y a le multiculturel et/ou le pluriculturel, des termes assez proches mais en même temps assez différents vu le fait que l'interculturel est « un choix pragmatique face au multiculturalisme qui caractérise les sociétés contemporaines » (De Carlo, 1998 : 40).

Pour les aider il faut que tous les acteurs de l'acte éducatif comprennent bien la terminologie et en plus il faut leur proposer des activités ou des projets concrètement utilisables et surtout réalisables pendant la classe de FLE. Ce qui est encore à souligner c'est le fait que : « L'interculturel est fécondé par des concepts empruntés à plusieurs domaines. Cette position-carrefour n'est pas invalidante mais au contraire, permet de rendre compte de la complexité » (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2020 : 66).

Mais comment enseigner l'interculturel ? Comment le faire comprendre à nos apprenants ? Peut-on vraiment enseigner une culture ? Quels seraient les objectifs à atteindre pendant l'acte éducatif ? Comment s'adapter aux changements ? Quelles seraient les attentes des enseignants mais aussi de nos apprenants ? Comment innover pour diriger les apprenants vers l'interculturel ? Ce sont des questions d'actualité que les didacticiens n'arrêtent plus de se poser.

Même si nous n'avons pas encore tous les moyens ou toutes les ressources nécessaires pour enseigner l'interculturel pendant les classes de langues nous sommes vraiment convaincus qu'à travers ses études, surtout pendant l'apprentissage des langues étrangères, l'apprenant, qu'il le veuille ou non, il est obligé d'apprendre l'interculturel : « Grâce à l'apprentissage des langues étrangères, l'apprenant apprend l'interculturalité » (Bouhechiche, 2021 : 97).

En didactique des langues les spécialistes affirment que l'interculturel devient possible si nous ajoutons quelques petits ingrédients dans notre travail en classe comme par exemple un peu d'effort, un ardent désir de découvrir ou de se redécouvrir, une grande curiosité, une confiance dans l'échange, un grand changement d'attitude et même un apprentissage parce que : « l'interculturel est donc tout autant un problème d'éducation que d'apprentissage et d'enseignement » (Cuq, Gruca, 2020 : 58).

Si les apprenants sont vraiment conscients de cette démarche et de tous ses efforts, les résultats ne tarderont pas dans leur processus d'apprentissage et l'interculturel sera compris comme

une démarche (et non pas comme un contenu d'enseignement) qui vise la construction de passerelles entre les cultures pour parvenir à l'ouverture, à la rencontre et à l'acceptation de l'altérité. La confrontation avec d'autres pratiques culturelles amène les individus à réfléchir sur leurs propres valeurs et à les relativiser. Il s'agit donc d'un processus dynamique d'échanges entre différentes cultures (Chaves, Favier *et alii* 2012 : 110).

Pour explorer ce monde de l'interculturel, il ne suffit d'ailleurs pas de connaître les définitions, si intéressantes soient-elles. Il faut également découvrir une recette pour l'apprentissage de l'interculturel : « Il s'agit de mettre en scène une démarche

interculturelle de manière simple et utile pour favoriser et faciliter la rencontre de l'altérité et l'acceptation de la différence » (Chaves, Favier *et alii* 2012 : 4).

La rencontre interculturelle

Le but de l'enseignement de l'interculturel est d'encourager la rencontre interculturelle parce que : « L'envie de rencontrer l'autre ne va pas de soi, il peut y avoir une incompréhension voire un rejet » (Chaves, Favier *et alii* 2012 : 45). Donc c'est quelque chose de normal parce que parfois c'est difficile de se comprendre avec les membres de sa propre famille qui ont la même culture, les mêmes habitudes, préférences, etc. Nos apprenants doivent être guidés dans cette aventure vers l'inconnu tout en sachant la règle :

On ne peut connaître autrui sans communiquer avec lui, sans échanger, sans lui permettre de se dire, de s'exprimer en tant que sujet. L'objectif est donc d'apprendre la rencontre et non pas d'apprendre la culture de l'Autre ; apprendre à reconnaître en autrui, un sujet singulier et un sujet universel (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2020 : 60).

S'ils sont bien guidés dans l'aventure vers l'interculturel et qu'ils passent consciemment toutes les étapes de l'apprentissage de l'altérité, nos apprenants seront vraiment convaincus que :

Dans une rencontre interculturelle, le locuteur évolue au sein d'un espace où cohabitent et s'entrecroisent plusieurs cultures. Le locuteur interculturel devient à la fois conscient de sa propre identité et de celle de ses interlocuteurs. Il devient en mesure d'accepter la réciprocité des regards. En ce sens, il est capable de vivre avec et dans la diversité culturelle (Chaves, Favier *et alii* 2012 : 21).

Aujourd'hui ce processus vers l'interculturel ne peut plus être interrompu et ce qui doit être vraiment clair pour nous tous, les apprenants et les enseignants, c'est que : « La rencontre d'autres cultures, leur connaissance et leur compréhension ne signifient pas adhérer à ses cultures et adopter leurs valeurs, mais porter un regard conscient et réciproque sur l'autre, ce qui contribue à la construction de l'identité personnelle » (Chaves, Favier *et alii* 2012 : 46).

L'interculturel dans l'enseignement des langues étrangères

Les auteurs du *Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues (CECR)*, publié en 2001, citent dès les premières pages de l'ouvrage la notion d'*approche interculturelle* en soulignant sa grande contribution au développement personnel souhaitable de l'apprenant :

Dans une approche interculturelle, un objectif essentiel de l'enseignement des langues est de favoriser le développement harmonieux de la personnalité de l'apprenant et de son identité en réponse à l'expérience enrichissante de l'altérité en matière de langue et de culture (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001 : 9).

En matière de définition les auteurs du CECR ne parlent pas de compétence interculturelle mais de *prise de conscience interculturelle* qui est ainsi définie :

La connaissance, la conscience et la compréhension des relations, (ressemblances et différences distinctives) entre « le monde d'où l'on vient » et « le monde de la communauté cible » sont à l'origine d'une prise de conscience interculturelle. Il faut souligner que la prise de conscience interculturelle inclut la conscience de la diversité régionale et sociale des deux mondes. Elle s'enrichit également de la

conscience qu'il existe un plus grand éventail de cultures que celles véhiculées par les L1 et L2 de l'apprenant. Cela aide à les situer toutes deux en contexte (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001 : 83).

Adopter une démarche interculturelle selon le CECR, c'est bien savoir ce que signifie concrètement cette prise de conscience qui est également décrit dans cet ouvrage:

Les aptitudes et les savoir-faire interculturels comprennent

- la capacité d'établir une relation entre la culture d'origine et la culture étrangère ;
- la sensibilisation à la notion de culture et la capacité de reconnaître et d'utiliser des stratégies variées pour établir le contact avec des gens d'une autre culture ;
- la capacité à jouer le rôle d'intermédiaire culturel entre sa propre culture et la culture étrangère et de gérer efficacement des situations de malentendus et de conflits culturels ;
- la capacité à aller au-delà de relations superficielles stéréotypées (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001 : 84).

Dans le même ouvrage les auteurs soulignent à bon escient que l'activité de communication peut être affectée par beaucoup de facteurs personnels et en particulier par les attitudes de l'apprenant :

- d'ouverture et d'intérêt envers de nouvelles expériences, les autres, d'autres idées, d'autres peuples, d'autres civilisations ;
- de volonté de relativiser son point de vue et son système de valeurs culturels ;
- de volonté et de capacité de prendre ses distances par rapport aux attitudes conventionnelles relatives aux différences culturelles (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001 : 84).

Une analyse minutieuse des occurrences du terme *interculturel* dans le Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues (CECR) montre qu'il y a 25 occurrences de ce terme tout au long de l'ouvrage.

Dans la nouvelle version amplifiée et actualisée du CECR, le *Volume complémentaire avec de nouveaux descripteurs* qui représente le produit d'un travail dur de la réflexion des professionnels de l'enseignement des langues, travail déroulé pendant presque deux décennies, le répertoire des occurrences du terme *interculturel* montre le double parce qu'on passe de 25 à 54 occurrences d'où l'importance accordée actuellement par les didacticiens à cette notion.

L'éducation interculturelle

Ce concept commence à être utilisé par les didacticiens en soulignant d'autant plus la grande difficulté pour les enseignants de langue car ils sont obligés de prendre en compte l'interculturel dans leur acte d'enseignement sans toutefois l'enseigner concrètement puisqu'il n'est pas encore un contenu dans un programme :

Plus que jamais, le devoir de chacun est de « savoir qui il veut être », et le devoir de l'école est de savoir quel individu elle peut, elle veut et elle doit former pour la société d'aujourd'hui et de demain. En ce sens, l'éducation interculturelle est plus qu'une option éducative, elle traduit des enjeux de société et c'est en fonction de ce contexte qu'il faut analyser son histoire, ses linéaments, ses contradictions et ses ajustements progressifs (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2020 : 7).

Si nos apprenants ont bien compris la terminologie et les implications de l'interculturel dans leur vie scolaire et quotidienne, quoi faire avec leur savoir ? Agir ! Ce n'est que l'interculturel qui puisse les mettre en marche ! Ce n'est pas du tout simple pour nos apprenants mais s'ils en sont vraiment conscients, ils pourront facilement comprendre que dès son enfance son environnement familial a été hétérogène donc ce n'est pas quelque chose de différent, c'est même quelque chose de normal. Tous autour de lui avaient leurs habitudes, leurs préférences, leurs attitudes, leurs coutumes etc. donc tout était marqué par la diversité mais ce que nous devrions apprendre à nos apprenants c'est la règle du jeu : « Il s'agit d'agir avec autrui et non pas sur autrui » (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2020 : 70).

Toutefois, mêmes si les règles sont nécessaires, elles ne peuvent pas être imposées, le processus doit survenir d'une manière naturelle pour que les apprenants puissent avoir les meilleurs résultats, autrement dit, il faut faire de l'interculturel sans avoir peur de l'inconnu :

Une éducation interculturelle viserait donc, d'une part, à faire supporter aux élèves l'insécurité causée par l'inconnu ; d'autre part, elle devrait les conduire à généraliser les expériences de contact avec la culture étrangère, sans tomber pour autant dans le piège du stéréotype (De Carlo, 1998 : 44-45).

Cela conduit également à concevoir l'interculturel comme une démarche, comme une action omniprésente en classes de langue dont tout enseignant est conscient et qui demande obligatoirement des répercussions sur ses pratiques d'enseignement :

L'approche interculturelle repose sur un triangle notionnel, diversité/singularité/universalité qui engendre, non pas une structure triadique, mais une dynamique discursive, une plasticité de l'interrogation qui vise à repérer plus qu'à identifier, à comprendre plus qu'à expliquer (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2020 : 59).

En effet, l'intégration et la prise en compte de l'approche interculturelle pendant les classes de langues n'est plus facultative car elle représente le noyau même de l'apprentissage tout au long de la vie :

La problématique interculturelle est désormais liée à l'idée d'ouverture ; ouverture par les langues, les cultures (immigrées, européennes, régionales), ouverture par les échanges internationaux, ouverture sur le monde par le biais des médias, des voyages, des nouvelles technologies, etc. (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2020 : 94).

Les didacticiens des langues et cultures étrangères ont bien compris que l'enseignement et/ ou l'apprentissage de l'interculturel en classe est un phénomène qui ne pourra jamais être stoppé ou totalement contrôlé et en plus il représente un défi et en même temps une solution unique dans le devenir de nos apprenants parce que : « Le but de toute démarche interculturelle est la formation d'un individu conscient de la relativité de ses valeurs, en mesure d'opérer des choix autonomes, capable d'élaborer une pensée divergente » (De Carlo, 1998 : 77).

Trouver les meilleures modalités de la mise en place de l'interculturel pendant la classe de langue demande beaucoup de responsabilité et d'implication personnelle et professionnelle pour que tous les acteurs puissent vraiment évaluer les résultats. Ce qui est important ce n'est pas de savoir la recette parfaite mais de trouver toujours la meilleure solution d'envisager l'interculturel pendant la classe de langue vu que :

Connaître les autres et les accepter pour ce qu'ils sont, dans un mouvement réciproque d'ouverture et de disponibilité, tout en gardant notre appartenance et nos racines culturelles : voilà la finalité à atteindre par un processus éducatif complexe, dans une situation qui est en devenir perpétuel et où les ethnies les plus disparates entrent en contact de façon temporaire ou permanente. Il s'agit en effet d'un paradoxe en fonction duquel chacun de nous a besoin de sauvegarder sa propre identité culturelle et en même temps doit être prêt à se faire transformer graduellement par la rencontre et la fréquentation des autres (De Carlo, 1998 : 119).

Toutefois, même s'il est nécessaire d'ajouter que l'acquisition de l'interculturel n'est pas toujours mesurable pendant les classes de langue, il assure l'ouverture de nos apprenants vers le monde. Ce qui nous reste c'est de concevoir les méthodes adéquates de son évaluation pour que son intégration dans le milieu éducatif soit vraiment tangible:

Il est temps de proposer aux acteurs sociaux et éducatifs, une théorie suffisamment dynamique permettant de comprendre les enjeux induits par les transformations en profondeur de la société dont l'hétérogénéité culturelle est sans aucun doute la principale composante. L'école du futur ne peut être définie sans choix prospectif, sans pari sur l'avenir, sans utopie (Abdallah-Preteceille, 2020 : 121).

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QUELQUES PRINCIPES ET CONCEPTS CLÉS DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT DU FLE

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Abstract: *In this paper, we aim at addressing some key principles and concepts of teaching French as a foreign language, commonly known as FLE. In the introduction, we will recall the roles of the teacher, which go far beyond the common conception according to which the teacher has the simple role of transmitting knowledge. Next, we will analyze the main learning strategies that represent the techniques or methods that learners use to learn to communicate in French; These strategies are very important because they help learners to be more autonomous and independent in their learning. After reviewing the learning strategies, we will talk about the approaches related to the teaching of a foreign language: we first address the "communicative approach" whose essential objective is to learn to communicate in a foreign language in a communication situation. With the communicative approach, the priority is communication between people in a specific context. Next, we will talk about another key concept of language teaching today: the "actional approach", a new approach to learning and teaching modern languages, based on the actions that the learner performs in a foreign language. The actional perspective uses the principles of the communicative approach, but it emphasizes the notion of task. Then, we will address the place of culture in the teaching and learning of foreign languages because the link between language and culture is inseparable. To communicate well with a person, you need linguistic tools but also cultural knowledge, what is called "cultural competence". These cultural tools are essential simply to understand the society whose language one learns and to know its cultural practices. Finally, we will deal with the notion of interculturality, which consists in building bridges between cultures. The starting point for intercultural education is the awareness that there are views that interact and that they can all be different. It is also the desire to allow successful communication between people from different cultures.*

Keywords: *foreign language; learning strategies; communicative approach; actional approach; FLE*

Introduction

L'idée de ce thème nous est venue plusieurs fois pendant nos classes de français langue étrangère, à partir des défis et des besoins constatés par nous-même dans le travail avec nos étudiants de l'Université de Pitești à différentes spécialisations non-philologues. C'est maintenant que nous avons décidé de mettre en pratique cette idée d'analyser et de rassembler en un seul article justement les principes et les concepts clés qui constituent, selon nous, un « paquet » complet et à la fois indispensable à tout enseignant pour réussir un cours de FLE. Notre ouvrage ne prétend pas d'être exhaustif, mais il peut constituer un instrument utile dans la pratique et s'adresse spécialement aux enseignants débutants qui n'ont pas eu le temps, peut-être, de découvrir par leur propre expérience ces trucs très utiles en classe de FLE. Nous allons appuyer notre étude sur les ouvrages de quelques spécialistes célèbres en didactique, mais aussi sur des exemples personnels tirés de notre pratique avec nos étudiants.

I. Les rôles de l'enseignant

La plupart des personnes qui n'ont pas le métier de professeur (soit les élèves / étudiants/ apprenants, soit les parents de ceux-ci, soit les gens qui ont d'autres métiers

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que celui d'enseignant) a l'habitude de considérer que l'enseignant ne fait que transmettre des connaissances, donc leur rôle serait d'expliquer et le rôle de l'apprenant serait d'écouter, ce qui fait de l'apprenant un récepteur passif et silencieux. Mais enseigner ce n'est pas seulement transmettre une information ou un contenu, c'est aussi concevoir, évaluer la performance des apprenants, animer. La définition du métier d'enseignant a changé dans le temps, avec l'évolution des méthodologies et de la pédagogie. Et avec ce changement, a évolué aussi la conception du rôle de l'apprenant. Au lieu d'être seulement passif, on attend maintenant de lui qu'il soit actif, qu'il soit acteur de son apprentissage, qu'il s'investisse et qu'il devienne autonome.

Pendant le cours, l'enseignant joue différents rôles¹ :

- il est un **expert**, en fournissant des informations et des explications sur l'utilisation de la langue, en répondant aux questions, en rassurant les apprenants en cas de faute ou de doute sur un point précis ; il présente nécessairement, dès le début, les objectifs du cours.
- il est **évaluateur** parce qu'il évalue le progrès et les difficultés des apprenants ainsi que son propre travail, il gère le contrôle continu et les examens ;
- il est **animateur**, car il stimule les apprenants à réaliser les exercices, il anime les activités de communication orale ou écrite, les débats, les jeux de langue. Il s'efforce de rendre le cours agréable et productif ;
- il est **concepteur**, parce qu'il élabore lui-même les séquences pédagogiques, les programmes, les tests ;
- il est **technicien**, car il utilise dans la salle de classe différents équipements (ordinateur, lecteur de CD, vidéoprojecteur, tableau numérique interactif) ;
- il est aussi **médiateur**/ facilitateur, parce qu'il facilite le processus d'apprentissage, en aidant les apprenants à acquérir des stratégies d'apprentissage et à devenir autonomes.

Mais le rôle de l'enseignant ne s'arrête pas aux portes de la classe, parce qu'il est aussi **correcteur/évaluateur** : il corrige à la maison les devoirs des apprenants, il évalue leurs épreuves écrites. Il doit aussi analyser et évaluer leur réussite et proposer de la remédiation pour aider les élèves à corriger leurs erreurs. En plus, il est obligé de s'informer régulièrement, de suivre des cours de formation, d'effectuer des recherches sur Internet et de se mettre au courant aux nouvelles technologies.

Tout enseignant de langues étrangères sait qu'il doit chercher à développer ses compétences tout au long de sa vie professionnelle, c'est pourquoi il essaiera de développer ses **savoirs**, autrement dit les contenus qu'il doit enseigner, mais aussi ses **savoir-être**, c'est-à-dire l'attitude qu'il adoptera en classe et ses **savoir-faire**, en d'autres termes sa capacité à proposer des méthodes de travail variées pour aider les apprenants à apprendre et à devenir autonomes. Et comme le degré d'autonomie des apprenants varie et comme « personne n'apprend à la place de personne » (affirmation du célèbre didacticien Louis Porcher²), l'enseignant doit faciliter le processus d'apprentissage pour chacun de ses apprenants, en adaptant les différentes stratégies d'apprentissage, tâche qui peut s'avérer quelquefois difficile.

¹ Idées reprises et reformulées de MOOC Cavilam, *Enseigner le français langue étrangère aujourd'hui*, MOOC CAVILAM – Alliance Française de Vichy, France, <https://mooc.cavilam.com>, consulté le 15 janvier 2023

² [Louis Porcher, Martine Abdallah-Preteuille, Les institutions éducatives irriguées par le monde dans Éthique de la diversité en éducation \(1998\)](#), pages 135 à 163, <https://www.cairn.info/ethique-de-la-diversite-en-education--9782130489795-page-135.htm>, consulté le 10 juin 2023

II. Les stratégies d'apprentissage

Tout apprenant utilise, consciemment ou non, des stratégies pour mieux apprendre une langue étrangère. Par exemple, pour réussir à communiquer en français, on a besoin, entre autres, d'enrichir notre vocabulaire, donc on apprend des mots nouveaux en français, soit en prenant le dictionnaire pour mémoriser quelques mots par cœur, soit on a besoin de répéter les mots nouveaux à voix haute, les écrire, les écouter ; soit on compare avec notre langue maternelle pour en rechercher le sens (si notre langue est à base latine) ; d'autres procèdent à les écrire et les classer dans leur répertoire de mots nouveaux en fonction de thèmes dans des phrases toutes faites, tandis que d'autres mettent en contexte les mots nouveaux ou font des cartes mentales de familles de mots. Ce ne sont, bien sûr, que quelques exemples mais sans le savoir, nous utilisons tous des stratégies pour mieux apprendre une langue étrangère.

Pour un apprenant, une stratégie d'apprentissage est donc une technique ou une méthode qu'il utilise pour apprendre à communiquer en langue étrangère, dans notre cas en français. Il y a, évidemment, beaucoup de stratégies possibles et ces stratégies doivent aider l'apprenant à être plus autonome et indépendant dans son apprentissage. Grâce à elles, il apprend aussi en dehors de la salle de classe.

Selon les spécialistes¹, les stratégies d'apprentissage peuvent être classifiées en 3 catégories :

a) **Les stratégies cognitives** : c'est la manière dont nous traitons les informations, les organisons et les mémorisons. Pour développer **les stratégies cognitives**, l'apprenant fait des actions de genre : observer, souligner, répéter, résumer, prendre des notes, comparer avec des langues connues, utiliser la langue maternelle ou créer des associations mentales.

b) **Les stratégies métacognitives** : c'est la manière d'apprendre et de gérer l'apprentissage. Pour apprendre plus efficacement, les apprenants vont développer des aptitudes à réfléchir sur leur apprentissage en mettant en œuvre des stratégies métacognitives, comme la capacité à réfléchir sur ce qui se passe dans le processus d'apprentissage. C'est l'idée de planifier et de contrôler. Par exemple, se fixer des objectifs, s'autoévaluer, chercher des occasions de pratiquer le français (parler avec des francophones), tenir un journal personnel d'apprentissage, etc.

c) **Les stratégies socio-affectives** : impliquent l'interaction avec une autre personne, permettent de contrôler les sentiments et les émotions, en améliorant ainsi le processus d'apprentissage. Ces stratégies mettent en jeu des actions comme : partager ses sentiments, s'ouvrir aux autres, coopérer avec ses collègues et s'encourager mutuellement.

Il y a de nombreuses stratégies qui peuvent être mises en place lorsque l'on apprend le français et le rôle de l'enseignant est de guider ses apprenants à identifier les meilleures stratégies pour les aider à apprendre, en se mettant souvent à leur place. Il s'agit de développer une série de stratégies qu'il utilisera pendant ses cours, mais aussi

¹ Idées reprises et reformulées de l'article *Les stratégies d'apprentissage en FLE*, <https://www.francepodcasts.com/2018/10/02/strategies-apprentissage-fle/>, consulté le 16 juillet 2023 et aussi de MOOC Cavilam, *Enseigner le français langue étrangère aujourd'hui*, MOOC CAVILAM – Alliance Française de Vichy, France, <https://mooc.cavilam.com/assets/courseware/v1/87fc2c54d24a5afc18008eef0407029/asset-v1:CAVILAM+CAV-001+5+type@asset+block@TranscriptionM2L2.pdf>, consulté le 15 janvier 2023

en dehors de la classe, et de comprendre ces stratégies d'apprentissage par l'expérience d'apprenant.

III. L'approche communicative

Après avoir rappelé les stratégies d'apprentissage, qui nous paraissent indispensables pour tout enseignant, nous parlerons des approches liées à l'enseignement d'une langue étrangère. Dans cette partie de notre travail, qui se propose de faire comprendre « l'approche communicative », nous allons aborder quelques concepts clés de l'enseignement du français langue étrangère, communément appelé le FLE. C'est important d'en parler parce que chaque enseignant sera mis en situation de faire des choix et ces choix vont déterminer d'une part, les contenus de son enseignement, et d'autre part, la façon dont il va les transmettre. C'est ce que nous appliquons nous-même, chaque jour, à chaque cours de français chez nos étudiants de l'Université de Pitești, donc nous y parlerons aussi de notre propre expérience d'enseignant de français langue étrangère, à part des études des didacticiens célèbres.

Plusieurs spécialistes en didactique du FLE parlent de ces 4 questions que tout enseignant doit toujours avoir en tête : « Qui ? Quoi ? Pourquoi ? Comment ? ». Cela veut dire « À qui j'enseigne ? / Pour quoi faire ? / Quoi enseigner ? / Comment enseigner ? »

L'approche communicative est une méthodologie apparue dans les années 70. Elle s'est opposée aux méthodes structuralistes d'enseignement du FLE qui mettaient surtout l'accent sur la forme et la structure des langues. Son objectif essentiel est d'apprendre à communiquer en langue étrangère. Il nous paraît très important de rappeler ici la réflexion critique de Boyer, Butzbach et Pendants (1990 : 27) :

Un sentiment a progressivement prévalu au sein de la didactique du FLE : le sentiment que les dialogues fabriqués de telle ou telle méthode présentaient une langue peu naturelle et qu'ils étaient trop éloignés de l'authentique proposée entre Français. La pseudo-parole proposée souvent dans les manuels semblait méconnaître aussi bien les ressorts de l'affectivité que la variation socioculturelle. D'où un plaidoyer de plus en plus répandu pour « l'authentique » et plus particulièrement pour une attention conséquente à la diversité des « façons » de parler et des situations de communication.

L'approche communicative a ainsi révolutionné l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues étrangères par le fait qu'elle a pris en compte la situation de communication. Pour répondre à la question « quand on apprend une langue étrangère, de quoi a-t-on besoin en premier lieu pour communiquer avec quelqu'un ? », un inventaire d'actes de parole a été réalisé en 1976 : le niveau - seuil.

Quand on dit à quelqu'un « Pourriez-vous me dire où se trouve la gare, s'il vous plaît ? », ce qu'on fait, c'est « demander à quelqu'un un renseignement ». Un acte de parole, c'est donc un moyen utilisé par la personne qui parle (le locuteur) pour agir sur son environnement avec des mots. Avec l'approche communicative, la priorité est la communication entre des personnes dans un contexte précis, par exemple, donner ou demander des renseignements, faire les achats, passer une visite médicale ou passer une commande au restaurant.

Dans un tel contexte, l'enseignant introduit la grammaire et le lexique en fonction des besoins et des objectifs d'une situation de communication et non dans le but de faire apprendre des règles grammaticales par cœur ou de réciter des listes de mots. Pour intégrer cette approche en classe, l'enseignant doit se demander quel type de document utiliser et il doit chercher les méthodes qui se rapprochent mieux des situations

réelles. Il s'agit des « documents authentiques » qui vont devenir l'un des emblèmes de l'approche communicative parce qu'ils vont permettre de faire entrer une réalité de la langue et de la culture.

Dans son *Dictionnaire de didactique du français langue étrangère*, Jean-Pierre Cuq appelle document authentique tout « message élaboré par des francophones pour des francophones à des fins de communication réelle : elle désigne donc tout ce qui n'est pas conçu à l'origine pour la classe. » (Cuq, 2003 : 29) Autrement dit, il s'agit de tout document ou objet non élaboré à des fins pédagogiques. C'est, par exemple, un article de presse, un extrait d'une émission de radio, une photo, une brochure ou tout document écrit, audio ou audiovisuel destiné au départ à des locuteurs natifs, mais que l'enseignant collecte pour l'utiliser dans des activités proposées en classe aux apprenants dans son état original, ni modifiés, ni tronqués, ni simplifiés. Ces documents permettent de développer la curiosité et d'introduire une dimension de plaisir à l'apprentissage. L'objectif de l'enseignant est de développer les compétences de l'apprenant pour qu'il soit capable de faire face avec succès aux situations de communication. L'idée de faire entrer dans la classe une langue proche du « réel » suscite chez l'apprenant le désir d'apprendre une langue étrangère et de découvrir la culture liée à cette langue.

IV. L'approche actionnelle

Dans cette troisième partie de notre travail, nous allons parler d'un autre concept clé de l'enseignement des langues aujourd'hui : « l'approche actionnelle ». Il s'agit d'une nouvelle approche pour apprendre et enseigner les langues vivantes, basée sur les actions que l'apprenant réalise en langue étrangère. L'enseignant doit donc considérer l'apprenant comme un acteur social, comme une personne qui va agir dans la réalité personnelle, publique, scolaire ou professionnelle.

Les didacticiens donnent comme définition pour « perspective actionnelle » celle du CECRL¹ (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001 : p. 15) en considérant avant tout

l'usager et l'apprenant d'une langue comme des acteurs sociaux ayant à accomplir des tâches (qui ne sont pas seulement langagières) dans des circonstances et un environnement donné, à l'intérieur d'un domaine d'action particulier. Si les actes de parole se réalisent dans des activités langagières, celles-ci s'inscrivent elles-mêmes à l'intérieur d'actions en contexte social qui seules leur donnent leur pleine signification.

La perspective actionnelle reprend les principes de l'approche communicative, mais elle met l'accent sur la notion de tâche. Dans cette approche, l'apprenant devra mobiliser des compétences qui lui permettent d'agir pour accomplir des tâches qui ne sont pas seulement langagières. La tâche met donc l'apprenant en « action » et l'important n'est pas seulement d'être capable de communiquer mais d'être capable de mobiliser des connaissances linguistiques (des savoirs) et des capacités langagières (des savoir-faire) pour réaliser la tâche.

La communication interactive est placée au centre des apprentissages. Certains introduisent à la suite de Puren (2004 : 123) l'idée de *co-action* plutôt que d'*interaction*. Il s'agit de « passer de *parler avec les autres* à *agir avec les autres* ou *communiquer pour agir* ». Le concept de co-action s'associe à la notion de réciprocité et de coopération. Et,

¹ Depuis 2001, le *Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues* (CECRL ou Cadre) est l'outil privilégié pour une démarche commune au niveau de l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues en Europe.

de cette perspective actionnelle, ce n'est pas la notion de tâche qui se détache pour les didacticiens mais celle de tâche-problème. Donc les tâches devraient présenter une question à résoudre et prêtant à discussion. Les interactions sociales que ce soit entre pairs ou entre apprenant/enseignant, en situation de résolution de problème, permettent de construire des compétences cognitives individuelles. Ici, l'enseignant a le rôle d'un guide qui aide à la résolution de problèmes. Ainsi, il s'agit pour les apprenants de mobiliser des savoirs et savoir-faire afin de résoudre les tâches-problèmes à accomplir ce qui permettra de restructurer ce qu'ils savent déjà mais également d'acquérir de nouveaux savoirs et savoir-faire.

Par exemple, si on est dans un restaurant, les savoirs correspondent à des connaissances (comme le vocabulaire de la nourriture) et les savoir-faire à des capacités d'utiliser ses connaissances dans un contexte (comme être capable de comprendre les informations écrites dans une carte ou dans une recette).

Pour intégrer l'approche actionnelle dans ses pratiques en classe de langue, l'enseignant devra proposer aux apprenants des tâches concrètes dans lesquelles ils seront amenés à résoudre des situations problèmes. Les activités d'enseignement-apprentissage seront donc contextualisées (une situation que chacun de nous pourrait rencontrer dans sa vie de tous les jours : un déjeuner au restaurant, par exemple). Cette situation choisie posera des problèmes (par exemple le steak n'est pas assez cuit et les légumes sont froids, donc il y aura une réclamation) ; elle sera finalisée (l'objectif est de trouver des solutions pour résoudre le problème. Par exemple, le garçon fait venir le chef, celui-ci demande des excuses au client mécontent et lui apporte un autre plat). La situation imaginée sera complexe (en nécessitant la mobilisation de différents savoirs, savoir-faire, savoir-être) et elle donnera un résultat langagier. Ainsi, en apportant des contraintes et en les laissant libres dans le choix des ressources, l'enseignant permettra aux apprenants de développer des stratégies pour qu'ils deviennent de plus en plus autonomes.

La plupart de nos étudiants adorent ce type de communication interactive que nous utilisons souvent dans nos classes de FLE et les jeux de rôle sur différents thèmes (faire les achats / le marché, chez le médecin, au téléphone, donner / demander des renseignements, au restaurant etc.) sont leurs favoris.

V. La langue et la culture

La place de la culture dans l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues étrangères est très importante, parce que depuis l'approche communicative, le lien entre la langue et la culture est inséparable. Pour bien communiquer avec une personne, il faut des outils linguistiques mais aussi des connaissances culturelles, ce que l'on appelle une « compétence culturelle ». Ces outils culturels sont indispensables tout simplement pour comprendre la société dont on apprend la langue et en connaître les pratiques culturelles.

Les actes de parole dont nous avons parlé plus haut sont donc inévitablement aussi des actes culturels. Dans l'approche actionnelle, on communique pour agir avec une personne et on doit comprendre sa culture du quotidien pour interagir avec elle.

En fonction du lieu et de la société où nous avons grandi et vécu, nous avons des caractéristiques culturelles qui se manifestent par nos représentations du monde, de la réalité et de nos comportements. C'est ce qu'on appelle charge culturelle partagée parce qu'elle est commune à tous les membres d'une culture. Par exemple, pour manger, certaines personnes utilisent des fourchettes et des couteaux, d'autres - les baguettes et d'autres - les doigts. Cela dépend évidemment de la culture dans laquelle on a grandi ou de l'endroit où on habite.

L'anthropologue Edward T. Hall (1976)¹ a utilisé la représentation visuelle d'un iceberg pour mieux comprendre la culture et ses composantes. Hall explique qu'il y a au sommet de l'iceberg des éléments culturels que l'on peut percevoir avec les sens. Ils sont appris ou acquis consciemment, ils peuvent changer relativement facilement, ils peuvent être observés, ils sont tangibles, et on peut les décrire sans expérience approfondie d'une autre culture. À l'inverse, à la base de l'iceberg se trouvent des éléments que l'on ne peut pas percevoir avec les sens. Ils sont appris ou acquis inconsciemment, ils sont difficiles à changer, ils sont intangibles, et on ne peut les décrire et les comprendre sans avoir une expérience approfondie d'une autre culture.

Il s'en suit qu'une langue est aussi une pratique culturelle d'une société. L'affirmation « La culture, c'est comme un iceberg » veut dire que la culture est composée, ainsi que l'iceberg, de deux parties : une partie visible et une partie cachée. La partie visible de la culture comprend l'art, la littérature, la musique, l'histoire, la géographie, l'alimentation, la religion, les langues, les symboles, etc. La partie cachée est composée des styles de communication, des règles de politesse, des valeurs, des croyances, des comportements, des codes culturels, de l'humour, des notions de temps, d'espace, de distance et des gestes. Evidemment, c'est la partie cachée de l'iceberg qui peut poser des problèmes.

Lorsque nous interagissons pour la première fois avec des personnes issues d'un milieu culturel différent (dans notre pays et à l'étranger), nous n'interagissons qu'avec les 10% supérieurs de l'iceberg culturel, selon l'opinion du célèbre anthropologue Edward Hall. C'est pointe de l'iceberg. Il est courant de faire des suppositions ou de développer des idées sur d'autres groupes culturels sans vraiment comprendre leur culture interne ou profonde. C'est-à-dire les 90 % qui constituent la majorité de nos valeurs et de nos croyances.

L'iceberg culturel de Hall² montre que les éléments situés à la surface, qui sont visibles et palpables, peuvent être facilement appris. Cependant, que se passe-t-il avec les éléments situés au bas de l'iceberg ? En grandissant, nous intériorisons la façon de penser et d'être de notre culture. En outre, nous intériorisons les valeurs, les comportements, les attitudes, les concepts philosophiques, les approches au travail et aux études, les façons de comprendre et de nouer des relations et la dynamique familiale de notre culture. C'est ici, au cœur de notre bagage culturel, que la plupart des malentendus interculturels surviennent parce que nous ne pouvons voir et comprendre les éléments cachés de la culture lorsque nous nous rencontrons pour la première fois. Nous faisons des suppositions et nous appliquons notre propre conception du bien et du mal à d'autres groupes.

Prenons un exemple : nous sommes en France et nous voulons saluer une personne française. Si on ne connaît pas le code culturel de la bise en France, on peut facilement choquer ou être choqué(e). Lors d'une rencontre entre un Français et une touriste étrangère, la touriste lui serre la main et le Français essaie de lui faire la bise. La touriste semble étonnée, gênée et fait un mouvement de recul. C'est déjà une relation qui commence très mal.

¹ *Compétences interculturelles pour apprenants internationaux*, Module 1: Créer une conscience interculturelle et comprendre les attitudes,

<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/competencesinterculturelles/chapter/what-is-culture-3/>
consulté le 20 juillet 2023

² *idem*

Prenons un autre exemple : si on ne connaît pas le rituel du repas en France (avec ses différents moments : l'entrée, le plat principal, le fromage, le dessert, le café), à la fin de l'entrée, on peut penser que les Français mangent très peu et qu'on va encore avoir faim à la fin du repas.

En plus, dans une situation où les interlocuteurs sont face à face, la communication est autant verbale que non-verbale, donc la communication ne se limite pas à ce qui se dit. Les interlocuteurs s'expriment aussi grâce à des gestes et des mimiques. Et, comme on le sait bien, les gestes que l'on utilise dans la vie courante sont aussi dépendants de la culture dans laquelle on a grandi. En effet, d'une culture à l'autre, certains gestes n'ont pas toujours la même signification. La différence culturelle représente un élément très important dans ce type de communication. Ainsi que le langage verbal se différencie d'une culture à l'autre, le langage non-verbal aussi peut être différent dans des cultures différentes. « *Tandis qu'un geste peut avoir dans une telle culture une interprétation claire, dans une autre le même geste peut être dépourvu de sens ou peut avoir une signification totalement opposée.* » (Goffman, 1974 : 9) Par exemple, l'index et le pouce réunis en forme d'anneau constituent au Japon un symbole de l'argent, dans la zone méditerranéenne suggèrent un trou et désignent l'homosexualité, tandis qu'en France ce geste signifie „zéro” ou „rien”. Dans les pays anglophones, spécialement aux Etats-Unis où ce geste a été popularisé au XIXe siècle, il signifie „OK” c'est-à-dire „tout est en ordre”¹. Ces exemples montrent que l'interprétation erronée des gestes peut provoquer des conséquences désagréables et on doit toujours prendre en considération le milieu culturel des gens avant de se hâter de tirer des conclusions sur leurs gestes.

Ce n'est que par l'exposition et l'ouverture à l'apprentissage culturel que nous pouvons faire sens et comprendre comment ces éléments sont similaires ou différents des formes de pensée, de raisonnement, de comportement et même de sentiments propres à notre culture de base, qui définissent ce qui est considéré comme bien ou mal au sein de chaque groupe culturel.

C'est ici qu'intervient le rôle de l'enseignant qui peut enseigner quelques stratégies très utiles pour tout apprenant : par exemple, lorsqu'on rencontre des personnes appartenant à d'autres groupes culturels, on ne doit pas se concentrer uniquement sur l'apprentissage de la nourriture, de la musique ou de quelques mots dans leur langue; on doit prêter attention à ce qui semble important pour l'autre personne et à son comportement afin d'en tirer des connaissances, en gardant à l'esprit que certains comportements sont culturels et d'autres individuels ou personnels. L'apprenant sera informé qu'on doit poser des questions, prendre le temps d'apprendre à connaître les gens en tant qu'individus (leur personnalité) et leurs tendances culturelles. Le fait de poser des questions nous aidera à mieux comprendre les autres tout en apprenant à ne pas faire de suppositions à leur sujet.

Nous avons donc tous une vision de la réalité qui dépend de notre lieu d'éducation et de vie et la langue en est le miroir. C'est pourquoi l'enseignant doit essayer à développer des compétences culturelles chez l'apprenant pour lui permettre de communiquer avec des locuteurs efficacement. L'important n'est pas que l'apprenant connaisse toute l'Histoire de la France par cœur mais plutôt de lui apprendre à décoder certains comportements culturels et à les comprendre.

¹ Idée empruntée d'Erwing Goffman, *Les rites d'interaction*, Les Editions de Minuit, 1974, Paris, p.9

VI. La notion d'interculturel

A la fin notre réflexion à ce sujet, il nous paraît utile de rappeler aussi la notion d'interculturel. L'interculturel consiste à construire des passerelles entre les cultures. Il s'agit donc d'un processus et d'une dynamique qui favorisent les échanges et qui permettent de nous enrichir. Il ne s'agit donc pas d'un contenu de culture à enseigner. En adoptant une démarche interculturelle, l'objectif premier est de lutter contre l'ethnocentrisme, c'est à dire « considérer sa culture, sa vision du monde, sa façon de vivre comme la seule et la meilleure »¹. Il s'agit de « se décentrer », de prendre conscience que nous ne sommes pas le centre du monde.

Cette approche invite donc à accepter que nous nous regardions tous d'une façon différente. Le point de départ à une éducation interculturelle est la prise de conscience qu'il existe des regards qui se croisent tous et qu'ils peuvent être tous différents. C'est aussi la volonté de permettre une communication réussie entre des personnes de culture différente.

En classe de langue, l'enseignant peut aider les apprenants à se « se décentrer » en leur proposant des activités adaptées. Comme exemple d'activité intégrant un objectif interculturel, on peut choisir la manière de passer les fêtes de Noël dans différents pays, avec les différentes habitudes alimentaires, avec les différents rituels, etc. On peut montrer aux apprenants une carte de vœux ou des images avec les plats traditionnels de Noël de différents pays. Ensuite, à partir de ces documents authentiques, nous pouvons demander à nos apprenants de choisir ou de tirer au sort une personne d'un des pays choisis et d'assumer son identité. Nous amènerons ainsi nos apprenants à imaginer d'autres façons de vivre et de penser. La conclusion à laquelle arriveront les apprenants est la suivante : se mettre à la place de l'autre est une manière de regarder le monde autrement, de comprendre ce qui est inhabituel pour soi, donc le point de départ à une éducation interculturelle est la prise de conscience qu'il existe des regards différents. C'est aussi la clé d'une communication interculturelle réussie.

Conclusions

A un regard rapide, les lecteurs de notre travail pourraient le considérer un mélange d'informations théoriques, mais comme nous l'avons mentionné dans l'introduction, notre but a été d'analyser et de rassembler en un seul article justement les principes et les concepts clés qui constituent, selon nous, un « paquet » complet et à la fois indispensable à tout enseignant pour réussir un cours de FLE. Notre ouvrage s'adresse donc spécialement aux enseignants débutants qui n'ont pas eu le temps, peut-être, de découvrir par leur propre expérience ces trucs très utiles en classe de FLE.

Nous avons montré tout d'abord dans quelle manière les rôles de l'enseignant dépassent beaucoup la conception commune conformément à laquelle l'enseignant a le simple rôle de transmettre des connaissances, parce qu'un enseignant est aussi un expert, un évaluateur, un animateur, un concepteur, un technicien, un médiateur, un correcteur/évaluateur et son rôle ne s'arrête pas aux portes de la classe.

Après avoir analysé les principales stratégies d'apprentissage, qui représentent les techniques ou les méthodes que les apprenants utilisent pour apprendre à communiquer en français, nous avons conclu que ces 3 stratégies (cognitives,

¹ Idées reprises et reformulées de MOOC Cavilam, *Enseigner le français langue étrangère aujourd'hui*, MOOC CAVILAM – Alliance Française de Vichy, France, <https://mooc.cavilam.com>, consulté le 15 janvier 2023

métacognitives et socio-affectives) sont très importantes, même essentielles, parce qu'elles aident l'apprenant à être plus autonome et indépendant dans son apprentissage. En étroite liaison avec les stratégies d'apprentissage sont les approches liées à l'enseignement d'une langue étrangère : premièrement c'est « l'approche communicative » dont l'objectif essentiel est d'apprendre à communiquer en langue étrangère en situation de communication. Avec l'approche communicative, la priorité est la communication entre des personnes dans un contexte précis. Deuxièmement c'est « l'approche actionnelle », une nouvelle approche pour apprendre et enseigner les langues vivantes, basée sur les actions que l'apprenant réalise en langue étrangère. La perspective actionnelle reprend les principes de l'approche communicative, mais elle met l'accent sur la notion de tâche ; il s'agit des tâches concrètes dans lesquelles les apprenants seront amenés à résoudre des situations problématiques. Ainsi, en apportant des contraintes et en les laissant libres dans le choix des ressources, l'enseignant permettra aux apprenants de développer des stratégies pour qu'ils deviennent de plus en plus autonomes.

Vers la fin de notre travail nous avons abordé la place de la culture dans l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues étrangères parce que le lien entre la langue et la culture est inséparable. Pour bien communiquer avec une personne, il faut des outils linguistiques mais aussi des connaissances culturelles, ce que l'on appelle une « compétence culturelle ». On a vu que ces outils culturels sont indispensables tout simplement pour comprendre la société dont on apprend la langue et en connaître les pratiques culturelles. Nous avons donné quelques exemples qui montrent que l'interprétation erronée des gestes peut provoquer des conséquences désagréables, donc on doit toujours prendre en considération le milieu culturel des gens avant de se hâter de tirer des conclusions sur leurs gestes.

A la fin, nous avons passé en revue la notion d'interculturel qui consiste à construire des passerelles entre les cultures. Le point de départ à une éducation interculturelle est la prise de conscience qu'il existe des regards qui se croisent tous et qu'ils peuvent être tous différents. C'est aussi la volonté de permettre une communication réussie entre des personnes de culture différente ou, mieux dit, la clé d'une communication interculturelle réussie. Apprendre une langue dépasse donc la connaissance unique de la langue et devient beaucoup plus intéressant et beaucoup plus complexe par le fait que toute langue englobe aussi la culture de son peuple. Et nous, les enseignants de langues étrangères, nous ne devons jamais l'oublier ou l'ignorer !

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BETWEEN NATURE AND LAW: ANALYSING PLURAL NARRATIVES IN "WHERE THE CRAWDADS SING" FOR MULTICULTURAL EFL INSTRUCTION

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Abstract: *In the pantheon of contemporary literature, Delia Owens' magnum opus, 'Where the Crawdads Sing,' unfolds as a testament to the intricate web woven between the natural world and the man-made realm of social structures and laws. Drenched in atmospheric descriptions and captivating plotlines, Owens' work not only paints a vivid picture of the North Carolina marshlands but also delves deep into the complexities of human relationships and societal judgments. This novel, rich in its thematic depth and multifaceted character sketches, emerges as an invaluable resource for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, particularly when aiming to instill a multicultural perspective in learners. The nuanced interplay of nature, love, isolation, and prejudice in the storyline presents ample opportunities for EFL students to engage in critical discourse, expanding their linguistic horizons while grappling with global themes. This paper aims to dissect the novel's plural narratives concerning nature and the law, drawing connections between the text and broader multicultural themes, thereby elucidating the pedagogical implications for multicultural EFL classrooms and enriching the learning experience for students of diverse backgrounds.*

Keywords: *intertextuality; multiculturalism; nature; law; pedagogy*

Introduction

Literature, since its inception, has offered an unerring mirror to the human condition, serving as a testimony to both the vicissitudes of fate and the underpinnings of societal structures. By virtue of its immersive narratives and complex characterizations, literature enables students—especially those in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom—to grapple with multifaceted themes that bear global resonance. Delia Owens' magnum opus, "Where the Crawdads Sing," presents an apt canvas to engage EFL students in discussions around the cardinal themes of justice, truth, and voice.

In this vein, "Where the Crawdads Sing" transcends the confines of mere storytelling, emerging as a seminal text for analysis in the context of EFL instruction. Owens' narrative, replete with its diverse array of linguistic nuances and cultural intricacies, becomes a crucible for exploring the dialectic between nature and law, a thematic confluence that is both primal and universally pertinent. This juxtaposition, articulated through the lens of Owens' lyrical prose, offers an invaluable resource for students and educators alike, endeavouring to dissect and comprehend the multifarious layers of human experience and societal constructs.

The novel's setting, a marshland ecosystem teeming with life and lore, serves as a metaphorical backdrop against which the complexities of multicultural narratives are unraveled. The protagonist's journey, marked by isolation and resilience, parallels the existential quests of individuals grappling with the challenges of linguistic and cultural assimilation. This parallel not only enriches the EFL learning experience but also broadens the scope of pedagogical approaches, allowing for a deeper engagement with themes of identity, belonging, and the transformative power of language. Indeed, navigating the intricacies of "teaching a foreign language to eclectic clusters of students

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has become a challenge not only from a didactic standpoint but from a communication point of view as well.” (Lăpădat & Lăpădat, 2020:139)

The Duality of Nature and Society

In Delia Owens' 'Where the Crawdads Sing', the thematic exploration of the duality between nature and society emerges as a central pillar, intricately woven into the fabric of the narrative. This duality is vividly portrayed through the contrasting depictions of the marshlands and the nearby town, serving as powerful symbols of the untouched natural world and the structured realm of human society, respectively. The marshlands, with their untamed beauty and primal allure, stand in juxtaposition to the town, a bastion of societal norms, laws, and human interactions. This stark contrast not only propels the narrative forward but also unfurls a deep-seated commentary on the human condition, offering a rich tableau for examining the intricate interplay between environmental consciousness and the perennial tug-of-war between human law and natural law.

Delia Owens vividly sets the stage for this exploration through her depiction of the marshlands. Consider the opening description: “Marsh is not swamp. Marsh is a space of light, where grass grows in water, and water flows into the sky. Slow-moving creeks wander, carrying the orb of the sun with them to the sea...” (Owens, 2018:14)

In this light, the marshlands, depicted with an evocative richness, embody the essence of nature in its most primal form – untamed, unspoiled, and mysterious. They represent a world that operates on its inherent rhythms and laws, untouched by human hands. This portrayal of nature as a self-sustaining entity, governed by its cycles and systems, stands in contrast to the human-centric perspective that often dominates our understanding of the natural world. In the marshes, nature is not a backdrop to human activity but a living, breathing presence that commands respect and awe. This setting becomes a canvas upon which Owens paints a vivid picture of the symbiotic relationship between the environment and the individual, especially through the eyes of the protagonist, Kya, who finds solace, sustenance, and ultimately, her identity in the marshlands.

Conversely, the nearby town represents the world of human society, with its intricate web of laws, norms, and expectations. This is a world where human constructs – social hierarchies, laws, cultural norms – dictate the rhythm of life. The town is emblematic of a structured existence, where the unpredictability of nature is replaced by the predictability of societal rules. However, Owens does not merely present this contrast as a binary opposition; rather, she delves into the nuances of how these two worlds intersect, overlap, and influence each other. The town's perception of the marsh and its inhabitants, particularly Kya, is fraught with prejudice and misunderstanding, highlighting the deep-seated divisions and the lack of comprehension that often characterizes human interactions with the natural world.

While discussing the marsh as a character and its secrets, the marshlands are not just a setting but a reflection of the characters themselves. Owens writes, “The marsh did not confine them but defined them and like any sacred ground, kept their secrets deep” (Owens, 2018:18), highlighting the symbiotic relationship between the environment and the individuals who inhabit it, contrasting sharply with the societal constraints faced in town.

This duality between nature and society in 'Where the Crawdads Sing' serves as a metaphor for the human struggle to find balance between the primal call of the wild and the constraints of civilized life. Kya, the protagonist, embodies this struggle. Her life in the marshlands, away from the constraints and prejudices of the town, represents a form

of freedom that is rare and alluring. Yet, this freedom comes at a price – isolation, loneliness, and a constant battle for survival.

Kya's daily life in the marsh demonstrates her deep connection and adaptability to her natural surroundings, as seen when Owens describes her handling of her Pa's wet overalls: "Pa's overalls were so heavy wet she couldn't wring them out with her tiny hands and couldn't reach the line to hang them so draped them sopping over the palmetto fronds at the edge of the woods" (Owens, 2018:28). This moment illustrates her innate bond with the marsh, even in her daily chores, as opposed to her experiences in the town.

Kya's character arc, oscillating between the marsh and the town, is a poignant exploration of this duality. Her journey is not just a tale of survival against odds but a deeper exploration of the quest for identity and belonging in a world that is often marked by a rigid dichotomy between nature and society. The concept of survival transcends the physical, touching upon the emotional and spiritual realms. Owens suggests through the narrative that "A man who didn't mind scrabbling for supper would never starve" (Owens, 2018:17), displaying the abundance and sustenance provided by nature, in contrast to the economic struggles and social hierarchies present in human society.

The novel's exploration of this duality provides fertile ground for discussions about environmental consciousness. Through its vivid portrayal of the marshlands, the narrative invites readers to reflect on the human relationship with nature. It challenges the anthropocentric worldview and advocates for a more harmonious and respectful interaction with the natural world. The marshlands are not just a setting for the novel's events but a character in their own right, shaping the lives of those who inhabit them and challenging the conventional understanding of the human-nature relationship. In addition, the inherent conflict between human law and natural law is a recurring theme in the novel. This conflict is not just a backdrop for the story but a critical element that drives the narrative. The laws of nature, as represented by the marshlands, are based on a balance and a cycle of life that is ancient and unyielding. In contrast, human laws, as exemplified by the town and its inhabitants, are shown to be malleable, often biased, and subject to the whims and prejudices of those in power. This juxtaposition raises profound questions about justice, morality, and the true essence of law and order.

When reflecting on Kya's journey and her evolving sense of belonging, the author crafts a poignant conclusion to the thematic exploration within the novel. Kya's affinity for the marsh and its inhabitants underscores her alienation from society. Owens captures this sentiment beautifully through the imagery of gulls squatting beside Kya on the beach, where she harbours a wish to gather them and bring them to her porch for companionship: "But the gulls squatted on the beach around her...she wished she could gather them up and take them with her to the porch to sleep" (Owens, 2018:38). This longing, articulated through her desire to be close to the gulls, mirrors her deeper connection to the natural world—a connection that far surpasses her ties to the human one, thereby offering a moving end to her story of navigating the spaces between isolation and belonging, between the wilds of nature and the constructs of society.

The narrative's deep immersion in natural settings, juxtaposed with the human-made world of the town, provides an apt metaphor for the contemporary environmental crisis. It brings to the forefront the urgent need for a re-evaluation of our relationship with nature. The novel posits that true understanding and coexistence with the natural world require a shift in perspective – from viewing nature as a resource to be exploited to seeing it as a vital partner in the journey of life. This shift is not just philosophical but practical, necessitating changes in how we live, govern, and interact with the environment.

In essence, the duality of nature and society in 'Where the Crawdads Sing' challenges readers to reconsider their relationship with the natural world, to question the constructs of society, and to reflect on the delicate balance that must be struck between these two realms. This thematic exploration is not just a narrative device but a reflection of the larger conversations and concerns of our time, making 'Where the Crawdads Sing' a novel that resonates with the contemporary reader on multiple levels. The novel, therefore, becomes more than just a story; it is a lens through which we can examine the critical and often fraught relationship between humanity and the world it inhabits.

The Role of Language and Dialect

The choice of the Southern dialect in 'Where the Crawdads Sing' is not a mere stylistic preference but a deliberate narrative strategy that serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it acts as a geographical anchor, situating the story firmly within its Southern setting. The dialect does more than merely depict a regional vernacular; it evokes the very spirit of the locale, its traditions, and its people. The idiomatic expressions, unique linguistic structures, and cadences of the Southern dialect are employed with such precision and authenticity that they transform the setting from a mere backdrop into a living, breathing entity. This linguistic embodiment of the setting allows readers to immerse themselves fully in the world Owens has created, experiencing its textures, sounds, and rhythms as if they were physically present. As Althobaiti (2023) notes in his comparative analysis of contemporary English literature, "Dialect diversity serves as a powerful tool in characterizing the struggles, identities, and histories of multifarious communities. This study underscores the pivotal role of dialect diversity in contemporary English literature, emphasizing its potential to bridge gaps and foster empathy among readers while amplifying underrepresented voices in the literary canon." (Althobaiti, 2023:235)

Additionally, the use of dialect is integral to the development of the characters, particularly the protagonist, Kya. Through her interactions and dialogue, the dialect becomes a window into her world, revealing her upbringing, her social environment, and her internal struggles. The way Kya speaks and the language she uses become markers of her identity, reflecting both her isolation from and her connection to the community. The dialect also serves as a symbol of her otherness in the eyes of the town's residents, highlighting the social and cultural divides that play a crucial role in the narrative. It is through this linguistic portrayal that Owens skillfully crafts a character who is at once part of her environment and yet distinct from it, caught between the natural world of the marsh and the human world of the town.

The dialect further enriches the plot progression, becoming a tool for depicting social hierarchies and cultural attitudes. The contrast in language between Kya and other characters, such as the townspeople or potential love interests, underscores the socio-cultural tensions that are central to the story. This linguistic divergence is not simply about accent or vocabulary; it is emblematic of deeper divisions – of education, class, and worldview. As the plot unfolds, the dialect becomes a narrative device that highlights Kya's evolution, her interactions with the outside world, and the conflicts that arise from these encounters. It is through these linguistic contrasts and transitions that Owens navigates the complexities of her plot, guiding the reader through Kya's journey with a linguistic map that is as revealing as it is intricate.

It can be said that the role of dialect in 'Where the Crawdads Sing' extends beyond character and plot development to engage with broader themes of cultural identity and belonging. The language used by the characters is not just a means of communication

but a marker of their cultural heritage. It speaks to their histories, their values, and their place within the wider world. In this way, the dialect becomes a medium through which the novel explores the themes of acceptance, prejudice, and the search for identity. It reflects the struggle of the characters, particularly Kya, to find a place where they belong, to be understood and accepted for who they are. This exploration of identity and belonging through dialect is a poignant reminder of the power of language to both unite and divide, to create connections and to reinforce barriers. Hodson (2017) emphasizes the significant social implications, stating that “the representation of dialect in literature has material consequences. Around the globe, many nonstandard varieties of English remain stigmatized, and the speakers of those varieties continue to face discrimination. Understanding the history of dialect representation and the ideologies that undergird it can help us transform its future” (Hodson, 2017: 29).

The novel's use of dialect poses significant questions about the nature of storytelling itself. It challenges the reader to consider how language shapes our understanding of a story, how it colours our perception of characters, and how it influences our emotional engagement with the narrative. The Southern dialect in 'Where the Crawdads Sing' is not just a feature of the story; it is a character in its own right, shaping the narrative and affecting the reader's experience. This engagement with dialect asks the reader to be not just a passive consumer of the story but an active participant, one who must navigate the linguistic landscape to fully comprehend the depth and complexity of the narrative.

Ultimately, the use of language and dialect in 'Where the Crawdads Sing' is a testament to the power of linguistic choices in storytelling. Owens' masterful employment of the Southern dialect serves multiple functions – grounding the story in its setting, developing its characters, advancing its plot, and exploring its themes. It is through this linguistic lens that the novel invites readers to delve into the rich tapestry of its narrative, to understand its characters and their world, and to reflect on the broader implications of language in shaping our perceptions and experiences. The dialect is not merely a stylistic embellishment; it is an essential component of Owens' narrative artistry, a tool that enriches and deepens the reader's journey through the world of 'Where the Crawdads Sing'.

EFL and ESP Acquisition in 'Where the Crawdads Sing'

In the dynamic and ever-evolving pedagogical landscape of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Delia Owens' 'Where the Crawdads Sing' emerges as an invaluable resource. The novel's intricate narrative fabric, woven with rich descriptive language and a compelling storyline, offers a fertile ground for the enhancement of vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension skills among EFL learners. Additionally, for ESP students, particularly those vested in the domains of environmental science or law, the text serves as a contextualized medium for language learning, embedding specialized vocabulary within an engaging narrative. In this regard, “In ESP the practical application and use of language overrides other aspects of language learning. The vocation can be anything from A to Z, from architects to zoologists, by way of bricklayers, lawyers and tour guides” (Harding, 2007:6). Furthermore, as highlighted by Lăpădat (2023), “Understanding the interconnectedness of these three primary elements - resources, methodologies, and challenges - is crucial for educators aiming to provide quality EFL instruction” (Lăpădat, 2023a:252). Motivation also plays a pivotal role in this learning process; “as it can significantly influence students' engagement, perseverance, and overall achievement in the language” (Lăpădat & Lăpădat, 2023:142)

The novel's prose, marked by its vivid descriptive quality and nuanced narrative style, presents a unique opportunity for vocabulary expansion and comprehension skill enhancement in EFL learners. The text is replete with rich descriptions of the natural world, offering learners a tapestry of language that is both diverse and complex. Such a linguistic array enables the deepening of lexical knowledge, moving beyond the conventional and often simplistic vocabulary found in standard language learning materials. The descriptive passages challenge learners to engage with language that paints vivid imagery, thereby fostering a more profound and nuanced understanding of English. Moreover, the narrative's complexity, with its intricate plot and character development, demands a higher level of reading comprehension, pushing learners to develop skills in inferring, predicting, and analysing, which are crucial for advanced language proficiency.

The contextual richness of the novel provides an authentic learning experience. Language acquisition is most effective when it occurs in context, and Owens' narrative offers a real-world linguistic environment. Learners are not merely memorizing vocabulary or grappling with abstract grammatical structures; they are immersing themselves in a story that contextualizes these linguistic elements. This immersion aids in the retention and application of language, as learners are more likely to remember and use words and phrases that they have encountered in meaningful contexts. This aligns with Van's research (2009) who argues that incorporating literature into the EFL classroom offers several benefits:

- It presents meaningful contexts.
- It encompasses a rich variety of vocabulary, dialogues, and prose.
- It stimulates imagination and fosters creativity.
- It enhances cultural awareness.
- It promotes critical thinking.
- It aligns with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles. (Van, 2009).

For ESP learners, particularly those focused on environmental science or law, 'Where the Crawdads Sing' serves as a bridge between language learning and subject-specific content. The novel's setting in the marshlands of North Carolina and its exploration of themes such as nature conservation, ecological awareness, and legal intrigue provide a rich source of specialized vocabulary relevant to these fields. Environmental science students can benefit from the detailed descriptions of flora and fauna, ecological processes, and the interplay between humans and the natural environment. This not only aids in language acquisition but also enhances their subject-specific knowledge. Similarly, students of law can glean insights into legal terminology and concepts, particularly those pertaining to criminal proceedings and societal laws, as the novel navigates through a murder investigation and subsequent trial. The integration of these specialized terminologies within a compelling narrative framework makes the learning process engaging and relevant. Using literature in EFL/ESP classrooms facilitates the integration of language learning with subject-specific content, making it possible to simultaneously develop linguistic proficiency and domain knowledge.

The novel's exploration of social themes, cultural nuances, and human psychology offers a broader educational experience. Language learning, particularly in an EFL/ESP context, is not just about acquiring linguistic skills but also about understanding the cultural and societal underpinnings of language. 'Where the Crawdads Sing' provides insights into American culture, social dynamics, and historical contexts, enriching the learner's cultural comprehension and sensitivity. This is particularly crucial

in multicultural and multilingual classrooms, where understanding the cultural connotations and societal implications of language is essential.

Also, the novel's narrative structure and character development can be utilized to enhance critical thinking and analytical skills in language learners. The complex plot, with its twists and turns, invites learners to engage in critical analysis and discussion, fostering higher-order thinking skills such as evaluation, synthesis, and interpretation. These skills are invaluable not only in language proficiency but also in academic and professional contexts. Learners are encouraged to articulate their thoughts, opinions, and analyses, thereby practicing and improving their spoken and written communication skills in English.

Maley (1989) provides a general classification of methods for teaching literature, distinguishing between "the study of literature" as a cultural artifact and "the use of literature as a resource for language learning." He explains that the former category can be divided into two approaches: 1. The critical literary approach: This approach focuses primarily on what Maley refers to as "the literariness of the texts we study" (Maley, 1989:10), including aspects like motivation, characterization, and background. It assumes that learners have a reasonable level of language proficiency and are familiar with literary terms and conventions. 2. The stylistic approach: This approach aims to uncover and interpret textual elements by describing and analysing the language used in a literary text.

Maley (1989) further emphasises that the critical literary approach, when applied in the EFL classroom, requires extensive linguistic preparation. While the stylistic approach may be more beneficial for language learning and teaching, it still largely depends on the learners' linguistic competence in the target language and does not necessarily advance language learning as much as needed.

The use of literature in language learning, exemplified by the incorporation of 'Where the Crawdads Sing', also promotes empathy and emotional intelligence. By engaging with the characters' experiences, emotions, and motivations, learners develop a deeper understanding of human psychology and social interactions. This emotional engagement with the text enhances the language learning experience, making it more personal, impactful, and memorable. In this regard, Ladousse-Porter (2001) suggests that, in addition to stimulating creativity and imagination, reading literature enhances the reader's emotional intelligence (EQ). This makes literature especially suitable for language classrooms, as the components of emotional intelligence - self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 1998), all play a crucial role in more effective language learning.

The novel 'Where the Crawdads Sing' offers a multifaceted resource for language acquisition in the EFL/ESP context. Its rich narrative and descriptive language provide an ideal platform for vocabulary expansion and reading comprehension skill enhancement. For ESP learners in fields like environmental science and law, the novel offers specialized vocabulary and contextualized learning opportunities. Beyond linguistic skills, the text serves as a conduit for cultural understanding, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence, making it an invaluable tool in the arsenal of language educators and learners alike. The novel transcends the traditional bounds of a literary work, becoming a bridge that connects language acquisition with broader educational goals and objectives.

Conclusion

In concluding this paper, it is essential to reiterate the fact that Delia Owens' "Where the Crawdads Sing" profoundly encapsulates the theme of voice, making it a crucial text for both ESP and EFL instruction. The novel highlights the journey of its protagonist, Kya, from a state of voiceless isolation to one of empowered self-expression. This transformation offers valuable insights for students, paralleling their own experiences in mastering a new language. Just as Kya discovers her voice amidst the challenges of her environment, English learners similarly navigate the complexities of expressing themselves in an unfamiliar linguistic landscape. Owens' nuanced portrayal of voice not only reflects the hurdles but also the victories inherent in the learning process, making "Where the Crawdads Sing" an exemplary literary work for exploring and understanding the multifaceted narratives of language learning and cultural integration.

Owens, a seasoned wildlife scientist herself, crafts the environment of the North Carolina marsh not merely as a backdrop, but as a pivotal character in the narrative. The marsh becomes synonymous with the novel's protagonist, Kya, and her trajectory from isolation to a fraught interaction with society. EFL learners can delve into descriptive passages, rich in flora and fauna lexicon, enabling vocabulary expansion while simultaneously fostering an appreciation for biodiversity. From a multicultural standpoint, these natural descriptions provide a canvas for learners to draw parallels with their indigenous ecosystems, promoting intercultural exchange and understanding.

Contrasting the unyielding constancy of nature, the human world in the novel is portrayed as mercurial, with laws and societal norms reflecting this fluctuating temperament. The courtroom drama ensuing in the latter part of the narrative provides an illustrative lesson on the subjectivity of truth, societal prejudices, and the malleability of the law. For EFL instruction, the courtroom scenes are a repository of legal lexicon and dialogue-based exercises. Moreover, they open avenues for discussions on justice systems across different cultures, thus inculcating a multicultural perspective.

"Language, at its core, is a vehicle for communicating ideas" (Lăpădat, 2023b:165) and Owens' narrative powerfully demonstrates how language and voice can bridge the gap between isolation and integration, both for the protagonist and for language learners. By navigating the intricate linguistic and cultural landscapes in "Where the Crawdads Sing," students gain a deeper understanding of the pivotal role language plays in human connection and societal participation. This underscores the novel's significance in EFL and ESP contexts, where mastering language is synonymous with finding one's voice and place in the world.

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APPROACHES TO COMIC LANGUAGE IN WORKPLACE DISCOURSE IN ESP CLASSES

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Abstract: *The article presents a few aspects related to comic language. In communication, comic language may be utilised for multiple purposes. Moreover, it may have interpersonal functions. In workplace situations, especially in spontaneous speech, not only intentional humour may appear, but also unintentional humour can be created. Humour uses similarity of linguistic forms (polysemy, homonymy) leading to ambiguity in the words or structures of language. Therefore, the double meaning utterances may reveal an alternative interpretation, characteristic to comic language.*

Keywords: *ESP; ambiguity; workplace discourse; pun; polysemy*

1. Introduction

In the context of this article, in order to examine comic language in workplace discourse in ESP classes, it is worthwhile to consider workplace as an important social context. Forms of workplace discourse vary from talks between co-workers to interactions in service encounters with lay-individuals, to international business communication (Koester, 2006:3). One important idea is that at workplace, co-workers may share a 'common workplace culture' (Homes, Stubbe, 2015: 2), that is "common assumptions, a common reference system, and use the same jargon or system of verbal shortcuts [...] extensive background knowledge and experiences" (idem). Moreover, participants in such a community of practice should be able to function in it and to observe its norms. Nevertheless, according to Holmes (2007: 118) humour was 10 times more frequent in meetings between friends than in talks between colleagues in the workplace.

A specific trait of the workplace discourse can be illustrated by the presence of "*special and particular constraints* on what one or both of the participants will treat as allowable contributions to the business at hand" (Koester, *op.cit.*:4). This means that workplace interactions may be asymmetrical as regards the roles of people in terms of initiating and controlling the conversation (*ib.*:5). Moreover, in the case of co-workers, more symmetry than asymmetry may be noticed in the spoken interaction because people share the same workplace culture. Nevertheless, in lay-professional encounters, due to the unawareness of a lay-person related to the workplace culture, there may be more asymmetry. Another aspect to consider is the natural language, which may be perceived as imprecise, creative, ambiguous, and vague. According to Blake (2007: x), in addition to entertainment, the comic, humorous language may perform functions such as rapport, ingratiating behaviour, reduce conflict, and soften criticism. Nonetheless, such language may lead to mockery, derision, stereotyping whenever utilised in a negative manner. In workplace discourse, it is mainly about the manner in which sounds, syllables, words, phrases, and sentences of natural language may be manipulated. This refers to intentionally or unintentionally generated comic language situations. Welcomes,

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introductions, launches, and openings are expected to have jokes included (Blake, *op. cit.*: 52). Furthermore, it appears that a cooperative style of humour is perceived as more feminine, whilst competitive humour is considered as more masculine in style, as Holmes (*op.cit.*:110) stated. This means that 'women's humour' is coded as feminine whereas 'men's humour' is regarded as a more masculine style of humour.

2. Aim

The aim of the article is to present aspects related to comic language in workplace discourse in ESP classes. It only offers a general overview and examples discovered during practical communicative activities with engineering undergraduates. The findings may add an important dimension as regards effective communication in ESP classes for non-native speakers of English.

3. Method and Material

Examples identified for examination were discovered during the development of ESP communicative activities for engineering undergraduates. At ESP classes, undergraduates utilised general dictionaries and thesauruses. Moreover, parallel texts were a handy tool to help to investigate the meaning in contexts. The term discourse was used for stretches of language longer than the sentence, specific to ways that conversation develops.

Therefore, communicative activities developed during ESP classes were meant to increase students' awareness as regards developing their communicative skills so that they should utilise them in international joint projects, contexts, workplaces, etc.

4. Procedures and Practice

The purpose of examining examples discovered whilst doing communicative activities with ESP students is to highlight the link between the plurality of interpretation of words and the context, which may generate ambiguity.

a. Assessing students' difficulties in communicative activities

Not all ESP students have a proficient command of the English language to perceive the ambiguity of words in contexts. This means that pronunciation mistakes or a poor vocabulary may be a hindrance for students. Additionally, the speaker's intention to generate a comic language situation remains a surprise for the addressee. Furthermore, ESL students ought to offer as much details as necessary to be able to convey a clear non-ambiguous message. Nonetheless, communication would become either tedious or all-consuming if too many details were offered in the communicative interaction.

b. Theoretical points of view and practice

The research in this article is focused on existing knowledge in the field of linguistics. From political satire to joking, humour may be considered as influential since it is a linguistical and social tool, which may establish friendships and exclude people from a group (Ross, 1998: xi). Moreover, there is a rich literature as regards the various forms and guises of comic language. For example, comic language situations may be based on puns. According to Delabastita (1993:70) "A necessary condition for pun perception is a context in which multiple and disparate meanings for the pun word are acceptable; the context must concern itself with certain matters if a pun is to be made on a certain word". This means that the appropriate context is key to a successful pun. Puns may be present in advertising, headlines, greeting cards, captions in newspapers and

magazines, in book titles. Puns can be based on a single word such as *eight / ate*, or may develop on phrases / sentences. For example, the sentence '*Many kings have reigned this country*' may sound unusual for a person with a poor command of the English language. The ambiguity comes from the misidentification of the word '*reigned*', a homonym of the word '*rained*' leading to a homophonic pun. Nevertheless, according to Blake (*op.cit.*: 3) there should be a *set-up* and a *punch* to generate humour in language. Furthermore, official, formal language may be perceived as stilted and unnatural leading to derision. An example such as *You may deplane the aircraft* instead of *You can get off the plane* addressed to passengers of a flight may seem unnatural, even humorous, in such an ordinary situation (*ib.*: 12).

It is worth mentioning that comic language may be noticed in the mispronunciation, misidentification, and misuse of words and phrases. Whilst talking, people are supposed to identify the words and the manner in which words fit together to be able to build a correct sequence of words. Some words may be rather ambiguous due to homonymy, either homophony (e.g. *piece/peace*) or homography (e.g. *bow*). Typically, polysemy is considered to relate "to the capacity of words to show different sides" and it should be viewed "as a catalyst for enriching languages" (Pennec, 2018: 25). In order to understand polysemy and homonymy, it is useful to address polysemy as the characteristic feature of a lexical unit to be linked to several *sememes*, one of the *semes* being common. In contrast, homonymy is characterized by different meanings, the corresponding *sememes* having no common *seme*. Nonetheless, "the morphological and acoustic kinship can also be a source of confusion when the context is not enough to select one meaning or another" (*ibidem*: 26). With different spellings and identical acoustic form, which is the case of homophones, there is misunderstanding, confusion, and ambiguity (*idem*).

As shown previously, polysemy and homonymy might generate ambiguity in a natural language context: "wordplay is based on the similarity of linguistic forms which is realised in an appropriate linguistic or nonlinguistic context" (Žyško, 2017: 7). Moreover, as Žyško states (*ib.*: 9), "the borderline between ambiguity and vagueness is fuzzy (not absolute), with polysemy as a halfway point between the two". This means that words such as *aunt in 'father's sister'* and *aunt in 'mother's sister'* could be viewed as ambiguous not as vague. As stated by Victorri and Fuchs (1996), polysemy is a central phenomenon in language being the rule not the exception. It can be found in all syntactical categories such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and, to a lesser degree in other grammatical words such as determiners, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions (Pennec, *op.cit.*: 25).

Additionally, *contrastive ambiguity* (homonymy) (Weinreich, 1964) and *complementary polysemy* (Pustejovsky, 1996: 27-28) may be identified during lexicon research. This means that words such as *bow* (in sports), *bow* (the front part of a ship), *bow* (bending one's head or body) exhibit contrastive polysemy (*idem*) and words such as *paper*, as in *reading a paper*, *writing a paper*, *giving a paper*, *making something out of paper* exhibit complementary polysemy. Nonetheless, complementary polysemy, may be used to describe how cross-categorical senses are related (*idem*).

Furthermore, theories of humour may be examined to identify traits of comic language in workplace discourse. One theory states that people laugh at the unexpected or incongruous (Ross, *op.cit.*: 7-25). The structural ambiguity theory may reveal the ambiguity of individual words or of the structure of English sentences utilised that is double meanings that may create comic language (Ross, *op. cit.*: 26-50). The superiority theory examines one's tendency to laugh when someone whom one despises is the target

(*ib.*: 51-71). Of the three theories, the first two will be considered relevant for the purpose of the present analysis.

c) Comic language exemplified

(i) Homophony

According to Erimida (2008: 52) "The multiple phonetic values that a single letter, or set of letters, can assume, as well as the variety of graphological representations that the same sound can have, pave the way not only for error but also for many sorts of play". This means that the discrepancy between pronunciation and spelling of English words may lead to humour either due to error or to ambiguity. Due to the fact that the English system of spelling is not based on representing each sound or phoneme with a distinct letter or symbol, the English language, is riched in homophones. Such words are pronounced alike, but are spelt differently, and have different meanings as the following examples:

E.g. *sore /saw, flour/flower, hole/whole, right/write/rite, paws/pause, buy/bye/by.*

Nonetheless, words such as *bear* (noun, *an animal*) / *bear* (verb, *to carry, to tolerate*) or *saw* (noun, *a tool used for cutting wood*) / *saw* (verb, *look at*) are homonyms that is homophones and homographs as the same time. The same is valid for the word *address* (noun and verb).

(ii) Polysemy

Many words have more than one meaning. Examples of complementary polysemes are provided by the phrases composed with words describing parts of the body such as *head of state, the back of your hand, the mouth of the volcano, and the foot of the page*. Moreover, words such as *plant* may be relevant examples:

E.g. *plant* (noun), meaning a living thing that grows in earth, in water, etc.; machines used in industry; a factory; a large machine used for building roads; something illegal or stolen put secretly among a persons' belongings to make them seem guilty of a crime;
plant (verb), meaning to put a plant into the ground or into a container; to put oneself or something firmly in a place; to cause an idea to exist; to put something or someone in a position secretly in order to deceive someone; to put a bomb somewhere in order to let it explode there, are relevant examples.

As regards contrastive polysemy, which deals with homonyms, the word *mole*, meaning an animal or a spy (a person *burrowing unseen* whilst searching for information within a company or organisation) may be a suitable example. Other relevant examples may be *match* (to pair things/ a stick for making a flame), *mean* (average/ not nice), *tender* (offer of money/gentle). Therefore, both contrastive polysemy (homonymy) which involves unrelated meanings and polysemy (complementary polysemy) which involves related meanings may generate ambiguity and comic language.

Such words can be used to construe comic language. By ambiguity in such words or the structure of language, incongruous humour is hidden within puns or gags. Moreover, comic language situations may present a conflict between what is expected and what actually occurs in the joke due to ambiguity and/or double meaning. This means that there should be elements of surprise, innovation, and rule-breaking. The speaker and the addressee should share the same set of conventions of language behaviour and cultural codes to communicate efficiently even by comic language.

(iii) Grammatical ambiguities

The examples below seem to be structurally similar since they differ only in the choice of the final noun that is a *swim/a drink/a fool*:

E.g. *I feel like a swim/drink* (idiom; to have a wish for something, or to want to do something); *I feel like a fool / It feels like rain* (to seem to be something, or to seem likely to do something).

Nevertheless, they are understood in rather different ways. The first could be paraphrased as 'I feel that I would like to go swimming' and the second as 'I feel that I would like to have a drink'. Moreover, the third example could be understood as 'I feel that I am like a fool'. The last example could mean 'It seems that it is going to rain soon'. The structural ambiguity present in the examples above is exploited to induce humour.

5. Conclusion

The present article focused on comic language in workplace discourse, presenting relevant aspects for ESP students. Moreover, the comic language was examined regarding mispronunciation, misidentification, and misuse of words and phrases. Being present as pun, joke, or satire, humour is a linguistical and social tool. Homophony, homonymy (contrastive ambiguity), polysemy (complementary polysemy) induce the potential to comic language. Additionally, examples in which sounds, syllables, words, phrases, and sentences of natural language may be manipulated in workplace discourse were examined. It was emphasised that during communication people need to identify the words used and the way these words fit the suitable place in a sequence to generate a correct meaning. In ESP classes, students should understand that a good command of the English language will be helpful in future communicative situations. Therefore, identifying comic language can be considered as part of an effective communication in future workplace situations in ESP classes for undergraduates.

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L'INTERCULTUREL DU POINT DE VUE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT PROFESSIONNEL, EN CLASSE DE FLE : UN DÉFI POUR LES ENSEIGNANTS ET POUR LES APPRENANTS

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Abstract: *Intercultural, from the point of view of professional education, represents a challenge, both for teachers and for learners, at the same time. We are preparing to interact on the European labor market, in the context of globalization. Thus, the subject of interculturality becomes very important and topical. The interaction and the dialogue of different generations and cultures is the challenge of today's society. Considering this context, a modern one, and also the migration on our continent, approaching culture becomes essential. How can we help our learners? How to respond to the challenges.*

Keywords: *intercultural; interaction; professional education*

Vers une définition de l'interculturalité

Pour pouvoir parler sur l'interculturel en général et dans l'enseignement professionnel, en spécial, on commence par essayer d'identifier la définition exacte de ce terme. Conformément au Petit Robert en ligne, l'interculturel, du point de vue didactique, est défini de la manière suivante : « il concerne les rapports, les échanges entre cultures, entre civilisations différentes ».

Dans la revue *Le français dans le monde*, le numéro 391, apparu en janvier- février 2014, à la page 26, on trouve un article qui pourrait nous aider à mieux comprendre « la notion d'interculturel ». Selon les auteurs de l'article, Paola Bertocchini et Edvige Costanzo, « *l'interculturel est avant tout une relation entre deux individus qui ont intériorisé une culture, à chaque fois unique* ». Ensuite, les mêmes auteurs font un tour de forces des définitions de l'interculturel à travers l'histoire. Ils considèrent que, dans les années 1980, la définition de l'interculturel « est encore mince ». C'est à ce moment là que le discours sur l'interculturel s'inscrivait dans le contexte interdisciplinaire, les auteurs citant, dans leur article, Martine Abdallah- Pretceille :

L'interculturel est l'interaction entre deux identités qui se donnent réciproquement sens, dans un contexte chaque fois à définir : l'interculturel est donc, avant tout, une relation entre deux individus qui ont intériorisé, dans leur subjectivité, une culture, à chaque fois unique, en fonction de leur âge, de leur sexe, de leur statut social et de leurs trajectoires personnelles.¹

En citant la même Martine Abdallah-Pretceille, les auteurs arrivent à la conclusion que si l'interculturel n'est qu'une « *intégration identitaire de soi par rapport à autrui* », alors, la négociation du sens devient négociation entre croyances, attitudes et significations².

Un autre point de vue sur l'interculturel et sur l'interculturalité est exprimé par l'Association Sitala Lilin'ba, qui base son projet sur l'échange interculturel. Selon cette

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¹ Paola Bertocchini, Edvige Costanzo, « La notion d'interculturel », janvier- février 2014, *Le français dans le monde*, no. 391, p. 26-27

² Idem

association « l’interculturel accorde une place plus importante à l’individu en tant que sujet qu’aux caractéristiques culturelles de l’individu ». ¹

Tenant compte du fait qu’une approche interculturelle est, dans son propre sens, une forme d’ouverture, on observe que les relations interculturelles font l’objet d’étude pour plusieurs disciplines ou sciences humaines et sociales comme par exemple la philosophie, la sociologie ou l’éducation. Ainsi, partant des définitions qu’on vient de présenter, on comprend comme il est important d’identifier la nécessité de l’interculturel dans la classe de FLE, au niveau de l’enseignement professionnel. Dans un monde qui porte devant nos yeux, chaque jour, la globalisation, un monde qui cherche des spécialistes dans de nombreux domaines de travail, en Europe et même sur d’autres continents, il devient essentiel de comprendre l’importance de l’interculturel à partir de l’école, de l’éducation. Pour s’intégrer, alors, sur un marché de travail européen, on doit comprendre les rapports qui peuvent s’établir entre les peuples impliqués. De plus, apprendre une langue étrangère et comprendre sa culture sont des avantages, des points forts dans l’éducation de chaque individu. Conscientiser ce fait montre, de manière claire et explicite, le niveau auquel un apprenant est arrivé dans son parcours d’apprentissage d’une langue étrangère et, plus exactement, du FLE.

L’interculturel dans la didactique des langues

*L’ensemble des connaissances, des habilités et des dispositions qui permettent d’agir*² définit, le plus simple, le terme de compétence, dans le Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues. Selon le même document, de la perspective actionnelle, les compétences sont classifiées en compétences générales individuelles et en compétence à communiquer langagièrement. Les compétences générales individuelles « reposent sur les savoirs, le savoir-faire et savoir-être qu’il (l’apprenant) possède, ainsi que sur ses savoir-apprendre ». ³ De l’autre part, « la compétence à communiquer langagièrement peut être considérée comme présentant plusieurs composantes : une composante linguistique, une composante sociolinguistique, une composante pragmatique. Chacune de ces composantes est posée comme constituée notamment de savoirs, d’habilités et de savoir-faire ». ⁴

Pour aller plus loin dans la compréhension de la notion de compétence interculturelle en didactique, on cherche, aussi, à définir, les notions de *multilinguisme* et de *plurilinguisme*.

On distingue le « plurilinguisme » du « multilinguisme » qui est la connaissance d’un certain nombre de langues ou la coexistence de langues différentes dans une société donnée. On peut arriver au multilinguisme simplement en diversifiant l’offre de langues dans une école ou un système éducatif donné, ou en encourageant les élèves à étudier plus d’une langue étrangère (...). ⁵

Par contre, le plurilinguisme met l’accent sur l’intégration de la langue étrangère apprise dans son être,

au fur et à mesure que l’expérience langagière d’un individu dans son contexte culturel s’étend de la langue familiale à celle du groupe social puis à celle d’autres groupes (...) il/ elle ne classe pas ces langues et ces cultures

¹ <https://sitala.org/sitala/ressources/linterculturel-cest-quoi/> consulté le 24 août 2024

² <https://rm.coe.int/16802fc3a8> consulté le 25 août 2024

³ Idem

⁴ Idem

⁵ Idem

dans des compartiments séparés mais construit plutôt une compétence communicative à laquelle les langues sont en corrélation et interagissent. ¹

L'interculturel dans Le Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues

La présence de l'interculturel dans l'enseignement du FLE, au niveau de l'école professionnelle comme point de départ pour le marché de travail européen n'est pas seulement très importante mais, on considère, plutôt très utile. Il faut, avant tout, comprendre et s'adapter dans un monde tout nouveau, dans les cadres tout différents qu'on trouve dans les autres cultures.

Le Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues définit, au sens didactique, large et très explicite, l'interculturel :

Dans une approche interculturelle, un objectif essentiel de l'enseignement de langues est de favoriser le développement harmonieux de la personnalité de l'apprenant et de son identité en réponse à l'expérience enrichissante de l'altérité en matière de langue et de culture. Il revient aux enseignants et aux apprenants eux-mêmes de construire une personnalité saine et équilibrée à partir des éléments variés qui la composeront. ²

On comprend, donc que la prise de conscience interculturelle est le résultat de la compréhension des relations entre le monde « d'où l'on vient » et le monde « cible ». Ce résultat est très complexe car il implique l'optique de chacun sur autrui, parfois stéréotypique, il implique la compréhension de la diversité régionale, mais aussi sociale de ces deux mondes, et, pourquoi pas, la subjectivité.

Dans ce contexte on peut remarquer que *Le Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues* traite la grande complexité langagière en fonction de toutes ses composantes. C'est pourquoi il met au centre de la communication l'être humain. Alors, l'être humain dont on parle, établit chaque jour, des relations sociales qui offrent à l'interculturel une importance essentielle pour l'enseignement des langues étrangères en général. En particulier, on souligne le fait que le même être humain maintient des relations harmonieuses avec les autres individus, toujours grâce à l'interculturel qui participe à l'enrichissement personnel, individuel.

Le même *Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues* propose la mise en forme des expériences interculturelles et d'apprentissage des langues à travers un Portefeuille. Celui-ci peut devenir un outil qui pourrait faciliter l'évaluation du progrès personnel de chacun et permettre la description des niveaux atteints.

Les savoir faire interculturels impliquent, selon *le Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues*, d'abord, la capacité d'établir des relations entre deux cultures : celle d'origine et celle étrangère et ensuite, la capacité de reconnaître et d'utiliser des moyens différents et variés pour établir le contact avec les gens de l'autre culture.

Au niveau de l'Union Européenne on peut observer que les peuples semblent partager une culture commune. Il y a aussi des exceptions notables de nature archaïque ou folklorique.

En partant de la base mise à jour dans le document mentionné, nous cherchons le moyen le plus accessible aux apprenants de s'approcher de la culture de la langue étrangère du pays où ils peuvent, un beau jour, accéder pour travailler.

Les notions d'interculturel, de multiculturel ou pluriculturel ont été étudiées aussi par d'autres linguistes et professeurs émérites, comme Christian Puren, selon lequel,

¹ <https://rm.coe.int/16802fc3a8> consulté le 25 août 2024

² Idem

« l’interculturel et le pluriculturel ne peuvent être que deux composantes différentes de cette compétence culturelle générale ». Nous trouvons cette idée dans son article publié en « Préambule » de le Hors-série de la revue Savoirs et Formations no : 3. On apporte en discussion, à ce moment-là, la grande complexité de l’ensemble des termes. Faire des liens et des comparaisons, à chaque pas dans le processus de l’enseignement du FLE, entre les deux cultures, en impliquant, en même temps, la composante globale, pourrait être une solution, une idée pour l’approche des apprenants à la culture. L’approche à la culture, ou à l’interculturel, doit se dérouler à l’inverse. On ne commence pas avec les faits historiques, on commence par les faits de l’époque moderne et on arrive, vers la fin, au début, au point où la culture de ces deux peuples, roumain et français, ont commencé d’avoir des liens communs. Les générations de ce siècle sont conduites par la composante digitale ou informatique. Alors, tenant compte de ce détail, on traverse ensemble la définition que Puren a donné à l’interculturel :

Capacité à gérer les phénomènes de contact entre cultures différentes lorsque l’on communique avec des étrangers dans le cadre des rencontres ponctuelles, d’échanges, de voyages ou de séjours touristiques, en particulière en repérant les incompréhensions causées par ses représentations préalables de la culture de l’autre, et les mécompréhensions causées par les interprétations faites sur la base de son propre référentiel culturel. ¹

La définition donnée par C. Puren est très pertinente et nous offre la possibilité de choisir les activités de références qu’on considère les plus proches du résultat qu’on veut obtenir, c’est-à-dire l’activité de référence langagière-communiquer, et l’activité de référence culturelle-découvrir ou rencontrer. Il est aussi important de préciser le fait que si l’on se trouve au sein de la même société, les contacts, dans le domaine de l’interculturel, peuvent produire des phénomènes de métissage, situation qui nous porte dans le pluriculturel.

L’enseignement professionnel, en Roumanie, un pays en plein épanouissement du point de vue de la formation des futurs spécialistes pour le marché du travail, donne de l’importance à la formation culturelle des jeunes. Nous sommes tous conscients du fait qu’il est très important de maîtriser une langue étrangère, en spécial la langue française. A l’insertion des jeunes sur le marché du travail européen et français, plus exactement, comprendre et parler le français est une des conditions de leur réussite. On parle de la possibilité ou de la chance de devenir autonome, comme futur adulte, et de se débrouiller dans la communication dans une langue étrangère.

En Roumanie, l’enseignement professionnel se déroule dans des lycées, où, comme au collège, il est très important de maintenir vifs tous les objectifs, linguistiques, culturels et interculturels en même temps. La manière de communiquer en classe de langue peut nous mener vers les solutions qu’on essaye de trouver. Pour tenir nos apprenants proches à l’acte didactique, dans l’époque moderne, la communication doit se dérouler sur tous les plans, horizontaux et verticaux. Il faut combiner toutes les composantes : linguistique, discursive, référentielle et socioculturelle.

Dans les programmes scolaires de l’enseignement professionnel roumain la compétence interculturelle est présentée sous la forme des valeurs et des attitudes sociales et civiques, pour les premières années d’étude. Pour la troisième année d’étude du FLE, nous observons que le développement de la compétence culturelle devient plus présent à

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https://lewebpedagogique.com/alterite/files/2015/10/PUREN_2013c_Comp%C3%A9tence_culturelle_composantes.pdf consulté le 2 décembre 2023

travers le vocabulaire des métiers. L'élève doit devenir capable de communiquer de manière consciente dans son domaine professionnel. Il peut interagir avec autrui, dans la langue cible, peut comprendre et il peut aussi transmettre un ou son message.

D'un autre côté on trouve le sujet lancé, pour la lecture, par Michaël Byram dans son livre *Culture et éducation en langue étrangère « L'enseignement des langues étrangères dans une société multi-ethnique »*. L'Europe actuelle se présente devant nous comme un seul pays, un pays multi-ethnique, qui fait des efforts pour développer une politique d'éducation multiculturelle. C'est le motif principal pour lequel il faut comprendre la nécessité de l'insertion du socio-culturel dans le processus d'enseignement du FLE. L'étude de la culture est un pas très important dans la formation générale des apprenants. Il faut arriver au point où l'apprenant intériorise la culture qu'on présente devant lui, comme partie de la totalité de son être, pendant plusieurs années.

Conclusions

La nécessité de formation dans le domaine des langues étrangères et de la langue française en spécial, en Europe, augmente chaque jour. Dans une société multi-ethnique le besoin de comprendre et de s'adapter aux plusieurs cultures, est partie composante de notre vie. Elle fait référence à l'environnement culturel, social et même politique.

On découvre, d'une manière très intéressante, la culture du peuple vers lequel on se dirige, on passe au-delà des stéréotypées, on accède à « l'autre » et on l'accepte dans toute sa beauté, dans son cadre spécifique, unique et personnel.

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<https://rm.coe.int/16802fc3a8> consulté le 25 août 2024

PLAGIARISM BETWEEN FRAUD AND ARTISTIC PRACTICE

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Abstract: *This paper aims to develop a nuanced understanding of plagiarism, exploring it from two apparently opposite perspectives: as a form of intellectual fraud and as an artistic practice. By intertwining ethical and aesthetic theories, the study addresses the complexities related to plagiarism in different contexts, from the academic space and the professional world to the artistic sphere. It investigates how plagiarism as fraud undermines integrity and authenticity in academic and professional environments, but also how, in certain artistic contexts, the act of copying or “remixing” can be seen as a form of creative expression. The paper concludes with a discussion that highlights the grey areas and inherent ambiguities in the assessment of plagiarism, arguing for a contextual and nuanced approach to this complex phenomenon.*

Keywords: *plagiarism; intellectual fraud; artistic practice; authenticity; creative expression; academic integrity*

Plagiarism, often defined as the inappropriate appropriation of another person’s work as if it were one’s own, is a complex field of research, rich in meanings and involved in a series of tense debates within the academic and artistic community. The act of “borrowing” or “copying” has, throughout history, been subject to various interpretations and valuations, oscillating between moral and legal censorship and a more permissive approach, associated with notions such as “intertextuality”, “referentiality” or “homage”. This nuance is anchored in the differences between the fields of application of the concept, each with its own ethics, aesthetics and codes of conduct.

In the academic environment, plagiarism is clearly designated as a violation of ethical and academic standards, questioning the scientific integrity and rigour of research (Löfström, Huotari *et alii*, 2017:278). In this context, strict policies and advanced technological tools are used to detect and sanction any form of plagiarism. On the other hand, in the artistic field, which highly values creativity and expressiveness (at the expense of methodological and ethical rigour), plagiarism can be subjected to a more complex analysis. Here, artistic “borrowing” can be seen not only as an ethical violation, but also as a means of developing and expanding an art form, or even paying homage to it. This duality places plagiarism in a tense space between ethics and aesthetics, between integrity and creativity.

A research topic with deep ethical, legal and cultural implications, plagiarism represents a phenomenon with multiple ramifications in different fields of knowledge and creation. Although the subject has been frequently addressed in specialized literature, significant aspects remain unexplored, especially regarding the complex relationship between plagiarism as a form of academic fraud and as an artistic practice. In this context, the justification for approaching this subject in an academic framework becomes imminent, both from a theoretical and from an applicative perspective.

In an academic landscape dominated by an exponential growth of information and dissemination methods, integrity and originality become essential currencies. Various studies have investigated plagiarism in the academic sphere, but rarely has the transition been made to analyse it in the artistic context. In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, where the barriers between cultures and disciplines become more

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and more fluid, the understanding of plagiarism cannot be limited to a single sphere of activity. In the academic environment, strict ethics policies and sophisticated plagiarism detection tools have been implemented. In contrast, the artistic field remains a less regulated field, where the notions of “imitation”, “inspiration” and “reproduction” are often ambiguous and permissive. However,

“plagiarism is, then, a failure of the creative process, not a flaw in its result. Although imitation is an inevitable component of creation, plagiarists pass beyond the boundaries of acceptable imitation by copying from the work of others without improving on the copied material or fully assimilating it into their own work; by failing to attribute the copied material to its actual author; and by intending to deceive others about its origin” (Stearns, 1999:7).

Plagiarism is a complex concept, with multiple interpretations, which varies depending on the cultural, academic or artistic context in which it is applied (Husain, Kamel *et alii*, 2017:168).

The term “plagiarized” comes from the Latin “*plagium*”, which refers to the act of kidnapping or stealing. In the modern sense, plagiarism refers to stealing ideas, texts or research results and presenting them as if they were one’s own (Park, 2003:472). However, the definition and meaning of the term have undergone significant changes over time, adapting to the ever-changing cultural and academic norms. The first to use the term *plagiarism* in today’s sense is Ben Jonson (1572–1637) in 1601¹, for it to be later on, in 1755, mentioned for the first time in a dictionary (Mallon, 1989:6, 11).

In the academic environment, plagiarism is clearly designated as a violation of ethical and academic standards, frequently associated with severe sanctions (Şercan, 2017:21). This includes not only the verbatim appropriation of texts, but also incorrect paraphrasing, omission of citation of sources or self-plagiarism. In an academic context, plagiarism is a form of fraudulent behaviour, along with falsifying data or manipulating results.

In the artistic field, plagiarism is often treated with greater ambiguity. Sometimes, it is seen as an act of creative borrowing, a form of dialogue between works and authors. In other cases, it is considered a copyright infringement, with legal and ethical implications.

One of the most problematic aspects in defining plagiarism is the ambiguity and subjectivity that accompany it. While in academia there is a relatively broad consensus on what constitutes plagiarism, in the artistic realm the lines are often more blurred. This leads to ethical and methodological dilemmas in the attempt to evaluate and sanction such behaviours.

The historical understanding of plagiarism requires a broader and contextual approach. This allows the development of a multidimensional perspective, analysing how the perception and assessment of plagiarism have changed over time, in various fields of activity and knowledge:

¹ The first use of the term plagiarism with the meaning of literary theft can be found in Marcus Valerius Martialis, in his *Epigrams*: “Quintianus, I commend you my little books - that is, however, if I can call them mine when your poet friend recites them. If they complain of harsh enslavement, come forward to claim their freedom and give bail as required. And when he calls himself their owner, say they are mine, discharged from my hand. If you shout this three or four times, you will make the kidnapper [plagiarist] ashamed of himself.” – Martial, *Epigrams*, Edited and translated by DR Shackleton Bailey, Volume I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, 1993, p. 78-80

“The figure of the modern author, together with the copyright laws reifying that figure, assumed importance three centuries ago and have been energetically developed ever since. The figure of the plagiarist and the institutional and pedagogical policies outlawing his or her activities are innovations of the 19th and 20th centuries” (Howar, 1999:96).

In ancient times, the concept of authorship and intellectual property was much different from the modern one¹. Texts were often considered the property of the community and were transmitted orally or copied by hand. In the Middle Ages, within religious and philosophical writings, the practice of quoting or even borrowing texts was common, without considering this an act of plagiarism.

“Plagiarism cannot be disentangled from authorship; both deal with issues of authority grounded in a specific cultural and historical moment [...] Plagiarism as we know it is a late product of a social formation process. Early in social formation, plagiarism is simply not a preeminent concern. In fact, it is because plagiarism is secondary that a social formation can develop the energy to construct and to articulate its identity” (Zebroski, 1999:34).

As the culture of writing and printing began to develop, so did the modern concept of the author and, implicitly, the notion of copyright. During the Renaissance, imitation and adaptation of texts were considered legitimate methods of learning and creation. However, during the Enlightenment period, the concept of originality was introduced as the supreme value in intellectual creation, which led to a reinterpretation of plagiarism as an ethical and legal crime (Swearingen, 1999:20).

In the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, with the proliferation of higher education and academic publications, plagiarism became a hot topic, associated with fraud and lack of ethics (Socaciu, Vică *et alii*, 2018:109). Academic institutions have implemented strict policies and advanced technologies to detect and sanction plagiarism.

On the other hand, in the artistic field, plagiarism was often treated with more indulgence or even considered a form of flattery. However, in the digital age, with the ease of access to works of art and text, debates regarding copyright and plagiarism in art have gained new momentum (Lessig, 2004:136).

It should be noted that the perception of plagiarism is not universal, being influenced by the cultural and legal context. In some cultures, the concept of individual ownership of ideas is much less emphasized, which influences the way in which plagiarism is perceived and sanctioned.

Ethical theories and plagiarism

Within deontological ethics, the emphasis is on moral duty and compliance with ethical rules (Aslam, Moraru *et alii*, 2018:49). From this perspective, plagiarism is a clear violation of rules and norms, including legal and academic ones, and is therefore unacceptable. Not only does it violate academic norms, but it also undermines trust in the institutional framework, which makes it a profoundly unethical act.

From the perspective of utilitarian ethics, the moral value of an action is determined by its consequences (Aslam, Moraru *et alii*, 2018:54). Within this paradigm, plagiarism can be evaluated in terms of the harm produced: if the act of plagiarism leads

¹ The modern age is an age of property: “We live in a world that celebrates «property»” - Lawrence Lessig, *Free culture: how big media uses technology and the law to lock down culture and control creativity*, The Penguin Press, New York, 2004, p. 28

to negative effects such as eroding trust in institutions, discouraging innovation and violating copyright, then it is considered unethical.

Virtue ethical theory emphasizes moral character and individual virtues (Aslam, Moraru *et alii*, 2018:45). Plagiarism, in this context, is seen as an indicator of a flawed character, which overshadows academic virtues such as honesty, integrity and excellence.

The ethics of rights, focused on the fundamental rights of individuals, provides a legal perspective on plagiarism:

“Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought [...] For us the primary subject of justice is the basic structure of society, or more exactly, the way in which the major social institutions distribute fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages from social cooperation.” (Rawls, 1999:3, 6).

Starting from this point of view, plagiarism violates the author’s right to the recognition of his work and contributions, and therefore is unacceptable from an ethical point of view.

In a relativistic approach, ethical values are not universal, but depend on the specific cultural context:

“We must, in short, descend into detail, past the misleading tags, past the metaphysical types, past the empty similarities to grasp firmly the essential character of not only the various cultures but the various sorts of individuals within each culture, if we wish to encounter humanity face to face” (Geertz, 1973:53).

Here, plagiarism must also be evaluated according to the cultural and ethical norms of different communities and traditions, which can lead to different ethical evaluations.

Therefore, ethical discussions regarding plagiarism cannot be reduced to simplifications or generalizations, but rather require a careful and nuanced assessment that must take into account its multiple dimensions and implications.

Aesthetic theories regarding plagiarism

When talking about plagiarism in the artistic and aesthetic context, the discussion often becomes more nuanced and complex than in the case of ethical or legal analysis. Considering plagiarism from an aesthetic perspective involves evaluating it as a form of artistic expression, considering its relationship with originality, imitation and creativity.

The concept of originality has often been elevated to the rank of dogma in modern and postmodern artistic discourse. For Kant, “True creation is spontaneous and comes from a kind of play of the soul’s faculties trained by the aesthetic spirit. This is, in fact, the definition of originality because creation according to the rule would not be original, but would be reproduction, imitation of something already produced. However, for Kant, imitation is the complete opposite of genius” (Aslam, Moraru, 2017b:73). Nonetheless, art has always had a complicated relationship with imitation and adaptation. In antiquity and in the medieval period, masters taught their apprentices by imitating previous works, and this process was considered not only legitimate, but also necessary. On the other hand,

“the basic fact must be remembered that “imitating tradition”, a permanent ideal of the Renaissance, means “creation according to the model”. The term “imitation” in the Renaissance does not have the pejorative meaning of a worthless “copy”, which imitates the original, as we call it today. On the other hand, “imitation” does not even have the ontological connotations of Platonism, of sensitive copies of the intelligible world. In the Renaissance, the word «imitation» is synonymous with

«creation». Imitation after the model was considered the highest form of creation. Therefore, the canon of the idea of “creation” in the Renaissance is “imitation” (Aslam, Moraru, 2017a:181).

Postmodern theory brings into discussion the notion of intertextuality, according to which any text is a “weaving” of other texts, whether this relationship is explicitly recognized or not. Thus, the subject of plagiarism becomes more nuanced, involving an exploration of the boundaries between “copying” and “creation” in an era where the lines between them are often blurred.

The aesthetic theory of reception suggests that the meaning and value of a work of art are co-created by the artist and the audience:

“The perspective of the aesthetics of reception mediates between passive reception and active understanding, experience formative of norms, and new production. If the history of literature is viewed in this way within the horizon of a dialogue between work and audience that forms a continuity, the opposition between its aesthetic and its historical aspects is also continually mediated” (Jauss, 1982:19).

In this light, an act of plagiarism can be reinterpreted as a collaborative act between different generations of artists and their audience, although this does not exempt the act from ethical or legal implications.

Contrary to the theories that consider originality and authenticity as unrealistic ideals, some theorists maintain that these remain central values in the evaluation of the work of art: “Authenticity involves originality, it demands a revolt against convention” (Taylor, 1991:65). In this perspective, plagiarism undermines the intrinsic value of the work, regardless of its ethical or legal implications.

The aesthetics of plagiarism raises fundamental questions about the nature of art, creativity and originality. Approaches vary from those who see plagiarism as a form of flattery and a tribute to previous masters, to those who consider it an act that undermines the integrity and value of the work of art. As with ethical analysis, there is no simple or universal answer, but rather a series of perspectives that contribute to a nuanced and complex understanding of the phenomenon. In this direction, the aesthetic approach offers an additional and essential analysis framework for understanding plagiarism in all its complexities and contradictions.

Plagiarism as fraud

In any academic or institutional discussion, plagiarism is almost unanimously considered a form of intellectual fraud. It is an act that involves representing the work of another person as one’s own, with the aim of obtaining an unjustified advantage, whether we are talking about grades, publications or professional recognition.

On the legal level, plagiarism as fraud involves the violation of copyright and is sanctioned by the specific legislation in force. Depending on the jurisdiction, the consequences can range from monetary fines to the withdrawal of academic titles (Şercan, 2017:53-55).

From an ethical point of view, the act of plagiarism is considered a violation of fundamental academic and professional norms, such as honesty, integrity and responsibility. This has the effect of eroding trust in institutions and in the knowledge system in general.

From a social perspective, plagiarism as fraud has a negative impact both on those who commit the act and on the wider community. It is a behaviour that discourages

innovation and creativity, because it undermines the values of excellence and meritocracy (Socaciu, Vică *et alii*, 2018:117).

In the academic environment, plagiarism has serious consequences for both students and teachers. Not only can it lead to the withdrawal or cancellation of publications, but it can also affect one's academic reputation and career.

It is essential to mention that the ethical and legal aspects of plagiarism are closely related, but not identical. In some cases, an act can be legal, but ethically questionable, and vice versa. An example of this would be cases of "self-plagiarism", where the author uses his own previous works without proper citation. This is a controversial subject in academia, with arguments for and against (Andreescu, 2013:795-796).

Plagiarism, although widely considered fraud in many spheres of human activity, has also been the subject of a series of criticisms and controversies. These discussions often stem from ambiguities in the definition of plagiarism, the context in which it occurs, and the historical fluctuations of norms and values related to intellectual property.

One of the most prominent criticisms of the concept of plagiarism as fraud comes from cultural relativism. In some cultures, the concept of "ownership" of an idea or a text is less rigorously defined, which raises questions about the applicability of Western norms in a globalized context.

In academia, some voices argue that accusations of plagiarism can often be the result of a misunderstanding or ignorance on the part of students about the norms of citation and referencing (Socaciu, Vică *et alii*, 2018:111). In this context, it is argued that education, rather than sanctioning, should be the preferred approach.

Another area of controversy concerns the role of intent in defining plagiarism. Some academics and ethical codes insist that plagiarism involves a deliberate intention to deceive (Socaciu, Vică *et alii*, 2018:111). However, this approach is criticized for its potential to exonerate acts of inappropriate reuse of the text if a lack of intent can be demonstrated.

The critical analysis of the concept of plagiarism as fraud reveals a wide spectrum of opinions, some contesting its ethical or legal foundation, others directed towards pedagogical approaches or defining criteria. These criticisms and controversies show that, despite its appearance of clarity, plagiarism is a concept full of ambiguities and subtleties that invite a more careful and nuanced examination.

Plagiarism as an artistic practice

While widely denounced in the academic and legal fields, plagiarism takes on a special significance and complexity in the world of art. Here, the boundaries between originality and imitation, between innovation and replication, become unexpectedly fluid.

In literary and artistic studies, the concept of intertextuality suggests that all texts and works of art are, in one way or another, connected:

"Hence the horizontal axis (subject-addressee) and vertical axis (text-context) coincide, bringing to light an important fact: each word (text) is an intersection of word (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read. In Bakhtin's work, these two axes, which he calls dialogue and ambivalence, are not clearly distinguished. Yet, what appears as a lack of rigor is in fact an insight first introduced into literary theory by Bakhtin: any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of

intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double” (Kristeva, 1980:66).

This constant flow of influences and references questions the notion of absolute originality and encourages a more nuanced interpretation of what might constitute plagiarism in an artistic context.

In many artistic cultures, practices of allusion, homage or appropriation are not only accepted, but also celebrated (Stallabrass, 1999:131). This is a context in which aesthetic or conceptual elements can be borrowed or re-contextualized not to deceive, but to bring new levels of meaning or to criticize, parody or honour previous works.

In postmodern aesthetics, the idea that art can and must be completely original is sometimes rejected: Fredric Jameson indicates originality as a “suspicious concept” (Jameson, 1991: 397). Instead, re-contextualization and remixing are seen as valid means of artistic expression, bringing into question the limits of what can be defined as plagiarism in such a setting.

Thus, plagiarism as an artistic practice cannot be effectively analysed without taking into account a number of factors including intention, context and reception. In a world where the lines between original and derivative are constantly re-evaluated and reconfigured, a multidimensional analysis is essential to understand the complexities of plagiarism in the artistic field.

Approaching plagiarism as an artistic practice requires a much more nuanced analytical framework than the ethical-legal one, facilitating the opening to a set of theoretical and aesthetic justifications. These range from theories of intertextuality to philosophies of postmodernism and to studies of remixing and re-contextualization.

In the work of Julia Kristeva, intertextuality serves as a theoretical justification for borrowing and referencing activities in art:

“The text is therefore productivity, and this means: first, that its relationship to the language in which it is situated is redistributive (destructive-constructive), and hence can be better approached through logical categories rather than linguistic ones; and second, that it is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality: in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another” (Kristeva, 1980: 66).

Here, the text is not an isolated entity, but a node in a network of interconnected texts. Through this lens, plagiarism becomes not only tolerable, but inevitable in a sense.

Fredric Jameson and other theorists of postmodernism have brought arguments that support that in the postmodern era, the notion of originality is unclear and often irrelevant (Jameson, 1991:397). In this vision, art becomes a form of “collage” in which pre-existing elements are reassembled in new configurations, thus becoming significant through re-contextualization.

Lawrence Lessig argued for a more liberal approach to copyright, arguing that “remixing” is an essential form of artistic expression in the digital age:

“The charge I’ve been making about the regulation of culture is the same charge free marketers make about regulating markets. Everyone, of course, concedes that some regulation of markets is necessary – at a minimum, we need rules of property and contract, and courts to enforce both. Likewise, in this culture debate, everyone concedes that at least some framework of copyright is also required. But both perspectives vehemently insist that just because some regulation is good, it doesn’t follow that more regulation is better. And both perspectives are constantly attuned

to the ways in which regulation simply enables the powerful industries of today to protect themselves against the competitors of tomorrow” (Lessing, 2004: 188).

Thus, the concept of plagiarism is problematic in a context where reassembly and reinterpretation are the order of the day.

In a world where *copy-paste practices* are technologically ubiquitous, an aesthetic justification can be found in the process of “authentication”. Here, “originality” does not come from creating anew, but from the way pre-existing elements are arranged and reinterpreted:

“Culture is a stake which, like all social stakes, simultaneously presupposes and demands that one take part in the game and be taken in by it; and interest in culture, without which there is no race, no competition, is produced by the very race and competition which it produces. The value of culture, the supreme fetish, is generated in the initial investment implied by the mere fact of entering the game, joining in the collective belief in the value of the game which makes the game and endlessly remakes the competition for the stakes. The opposition between the 'authentic' and the 'imitation', 'true' culture and 'popularization', which maintains the game by maintaining belief in the absolute value of the stake, conceals a collusion that is no less indispensable to the production and reproduction of the illusion, the fundamental recognition of the cultural game and its stakes” (Bourdieu, 1984: 250).

Plagiarism between fraud and artistic practice

An exhaustive perspective on plagiarism as a phenomenon requires a thorough examination of the ways in which it is understood, justified or criticized. Comparing and contrasting the perspective that considers plagiarism a fraud with the one that sees it as an artistic practice adds critical nuances in understanding the complexity of this subject.

From the perspective of plagiarism as fraud, the author and the originality of his work represent the ethical and legal core of the discourse. This perspective strongly contrasts with the postmodern one, which, citing theorists like Michel Foucault, questions the very concept of “author” and originality:

“The process of writing escapes the designation of its creator. No one can become entirely determinant or sole instigator of a thought [...] «Absence is the first premise of discourse» (Foucault 1969:75). This idea is present throughout Foucault’s inspiration. It marks out its course and more particularly, it guides his criticism of authority. Consequently, it criticizes intellectual property, as constantly claimed on texts during the cultural movement of the eighteenth century” (Larochelle, 1999:125).

From the ethical and legal perspective, the aesthetic value of a work of art is closely related to the originality and the unique contribution of the author. In contrast, the postmodern vision considers aesthetic values as fluid and contingent, dependent on the context and the dialogue with other works of art: “The matter grows more complicated, however, when we realize that none of these elements or new cultural signs or logos exists in isolation; the videotext itself is at virtually all moments a process of ceaseless, apparently random, interaction between them” (Jameson, 1991:85).

Another major point of contrast is how each perspective relates to the law. While the traditional view emphasizes the importance of copyright laws as a means of protecting originality, the artistic perspective often argues that such restrictions can inhibit creativity and freedom of expression:

“The focus of the law was on commercial creativity. At first slightly, then quite extensively, the law protected the incentives of creators by granting them exclusive rights to their creative work, so that they could sell those exclusive rights in a commercial marketplace [...] This rough divide between the free and the controlled has now been erased [...] The consequence is that we are less and less a free culture, more and more a permission culture. This change gets justified as necessary to protect commercial creativity. And indeed, protectionism is precisely its motivation. But the protectionism that justifies the changes that I will describe below is not the limited and balanced sort that has defined the law in the past. This is not a protectionism to protect artists. It is instead a protectionism to protect certain forms of business” (Lessing, 2004:8-9).

The ethical perspective gives considerable emphasis to the ethical gravity of plagiarism, seen as an act of fraud and dishonesty. In opposition, the postmodern one sees culture as a playground of meanings and fluid identities, where fixed borders become problematic.

In the academic dialogue about plagiarism, one can observe the presence of “grey areas” and ambiguities that cannot be easily placed in the rigid categories of “fraud” or “artistic practice”. Examining these aspects adds an additional layer of complexity and nuance to the debates on this topic.

A first example is the re-contextualization of a work, a situation in which the original work is used in a way that changes its meaning or interpretation. Thus, re-contextualization calls into question the ethical principles of authorship and originality, without necessarily falling into a practice of fraud or deliberate artistic representation:

“Such experiments thrive within convergence culture, which creates a context where viewers – individually and collectively – can reshape and recontextualize mass-media content [...] As we have seen across the book, convergence culture is highly generative: some ideas spread top down, starting with commercial media and being adopted and appropriated by a range of different publics as they spread outward across the culture. Others emerge bottom up from various sites of participatory culture and getting pulled into the mainstream if the media industries see some way of profiting from it. The power of the grassroots media is that it diversifies; the power of broadcast media is that it amplifies. That’s why we should be concerned with the flow between the two: expanding the potentials for participation represents the greatest opportunity for cultural diversity. Throw away the powers of broadcasting and one has only cultural fragmentation. The power of participation comes not from destroying commercial culture but from writing over it, mudding it, amending it, expanding it, adding greater diversity of perspective, and then recirculating it, feeding it back into the mainstream media” (Jenkins, 2006:257).

In the academic environment, the correct citation of sources is an essential practice. However, there are cases where the line between citation and plagiarism can become blurred, especially when paraphrasing is used. The difficulty in differentiating between the two points to an inherent ambiguity in the way authorship practices are understood and regulated (Şercan, 2017:31).

Another grey area is plagiarism as a form of homage or tribute to an earlier work. In some cases, artists use elements of other artists’ works as a way to celebrate them and enter into a dialogue with them. In these situations, the intention is not to defraud, but to employ an artistic discourse that is, at the same time, an act of recognition and continuation of a tradition:

“As an artist, you may very well copy other artists’ works, as appropriation art has demonstrated. This is because appropriation art is another style, however contradictory it may sound. Appropriation is a double signing –“a Walker Evans by Sherrie Levine” or “a Warhol by Sturtevant” – and articulates a different artistic enunciation than the work appropriated, even if the works in question are aesthetically or physically indiscernible” (Bäcklund, 2016:212).

In the context of contemporary art and digital culture, collaborations between different artists and creators are frequent. In such cases, the delimitation of copyright becomes complex and brings into question who, exactly, is the “original” author and how much each contributed to the final creation: “Some of the contributions by the other musicians may well have been original contributions to a complex work of joint authorship, but they were not credited and not registered at the Copyright Office as was required by the law at that time; by consequence any claim to a copyright in such elements would be void” (Ortland, 2016:234).

Grey areas and ambiguities in the interpretation and evaluation of plagiarism bring to the surface the limits of the binary categories of “fraud” and “artistic practice”. They invite a reconsideration of how we conceive of authority, originality and copyright in a constantly changing cultural and technological landscape. Thus, not only do these aspects add nuance to the understanding of plagiarism, but they also signal the need to reformulate the ethical and legal frameworks in a world where the boundaries between the author and the reader, between the original and the copy, are becoming more and more permeable: “Although plagiarism and copyright are conceptually distinct matters, where there is a legal dispute, plagiarism is often treated by the public as an ethical (or aesthetic, or cultural) wrong that may justify legal intervention” (Oels, 2016:174).

A crucial aspect in the evaluation of plagiarism, which transcends the simplified division between “fraud” and “artistic practice”, is the role that context and intention play in the interpretation of this phenomenon. This invites a level of analysis that cannot be reduced to simple binaries, providing a platform for sophisticated academic discussions and the development of new theories and models.

In a number of situations, the context in which plagiarism occurs can significantly change its assessment. For example, in the academic environment, where integrity standards and ethical rigors are strictly defined, any violation of plagiarism norms is often viewed as an act of severe fraud. In contrast, in artistic spaces, where experimentation and re-contextualization are more tolerant, the same actions can be interpreted as innovations or as evolutions of the artistic discourse.

Intention is another critical aspect in the assessment of plagiarism (Şercan, 2017:26-27). In the artistic field, however, the intention to challenge or question the concept of originality can make plagiarism a deliberate and artistically significant act.

Context and intent are not just individual factors, but often interact in complex ways. In some cases, context can influence the interpretation of intention, and vice versa. An artist can use elements of plagiarism with the intention of criticizing copyright norms, but the context in which this act is received can either emphasize his critical intention or completely undermine it: “Artworks have always been copied. Why they are copied—to what purpose and with what intentions—makes all the difference as to whether we judge the copying of them to be legitimate or illegitimate” (Jones, 2016:187).

The assessment of plagiarism cannot be reduced to simplistic criteria. Context and intention are critical variables that contribute to the complexity and ambiguity of the phenomenon. Not only does the understanding of their role allow a more nuanced analysis, but it also opens the way to the development of new theoretical models and

research paradigms. Both in law and in aesthetics, these aspects require a reconsideration of current norms and practices, providing for possibilities to redefine the concept of plagiarism in a manner that is more adapted to the complexity of contemporary realities.

Implications for academic policies and artistic practice

Plagiarism, framed at the intersection between fraud and artistic practice, raises considerable implications for policies and practices in the academic and artistic environment. The nuanced understanding of this complex issue implies reconsideration and eventual reformation of existing policies and ethical codes.

A point of convergence in the academic literature is the need for clearer and more unified standards regarding plagiarism. In the absence of clearly defined criteria, the risk of unequal or inadequate punishment of those who commit plagiarism increases (Park, 2003: 483). Another implication would be to improve student and faculty training programs on what constitutes plagiarism and how it can be avoided, so that the associated ethical and legal problems are avoided: “Implementing an institutional strategy that emphasizes integrity is usually done from inside. The members of the community participate in awareness trainings, debate together the problems raised by the phenomenon of plagiarism and agree on some solutions that are in line with the moral values they assume” (Socaciu, *Vicăet alii*, 2018:64).

In the artistic space, where the boundaries between inspiration and imitation are blurred, there is a need for more nuanced guidelines. Such guidelines must be adapted to the specifics of each artistic field and take into account the different cultural contexts and aesthetic traditions. On the artistic level, it can be argued that a certain degree of appropriation or creative imitation can serve as a mechanism for the advancement of artistic discourse and innovation. Thus, legal regulations and ethical norms should be flexible enough to allow such experimentation, without undermining intellectual property rights:

“A copyright law that would protect everything that is a work in the ontological sense seemingly threatens to open the door to a flood of legal actions that are intuitively unjustified but hard to dismiss (or only after lengthy investigations that bring to light that the plaintiff’s alleged “creations” themselves in fact resulted from plagiarism), and such a development is potentially harmful to the society as a whole, since it might lead to drastic limitations of creativity” (Reicher, 2016:71).

In both contexts, it is essential to develop ethical and legal models that allow a clear distinction between plagiarism as fraud and as artistic practice. In addition, education and training regarding plagiarism ethics and law are also crucial to reduce confusion and ambiguity. A balanced approach to plagiarism not only clarifies the ethical and legal boundaries of this phenomenon, but also enriches its understanding, allowing adaptations and reforms of academic and artistic policies. This multidisciplinary approach has the potential to provide a much more coherent and effective platform of understanding and regulation to address issues related to plagiarism.

Conclusions

The analysis of plagiarism as a multidimensional phenomenon, located between academic fraud and artistic practice, shows us that this is a topic that still requires an elaborate approach from both a theoretical and an applied point of view. It is obvious that plagiarism cannot be adequately understood through a simple binary classification as simply an illegitimate activity or as a form of artistic expression.

In the academic field, the need for clearer and more consistent policies, coupled with more advanced technologies for plagiarism detection and improved education programs in the field of academic ethics was brought to the forefront (these can help to reduce plagiarism and improve the quality of research and education).

In the artistic field, we have faced multiple attempts to redefine and re-contextualize plagiarism, to include notions of artistic appropriation and creative imitation, without compromising intellectual property rights. Although this remains contested territory, a flexible theoretical and legal framework can serve as a foundation for navigating these complicated waters.

At the intersection of the two fields, we see the acute need to develop robust ethical and aesthetic models, which allow an understanding of plagiarism from multiple perspectives. Approaches that consider cultural context, intent, and originality can provide valuable tools in assessing and understanding plagiarism.

In conclusion, it is essential not to consider plagiarism as a monolithic phenomenon, but as a social and cultural construct that incorporates a variety of practices and interpretations. This complexity requires a concerted effort from the academic and artistic communities to develop a comprehensive and adaptable framework that can address the different facets of plagiarism. This synthesis of perspectives can serve as a catalyst for a more comprehensive dialogue and for the development of effective strategies to combat plagiarism in all its forms and contexts.

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